



Eileen Ruppel

Major: Religion (pre-seminary)

Minors: Graphic design, Greek for New Testament studies

Activities: UNYK multicultural dance troupe, Campus Ministries Leadership Team, Big Brothers and Big Sisters mentor, South Park Presbyterian Church youth director

Post-grad plans: I am moving to Philadelphia to attend United Lutheran Seminary, pursuing a Master of Divinity.

“One of my former bishops, a very wise man, had three questions he used to ask prospective pastors: 1. Do you love Jesus? 2. Do you love the Church? and 3. Do you love people? When I think about Eileen Ruppel, I think of someone who, even at her young age, combines these “three loves” in a remarkable way. What you first notice about Eileen is her big-heartedness. It’s a cliché but it’s true in her case that she cares about each and every young adult in the youth group she leads and every one of her peers on the Campus Ministries Leadership Team. Combine this big heartedness with a deep trust in the God revealed in the Bible and in her life and you have someone that I can already say at the beginning of her seminary career I would want as my own pastor.”

— Pastor Richard Priggie '74, college chaplain

MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2018

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

Why Augustana?

Several reasons! Like many other students, I come from the Chicago suburbs and liked the reasonable distance from home. My choice was solidified when I was offered an art scholarship at Augie. I really knew Augie was right for me the first time I visited campus though, and it just felt like home.

Are you where you thought you'd be when you first came to campus?

Not at all. I originally intended to pursue computer science and graphic design and end up at a design firm. Instead, I found so many other areas that I was interested in and was able to learn a range of things, while keeping graphic design as a minor.

Who helped you get to where you are now?

So many people have shaped me and helped me get to this point. I'm especially grateful for the support and encouragement of my advisor Dr. Jason Mahn, Pastor Richard Priggie and Pastor Kristen Glass Perez, and Connie Huntley. They have been an incredible support system here for all four of my years. I am also thankful to Dr. Eric Stewart, who advised my Senior Inquiry project through all of its ups and downs!

Peak experience?

For me, the extra things that have come into my life because of Augustana (work, volunteering, relationships) have been just as significant as my actual academics. I'd be remiss if I didn't acknowledge my peak experience to be getting engaged in December of my senior year, at Augustana's Lessons and Carols Christmas service. Augustana has given me many wonderful things to take with me beyond graduation, but I am so grateful for the lasting friendships and future marriage that were founded here.

What surprised you?

I have learned that I am truly interested in learning for its own sake, especially from professors who have such a wealth of knowledge to share. That has drawn me to studying such a range of things and left me wishing I could fit even more into my schedule.

How did you use Augie Choice?

I took a spring Learning Community with a two-week summer trip to Greece at the end of my sophomore year. It was definitely a highlight of my time at Augie, and was made possible through Augie Choice!

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What will you miss the most?

For me, this is the hardest question to answer succinctly! By far, I will miss the Augustana community—the students, coworkers, roommates, faculty, staff and others—who have impacted and supported me while I have been here.

Advice for the Class of 2022?

The one thing that I wish I heard more often in college was: *don't stretch yourself too thin*. Grades and extracurricular involvement are important, but not as important as taking care of your own overall health and managing stress. Cut yourself some slack; don't be afraid to join a lot and narrow it down later, and take some time to acknowledge all of the things that you're already taking on.