

WINTHROP ECUMENICAL LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY

A NOTE FROM THE CAMPUS MINISTER

It is hard to believe that the spring semester is almost over. The four months since I had the privilege of joining WELCM as the new campus minister went by super-fast. These four months were meaningful, provided learning opportunities, brought new opportunities, and blessed WELCM with three new students (Emmie, Constance, and Emma). WELCM continues to be a safe space, a special community, and a place where spiritual wounds can be nursed, and support is offered for life's challenges.

The spring semester was bookended by two special celebrations: the Christmas party in December and the end-of-semester and graduation cookout in April. Another high point was our service project with HOPE of Rock Hill. Each week, the wonderful people of Grace Lutheran Church provided hospitality and home-cooked meals.

Several members of Grace have stepped forward to serve as "resource persons" for the WELCM students. This could be a great help should a practical need or life challenge arise where the wisdom and experience of another person might be helpful, especially when parents or relatives might not be immediately available. (A list is on the bulletin board in the White House.)

The topics for the program time at our Tuesday gatherings were chosen by the students. (We ranked the topics and did the most popular ones first.) Two programmatic events stood out: (1) A conversation with Dr. Cynthia Roddy, the first African American graduate of Winthrop University, and (2) a viewing of the documentary movie, "1946: The Mistralation That Shifted Culture."

Our hearts are a little heavy as we will have to say goodbye to five of our students who are graduating: Sarah, the two Paiges, and our peer ministers, Bella and Cat. All of them will be missed. We congratulate them on their milestone achievement. We look forward to seeing Clara and Gracee again who will be returning from their studies overseas. Savannah has agreed to serve as one of our peer ministers for the coming year. Near term, we are beginning to think about WELCM's participation in Pride Week and, long term, we are beginning to focus on inviting new students into our wonderful community when the fall semester begins.

God's peace, Pastor Hahn

WELCM NEWS

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A NOTE FROM THE PEER MINISTERS

Bella Fleischer (she/her)

Hi, I'm Bella! I have been attending WELCM since my freshman year, and this is my second semester being a WELCM peer minister. WELCM has been a safe haven for myself and to many others. WELCM has allowed me to be loved unconditionally in faith, not despite who I am, but because of who I am. I am so thankful to be apart of this ministry and I will miss it after graduation this May!



Cat Windham (she/her)

Hi all. I'm wrapping up my time here at both Winthrop and WELCM as a peer minister, and it's very bittersweet. I've had a wonderful time participating in this group and I've been thankful for the opportunity to minister and be ministered to. I look forward to seeing what WELCM has in store for the future!



FROM THE PEER MINISTERS

We've been up to some cool things this semester! At the beginning of the semester, we took the time to get to know Pastor Hahn and choose which topics we'd like to discuss this semester. Since then, we've been discussing weekly topics chosen by the students. This has included the place of LGBTQ+, nonbinary people, and women in the church; grief; beginning and continuing our faith journeys; and more. Some of these topics were discussed for multiple weeks, whereas others were only discussed for one. We took the time to network on campus as well as off campus through our Instagram and friends.

Additionally, we're seeing growth in a couple of places! Right now, we have thirteen active members, including four new members and two members studying abroad. It's been lovely to see our old and new members alike invite their friends, and to see WELCM continue to grow as a result.

SPRING ACTIVITIES

We were busy this Spring with service projects, guest speaker, and events! Along with volunteering at HOPE, we also wrote cards to people at Grace Lutheran who are ill, grieving, going to college, and more. One of our guest speakers was Dr. Rev. Cynthia Rodney. Dr. Rodney has attended Grace Lutheran since she was a teenager. She told us about her faith journey, the importance of diversity and inclusion, as well as her experience as the first Black student admitted to Winthrop. Our last event was the end-of-the-year cookout hosted by the WELCM committee for our students before they leave for the summer. Thank you to everyone who helped out! The seniors were gifted with handmade quilts from Grace and senior blessings from Pastor Hahn.



We enjoyed having Dr. Rodney (left) at our Tuesday night WELCM gathering (below)!



The WELCM cookout with the WELCM members and committee members (above). During the cookout, four of our seniors-- Bella, Paige, Cat, and Sarah-- received their senior gifts (right, left to right).



SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

This semester, we have five seniors graduating!

Cat is graduating with a B.A. in Psychology and Religion, and she's going on to pursue her M.S. and S.S.P in School Psychology at Winthrop.

Paige Lillibrige (she/her) is graduating with a B.A. in English and a minor in Education, beginning a new career as a technical writer in Charlotte, N.C.

Sarah (she/they) is graduating with a B.F.A. with a concentration in Sculpture as well as her B.A. in Psychology and a minor in Art History, and she will be returning home to Spartanburg for some time off before pursuing graduate school.

Bella is graduating with a B.S. in Early Childhood Education, and she is planning to teach in Greenville.

Paige Lester (she/her) is graduating with a B.S. in Elementary Education and is planning to teach in the Rock Hill area.

Pictured, left to right: Paige Lillibrige, Sarah, and Cat



Pictured: Bella (left) and Paige Lester (right)



Love,
the seniors

SERVICE: HOPE OF ROCK HILL

On Tuesday, April 9th, WELCM volunteered with HOPE of Rock Hill, a non-profit organization that works to provide assistance with food and utilities for those in need. We helped check food dates, pack food into cars, and organize necessities within HOPE. We also presented HOPE with a \$500 check to help with their ministry. Thanks to Bill and Nora Sliney for helping us organize this opportunity, and thank you to HOPE for having us!



Pictured below, left to right: Maggie, Paige, Savannah, Emma, Sarah, Abby, Constance, Bella, Cat, and Emmie, with Pastor Hahn in the bottom left.



Above: Bella (left) and Constance (right) packing families' cars with food.



Above: WELCM checking the dates on food and packing it to prepare for deliver.

MEET OUR NEWEST WELCM MEMBERS!



EMMIE (she/they; bottom right): "WELCM matters to me because of the community I've found here!" Emmie found WELCM through a friend and started attending with them.

EMMA (she/her; bottom left): "I found WELCM because my suitemate started going! WELCM matters to me because I was able to explore more religiously and become more comfortable in my faith while still being in a supportive environment. WELCM has helped me establish myself more in my faith and I am so grateful!"

CONSTANCE (she/her; top left): My roommate started going (to WELCM) and really loved it, so I started going with her! WELCM matters to me because it is loving and supportive community that I know I can go to with anything.

ABBY (she/her; bottom photo): I found WELCM through a God moment! I had just talked to my therapist about wanting to go back to church and then WELCM reached out to me on Instagram the same day! WELCM matters to me because it has given me the acceptance and community I couldn't find in my hometown. Being apart of WELCM made me feel like I could explore my faith in a welcoming environment. I have definitely grown in my relationship with God and that is all thanks to them!

NEW Campus Minister!

Pastor Norbert Hahn
cm@welcm.org

Peer Ministers

Cat Windham
windhamc2@winthrop.edu
Bella Fleischer
fleischeri2@winthrop.edu



Winthrop Ecumenical Lutheran Campus Ministry
426 Oakland Avenue
Rock Hill, SC 29730