



CAMPUS NOTES

“FRIENDS OF THE MINISTRY” NEWSLETTER

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Dr. James K.A. Smith</i> <i>—All are Invited</i>	1
<i>Weekly Worship:</i> <i>A New Initiative</i>	2
<i>O-Week Breakfast</i>	2
<i>Solidarity in Kenya:</i> <i>Tumaini 2009</i>	2



Guelph Campus Ministry

RAITHBY HOUSE



UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH

James VanderBerg

University of Guelph
javander@uoguelph.ca
(519) 824-4120, ext. 52392

BAPTISM—TAKING STOCK

Four years ago, I could not have imagined the community that God has brought together here on Guelph’s campus. Four years ago, I didn’t know anyone on campus! Our first Community Dinner was attended by only a handful of students. And now, I can honestly say that the strength of the community fills me with joy and causes me to marvel at God’s goodness.

This could not have been more evident than at a baptism service held at the close of the summer. Joseph Upfield had been a student leader with us for a couple of years. It was Joe who concocted the idea of our first winter retreat; it was Joe who took Community Dinners to the next level; it was Joe who practiced the art of hospitality. Though he started going to church in high school, it was

more his parents’ spiritual home than his; and so, he opted not to be baptized. Guelph Campus Ministry, together with New Life CRC, has become his spiritual home. Early in the summer, he asked to be baptized into the body of Christ.

So, we gathered. Over 50 students surrounded him, and several families from New Life joined us out at Guelph Lake. As we sat together in the pavilion, I looked around the circle. I saw a couple that had come into my office for counseling; I saw a student who nearly went home because she was homesick during those opening weeks of school; I saw students who had planned entire trips to



A Guelph Lake Baptism

Kenya and student leaders who have served faithfully on our worship team.

As a community, we witnessed Joe’s baptism, and we broke bread together. As we did so, I was struck by the beauty of what God has brought together—an authentic, supportive, outward-focused, mission-minded community.

—Jamie VanderBerg
Campus Minister

DR. JAMES K.A. SMITH—ALL ARE INVITED

Wasn’t religion supposed to be dead decades ago? Where is that triumphant secular world many anticipated in the new millennium? Why are we seeing a resurgence of religion? Perhaps we need to reconsider our assumptions about the “secular” and the “religious”.

On Thursday, January 21, at the University of Guelph (War Memorial Hall), Dr. James K.A. Smith will give a public lecture, “Rethinking the Religious and the Secular: Explorations in Postmodern Fiction and Philosophy.”

Dr. Smith is Associate

Professor of Philosophy at Calvin College. He has authored numerous books on theology, on philosophy, and on that fertile ground where these subjects intersect. An influential voice on post-modern theology, Dr. Smith’s work has been described as “nose-in-the-book intellectual and dirt-under-the-nails practical”. Dr. Smith brings a new, practical perspective on the postmodern philosophy of religion.

Guelph Campus Ministry is excited to welcome this dynamic speaker to our campus. We encourage you to

mark the date on your calendar. All are invited to join us a 7:00pm.

—Eve Mazereeuw
Member, GCM Board



Dr. James K.A. Smith

WEEKLY WORSHIP: A NEW INITIATIVE

"They broke bread in their own homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God."

—Acts 2:46-47

This past September, a hunger was expressed. The students longed for a weekly time of worship, but they didn't just want another praise and worship event. They longed for an intimate setting, a quiet and reflective space, and an opportunity to break bread together. We gather around the Lord's Table every other week (under New Life CRC's supervision), with the

Wednesdays in between serving as an opportunity to be in prayer together. Here's a student perspective on what's taken shape:

On Wednesday nights, we have a beautiful opportunity to share a moment gathered together to acknowledge Christ and His place in our lives. We are invited into the space by God and long for Him to work in our hearts. It is a time in which we are able to enter in and experience Him through singing, praying and sharing together.

Weekly, I am overwhelmed

with how each time we draw near to God in humbled worship, He draws near to us. In despair, He brings hope. In strife, He brings calm. In guilt, He brings freedom. In worry, He brings peace. In sadness, He brings joy. Even in our campus community, which is but a small part of Christ's body, we know that He is present and working among us, teaching us, guiding us and filling us. This re-generating night is irreplaceable in our week, and I am very grateful for the opportunity to fellowship together in worship.

—Ruthann Brock

SOLIDARITY IN KENYA: TUMAINI 2009

Solidarity can mean many things. For the team that traveled to Kenya in August, solidarity could best be defined as a partnership.

Twelve students traveled to the rural village of Butula, near the Ugandan border. We did go to volunteer with Children of Bukati, a Guelph initiative that is opening up the door of primary education for over 500 AIDS orphans. But even this initiative is not a North American-directed endeavour. All decisions that concern the rural community are made in partnership with that

community. In other words, the local school board calls the shots. Yes, we went to build a classroom, but we did so working alongside the Butula Builders.

Our team left for Kenya not wanting just to serve, but longing to experience Kenyan culture and to learn about the place of faith within that culture. While in Butula, we lived with host families. We ate their food; we lived without electricity and running water; and we walked everywhere. We also visited places like the Reformed Institute for Theological Training and FOCUS (the Kenyan equivalent to our campus ministry movement). The perspective we gained along the way was invaluable, and it deepened our understanding of the body of Christ.

The most meaningful part of the whole experience for me was living with my host family. Violet and her four children



Our Kenyan Team

survive on just over a dollar a day, but they opened their doors for Cameron, a student participant, and me. They practiced the art of hospitality on a daily basis. In fact, at first, they served us dinner separately and wouldn't allow us to help. Solidarity took shape, though, after a couple days. In the end, they taught us how to cook a Kenyan meal and we stood together doing dishes.

God has entrusted us with one another. Everyone is called to serve.

—Jamie VanderBerg



A Host Family

O-WEEK BREAKFAST

What would get students out of bed early for breakfast during Orientation Week? At least a partial answer has been found: good food and the growing reputation of the community that is Guelph Campus Ministry!

First-year students found their way to our O-Week breakfast not only from the advertising in the O-Week guide, but because friends told them they had to check it out. One student came because a recent grad had told her about the strength of the community. A delicious, hot breakfast, served up by members of the GCM Board didn't hurt either.

Thirty-five students enjoyed the great food, got to know one another and heard about the Guelph Campus Ministry community. The breakfast is a key point of contact for new students, a place of welcome and a relaxed introduction to this dynamic faith community. Of course, many were delighted to hear that the breakfast turns into a weekly Community Dinner.; after all, no one is going to complain about more good food and conversation.

These gathering points for the community give a cohesiveness and identity to this diverse and active Christian community. What happens as a breakfast gathering during O-week spills out onto the campus. The community is eager to grow in faith, support one another and engage campus. We see all this as an opportunity for the Kingdom of God to be lived out at the University of Guelph.

—Mark Wallace
GCM Board Member

YOUR DONATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THE FOLLOWING CAMPUS MINISTRY PROJECTS:

WORSHIP SERVICES—\$2000 PROJECT BUDGET

DISCIPLESHIP, INCLUDING WINTER RETREAT—\$6500

HOSPITALITY, INCLUDING COMMUNITY DINNERS—\$1000

ON-CAMPUS SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVES—\$500

STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT—\$8000

Donations can be made online at:

www.guelphcm.ca

or cheques can be sent to:

Guelph Campus Ministry
University of Guelph, McNally House
Guelph, ON N1G 2W1