

Guelph Campus Ministry • Spring 2019

GCM is a bridging community -- bridging campus and church, faith and feelings, expectations and experiences, and always naming Christ as Lord and rooting our identities in Him.



Who shows up for weekly Community Dinner at Raithby House?

A faithful core of 15-20 students show up every week. These students help make the front room welcoming by rearranging the furniture. They carry in the crockpots from the kind volunteers who send us homemade food week after week. These core students also help clear up and clean up after the meal, load the dishwasher and scrub the pots. These students are thoughtful about how we build and share Christ-centred community. Bless them!

A secondary crew of about 25 students also share dinner regularly... but not every week. Many of them have classes or labs that determine whether or not they can show up. "My lab worked out this week, so I'm here!" announced a young woman. "I've got meetings for a class project at 5 pm this month," said another, "Could someone set aside a vegan plate for me? I'll be coming a bit late." Without playing leadership roles, this crew is vital to the general liveliness and welcome tone on Wednesdays.

A third group also share our food: friends and connections of GCM students, the spiritually hungry, and the physically hungry. "I brought all my lab mates!" announced a GCM regular early in the semester, and they showed up off and on again throughout the semester. "You always make me feel welcome," one woman said to Virginia, "this fills my stomach and my heart!"

Our January Retreat looked forward to the Spring: Though the snow outside was deep, we gathered near a warm fireplace at Liebenzell Retreat Centre to ask what is growing in the gardens of our souls. Students considered the parable of the sower, asking themselves about the times when their lives felt like rocky ground, wondering about the weeds that are choking their lives, and considering what we can do toward nurturing good soil in us. "Lord, let our hearts be good soil," we sang as our prayer.

GCM intern Nicole VanderWindt spear-headed bread-baking on Saturday afternoon (not an easy thing to do in a strange kitchen!). At mealtime she shared, "The first 'I am statement' that Jesus makes in the book of John is, 'I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry...' ...Jesus was comparing Himself to a staple food of life. He also knew that those who were listening would immediately recall when God provided manna for the Israelites in the desert. Manna was bread from heaven; it was God's provision but it would still perish if kept overnight. By calling Himself the Bread of life, Jesus says He is the new bread of heaven, sent by God to sustain us." **We rejoice in Jesus as the Bread of Life, and the gardener of our souls!**



You are invited!! GCM Supporter Wine and Cheese Night, Saturday, April 27, 2019, 7-9pm
at the home of David Tigchelaar (Guelph Campus Ministry Board Member) 313 Ironwood Road, Guelph



GCM Staff & Board: visioning together for the ministry's next decade.

Not only has GCM undergone significant staff changes, but the student community is in the midst of significant transitions. GCM's mission statement and website language is over a decade old – and designed for a different student body. The University of Guelph, like campuses throughout North America, is trying to put its fingers on how to best educate and support a new generation as the Millennials graduate. How do we serve and speak to “Gen Z”? Inspired by the Church reports “Hemorrhaging Faith”(2010) and “Renegotiating Faith” (2018) as well as staff requests, the Board has

enthusiastically stepped into conversations about mission, vision, values. For a generation in which “identity formation is routinely delayed,” GCM seeks to speak firmly about rooting our identity in Christ. What words capture the identity that grows out of this for GCM? Intelligence and faithfulness, authenticity, loving, inquiring, wondering – these are words the board is currently crafting together.

More ministry highlights from Winter 2019 (Thank the Lord for his faithfulness!)

- **International Justice Mission speakers** in War Memorial Hall at the end of January. GCM intern involved
- **Weekly prayer** with student leaders from different Christian clubs: what a wild variety of prayer styles!
- **Women's group** met regularly to laugh and challenge one another to full, faithful life
- **Men's group** met several times to talk about being “male, Christian and maturing”
- **Faculty/Staff group** met over lunch each Tuesday for prayer and discussion
- **Lectio Divina** after dinner on Wednesdays – a time to marvel at God speaking to us in Scripture
- **“Read Aloud” Scripture together:** We read all of Esther & Ephesians, and large portions of Luke & Judges
- **Grad students gathered each week** to share experiences and talk about living out their faith
- **“Popcorn Podcasts”** was a new small group this semester, with lively podcast-based discussions
- **Saturday Fun** included an Art Gallery tour and time together at College Royal led by intern Anna McMenemy
- **Viewing the film: “Reserve 107”** followed by discussion led by an elder from the Aboriginal Centre
- **A Flashmob-style Christian song burst** erupted from Raithby House as part of MultiFaith Week
- **One-on-Ones:** personal discipleship conversations with Sara DeMoor or the Lettingas

We appreciate your prayers for Guelph Campus Ministry!

- Pray for the Christian Reformed Campus Ministry conference in Chicago at the end of May. We're excited to take a carload of student leaders along to join in prayer and learning with our great colleagues!!
- Pray for GCM's student leaders – Anna, Allie and Leah plan to serve as GCM interns in the fall. We thank the Lord for Nicole who is retiring as an intern, but plans to continue to be part of our student leadership.
- Thank the Lord for the partnership of Sara and the Lettingas and pray for wisdom as GCM explores new ways to configure team ministry. The Lettingas plan to return to BC sometime before the end of 2019.
- Pray for students full of questions: questions about God, about their plans, about the church, about their sense of betrayal... and so much more! Pray for God's hope in all the difficult questions and doubts.
- Pray for wisdom as GCM steps into new patterns -- and as it continues traditions that seem healthy and helpful. Ask the Lord to open our eyes to what he's calling us to in this school year!
- Thank the Lord for the friendships and partnerships that continue to flourish between GCM and the university. Colleagues and connections continue to open doors for ministry and fellowship

Your financial support for Guelph Campus Ministry shapes conversations and lives on campus. We never know where those conversations will go or how exactly God's Spirit will move in students' lives. Yet we proclaim with confidence that our world belongs to God!

Donations can be made online at www.guelphcm.ca or cheques can be made payable to “Guelph Campus Ministry” and sent to: Guelph Campus Ministry, University of Guelph, 203 Raithby House, Guelph, ON N1G 2W1



Sara DeMoor (centre) with interns Nicole VanderWindt & Anna McMenemy

Guelph Campus Ministry is a ministry of the Christian Reformed Church under Classis Huron and is located in Raithby House in the heart of the University of Guelph Campus. Campus Ministers: Sara DeMoor, Neil & Virginia Lettinga. Email: gcm@uoguelph.ca. Sara's cell: 416-705-7838. Neil's cell: 250-612-8670. Virginia's cell: 250-961-8021.