

CAMPUS NOTES



“FRIENDS OF THE MINISTRY” NEWSLETTER

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A WELCOMING PRESENCE

As last year drew to a close, there were a number of conversations within GCM about strengthening our efforts to welcome first year students. Although always a community that has included students from across the years, GCM has tended to draw out more upper year and mature students. This past September, we participated in Orientation Week more than we ever have before, hosting events that included a Frisbee game, house concert, worship event, Community Dinner, pizza making night and lemonade stand. Strong connections were made right away, and a whole number of new students have been getting involved in the community in various ways.

First year involvement and new growth is a really exciting thing. It also means that GCM looks quite different this year. Long gone are the Community Dinners where everyone

knows everyone else. At first, McNally House during Community Dinner felt like a house full of strangers. The community is less closely connected than it has been in several years, with pockets of relationships found in small groups, the morning worship devotees, and those who meet together to play Euchre on Friday afternoons.

At the end of November, we had an “Evening of Koinonia,” bringing together a number of students to share communion and to ask the questions of who makes up our community, what do we care about and how is God using each of us to be a light to the world? It was a beautiful evening. For many, it was the first time they had met a lot of other people in the



New Friends at Community Dinner

room, but even so, there was a clear collective embracing of God’s spirit. At the same time, I think that there was also a sense that there was also a loosely connected community is not such a bad thing. There is such a strong desire among students to be God’s redemptive presence in the world, and the best way GCM can encourage that is to disciple students who are spending most of their time “in the world.”

—Jenn McIntyre
Campus Ministry Associate

GUELPH CAMPUS MINISTRY



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TO WRITE LOVE ON HER ARMS AND OTHER INTENTIONAL CONVERSATIONS

Life is complicated, and navigating its strange waters is not always easy. Each of us has our fair share of stories to tell, and some of us are dealing with more than we can bear on our own.

Intentional conversations have been GCM’s way for students to support one another. Pushing this one step further, we’ll be hosting *To Write Love on her Arms* (TWLOHA) on March 25,

2012. This not-for-profit organization is raising awareness about depression, self-injury and addiction among young adults. TWLOHA has a huge social media presence, and the founding director will definitely draw a crowd. We hope to resource the event by bringing in —article cont’d on page 2



Another Intentional Conversation

FOR THE GUYS ONLY: NOT YOUR TYPICAL GENTLEMAN’S CLUB

The four members of the band set their instruments aside and let their harmonies fill the arena. Mumford & Sons played two shows in October—one in Toronto and one in Hamilton. GCM was well represented at both. During the song *Timshel*, they sang these words: “You are not alone in this—as brothers we will stand, and we’ll hold your hand.”

Over the years, we’ve had dozens of small groups, but never have they been gender-specific. The University of Guelph is nearly 70% female, so connecting with the guys is not always easy. Back in September, two friends—Jordan and Kai—started opening their house every week. Here’s their description

of what they’ve done:

This year, some of our young men have begun to gather with a specific desire to live with discipline and integrity, recognizing that in our busy lives as students it’s difficult for us to pursue intentional relationships that encourage us to keep our hearts on God and stay focussed.

Every Wednesday, we get together to discuss whatever is on our hearts. We turn to theology, to philosophy, to scripture and to each other for wisdom and encouragement, as we think about what it means to be a Christian student and a brother in Christ. Our conversations and prayer have filled me with

encouragement and an appreciation for the guys that have been brought together by this community.

—Jamie VanderBerg
Campus Minister
—Jordan Vetro
Student



Jordan Doubles as the Apple Guy at the Farmer’s Market

FOLK FESTIVAL: FROM CHORUS TO BRIDGE

This past May, a new internship was born and Hannah Douglas started serving at the Brant Avenue Community Garden. As an extension of New Life Church’s diaconal work, Hannah helped run a therapy garden for kids with behavioral and special

needs. As the gardening season came to a close, it was only appropriate to celebrate. Here’s a board member’s description of the event:

On the evening of October 16th, GCM brought three communities together: New Life Church, the Brant

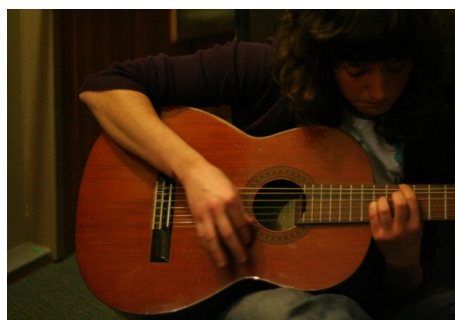
neighbourhood and our own students. People gathered at New Life for a wonderful time of fellowship at another GCM Folk Festival. The talents of local musicians from both GCM and the Brant neighborhood were featured and enjoyed by all. From an eclectic mix of

personal songs, Bob Dylan tunes, and harmonious voices singing, “Down to the River to Pray”, the evening was a showcase of soulful folk music.

Children who attended the event were well entertained with crafts and activities, and all present were enticed with the free BBQ, salads and desserts offered.

The Folk Festival served as a beautiful display of bridging communities and building ties across a city. The night proved to be an excellent opportunity for people to share fellowship, great food, and a bit of good fun.

—Jamie VanderBerg
Campus Minister
—Eva Joosse
Member, GCM Board



Music Brings Communities Together

MINISTRY AT A GLANCE

The first semester has come and gone, and there’s been a lot of activity. Here’s a quick glance at our participation in Christ’s redemptive work:

- Morning worship, celebrated weekly at 7:30am, as well as a larger monthly worship service
- Discipleship groups, including a study of Romans and a close look at joy
- Weekly Community Dinners and regular Community Music Nights
- Graduate student and faculty/staff gatherings
- Peer mentoring
- Christianity & Culture Lecture, planning for TWLOHA in March
- Peace Week, closed off with an Ubuntu flash mob
- Volunteer opportunities, including Run & Read, Agape Café, Brant Neighbourhood Community Garden and Friendship Club

TWLOHA cont’d

Counselling Services and other local agencies. We also hope, though, to open up the door for more intentional conversations to unfold on our own campus.

GCM seeks to be a place in which students can share their stories, wrestle with penetrating questions, search out God and open ourselves to the beauty of God’s reconciliation. It’s not just us who need to be a part of these conversations, and our community is hoping to crack open a door for others.

—Jamie VanderBerg
Campus Minister

YOUR DONATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THE FOLLOWING CAMPUS MINISTRY PROJECTS:

STAFF EXPANSION—\$30,000 PROJECT BUDGET

WORSHIP SERVICES—\$2000

DISCIPLESHIP, INCLUDING WINTER RETREAT—\$1500

HOSPITALITY, INCLUDING COMMUNITY DINNERS—\$1000

ON-CAMPUS SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVES—\$500

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNSHIPS—\$8000

Donations can be made online at www.guelphcm.ca, or cheques can be made payable to “Classis Huron” and sent to:
Guelph Campus Ministry
University of Guelph, McNally House
Guelph, ON N1G 2W1