

Guelph Campus Ministry

A ministry of the Christian Reformed Church at the University of Guelph



Our Mission:

To be a community where all who are curious about life and God wrestle with scripture and are challenged to root their identity in Christ.

Graduating Student Reflection: Before, After, & During COVID

By Amy Kyle, Undergraduate Student

My name is Amy and I'm a graduating student from the University of Guelph. I've been a part of GCM for about 5 years, but sadly I'll be slowly moving on to other things now! Completing university over the past few years has been a bit of a wild ride, but one thing that was always a staple during this time is my connection to my Christian community.

Luckily, it was during orientation week in my first year that I discovered two wonderful groups- GCM and ECM, which were holding a joint free dinner that week! I figured I might as well check it out. Since that day, I slowly integrated myself more into the group by attending community dinners, going on a day retreat, and even joining a small group. But just as I was beginning to make some real connections, the world shut down. However, even while battling zoom fatigue alone in my bedroom, online GCM events still provided a place of solace to take a breath, catch up with my friends, and share in our fears and joys in that "unprecedented time".

The transition back to normalcy in 2021-2022 was also an interesting time because the GCM activities I was looking forward to returning to just couldn't operate the same way. Still, I made sure to attend events both in person and online, because no matter what activity it was, I always left feeling better than I did going in. It has been such a joy this past year to finally see everything return to an almost normal state, and it was so satisfying to be able to end off my undergrad with everything (almost) the way I remember it being when I entered.

Overall, Sara and the GCM interns, along with those from ECM, have worked hard to create a welcoming and inclusive Christian community that fosters connections, growth, and faith development at the university. Being a part of this group really helped me to persevere through the stress of my engineering undergrad, and really strengthened my faith by allowing me to find a Christian community that I felt I could connect with and relate to. I'm so grateful for this space that I was able to be a small part of and I sincerely hope that GCM continues to grow and develop over the next few years while continuing to be the safe and restful place that it has been for me.



CROKINOLE

GCM/ECM Winter Retreat Reflection

By GraceAnn Kroondijk, Undergraduate Student

In January I had the privilege to take part in the GCM/ECM winter retreat at the Liebenzell Retreat Center. Pat Morrison from Grace United in Sarnia led us in some conversations about the work of Charles Taylor, Hartmut Rosa, and Andy Root. It was a real treat to learn from him and share our struggles, joys, and hopes with him.

We arrived at the retreat center on Friday evening. We spent the night exploring the center, settling in, and getting to know Pat and each other a bit better with some ice-breaker games and discussions.

On Saturday we continued our discussion with Pat, went on a hike, played games, ate delicious food, and talked late into the night.

Sunday was our final day of the retreat. In the morning we were blessed to worship together. Members lead us in worship using their gifts with instruments and song. People also shared meaningful passages and prayers. I loved that we could all join together to give glory to God. After our service we took part in communion. It was a beautiful way to close our time together.

It was such a blessing for us to get away from campus and spend some quality time together. It's my first year at Guelph, and the retreat helped me to get to know the other members of GCM and ECM at a deeper level. I had so much fun spending the weekend with everyone, deepening relationships, and growing my faith. It was a wonderful way to kick off the semester and I cherish those memories.



WINTER RETREAT

Jumping into Campus Ministry

By **Melissa Burmaster, Interim Campus Chaplain**

It is so cliché to say that "time has flown by while Sara has been away", but it really has. When I arrived, the ministry was so new to me and there were so many hurdles to work through. It was a challenge to respond to the mission of Jesus in a new setting on this campus and learn how it functioned here. It was a challenge to get to know the students by name quickly to continue to nurture relationships. In spite of my newness to the people here, God continued to do his work as I learned the ropes.



Pages 4-5 of this newsletter include a list of the many ways we engaged our campus community over the Winter 2023 semester. While the ministry looks so simplified in the list, the work was constantly flowing, growing and changing. Being ready to respond and find new ways to support what God wants to do through the ministry and in the student's lives was constantly necessary. The rhythm of these events was the key to providing continuous little moments where care, love, knowledge, wisdom, scriptures and more could be shared and deposited into students' lives.

It is my hope Paul's words in Corinthians come to fruition in the lives of those touched by GCM this term. Paul writes, in 1 Corinthians 3:6-8, "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So, neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor."

For those on the receiving end, Paul's words encourage us to be willing to receive the seeds and the water that others have to offer. These are necessary to our growth, even when we do not immediately see the benefits. Second, there is an encouragement to each one of us to be someone who plants and waters others. Interestingly, this verse suggests collaboration and partnership with others - not lone workers in the field! Let's be the kind of people who work together to plant and to water others so they may reach their spiritual potential in Christ Jesus.

At the close of this reflection, I want to thank everyone who was part of making my experience at GCM possible, for the support, prayers and encouragement along the way. I have been blessed to journey with the students here and learn about campus ministry at U of G. I wish the sincerest blessings to all, as I finish up in this role on June 3rd.

In his service,

Melissa B.



Support Guelph Campus Ministry

Financial contributions are what makes this ministry happen. GCM is grateful for those whose gifts make hospitality easy and our faithful presence at the University of Guelph possible. Donations can be made online at www.canadahelps.org. You may also send a cheque to: Guelph Campus Ministry, University of Guelph, 203 Raithby House, Guelph, ON N1G 2W1.

Winter 2023 Programming Snapshot

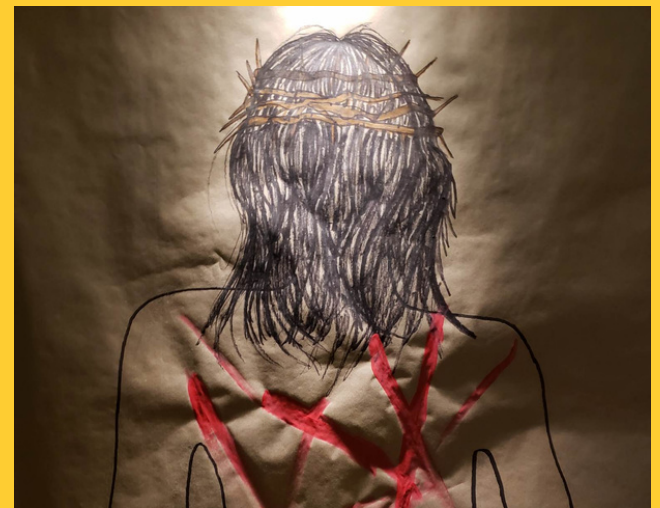
Women's Group this term included discussions on marriage, women of the Bible and balancing energy across work, relationships and family.

Stations of the Cross -- GCM set up 12 stations of the cross on Maundy Thursday in Peter Clark Hall. Faculty and students took time to reflect through Christ's journey to the cross. The responses from participants were that it was just what they needed to prepare themselves for Easter. It helped them to connect with Jesus despite the busy atmosphere on campus and refresh their commitment as a disciple.

Faculty Bible Study has continued on Thursdays each week this semester. The focus has been on a study through the book of Acts. Everyone values reading and studying Scripture together, and a significant blessing this term has also been supporting one another with prayer for the life challenges we face.

Grad Panel was held at the end of the term and stands out as a truly significant highlight. Thirteen students shared their hard-earned wisdom and knowledge from being an undergraduate with those coming up behind them. Students shared about how being a part of community dinners and Bible study allowed them to have space to explore their faith and ask their hard questions. Graduating students received a quilt from a local church as a parting gift/memory of their time with GCM/ECM.

Intern Student Development over the term involved journeying through the book Liturgy of the Ordinary. Interns explored liturgy with ordinary tasks like making the bed and the overlooked practice of keeping Sabbath.



Sara is back on campus!

Sara has been blessed by a restful time with her family during her Sabbatical and is grateful to the GCM community for allowing her a few months of refreshment and renewal. She is now back on campus for the rest of June and then again from August onward and is eager to reconnect with students through summer group or going out for coffee together one-on-one.

Winter 2023 Programming Snapshot, Continued

Weekly Community Dinners were a constant delight and source of relationship building with students on campus. Surprisingly, we experienced new people coming right up to the last weeks of the term. One Wednesday I counted over 40 people at Raithby House for dinner! GCM is thankful to the church communities of Water Street CRC, New Life CRC, Kortright Presbyterian, and Two Rivers for their ongoing provision of meals.

The **Wednesday Bible Study**, shared with the Ecumenical Campus Ministry, examined various Saints of the early church like Macrina the Younger, Saint Cyprian and Hildegard Von Bingen. The focus of our study was to look at the struggles of their times and consider how they could inspire us to keep our faith strong today.

Multi-Faith Resource Team -- With Sara away, I have had the opportunity to be involved as a part of the wider faith community on campus through attending the regular MFRT meetings. Next year, Sara will be stepping up as chair of the Multi-Faith Resource Team!



Contact Us



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