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WINTHROP ECUMENICAL LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY

A NOTE FROM THE CAMPUS MINISTER

From my perspective, the first three months of 2025 of the WELCM campus ministry have been marked by spiritual growth and growth in the support for the ministry.

The WELCM community's spiritual growth has been anchored in the Bible studies/conversations during the Tuesday gatherings and in the Evening Prayer service on Sunday evening. I find it remarkable that the students, who have tight schedules and full calendars, don't seem to mind when the Bible study goes beyond the allocated time. Sometimes it feels as if they would like to go on even longer.

The Sunday Evening Prayers, a meditative 30-minute service, are co-led by students. Members of Grace Lutheran Church who would like to get to know WELCM students and members of the WELCM Committee also participate.

The high points of the spiritual journey at WELCM this Spring was the desire of three students to be baptized and a guest presentation by Dr. Sandy Rogers, Adjunct Professor of Religion at Winthrop University.

God's Peace,
Pastor Hahn

A NOTE OF THANKS!

The support for the WELCM ministry has also grown. In addition to the many meal hosts from Grace Lutheran Church, members of Amazing Grace Lutheran Church in Waxhaw, NC, and Epiphany Lutheran Church in Rock Hill also took turns serving as dinner hosts.

WELCM was blessed by several financial gifts given in memory of loved ones, a donation from Reformation Lutheran Church in Lancaster, SC, a grant from Epiphany Lutheran Church, and a grant from the ELCA. We are very grateful for this support that comes in addition to the ongoing support from Grace Lutheran Church and the South Carolina Synod of the ELCA.

WELCM NEWS

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STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Overcoming Religious Trauma and Finding a Spiritual Center

A dedicated photographer and a published poet, Emmie came to Winthrop to pursue a degree in English Education. Before her family put down roots in South Carolina, Emmie's experienced both geographical and religious diversity. She was exposed to three different denominations and churches, including one that did spiritual damage to her. She minces no words:

"This particular denomination is heavily political, weaponizes the Bible, and openly condemns certain people. It was a very uncomfortable situation for me to be in an environment that was so openly negative about the person I was and the people I loved. It just really felt stifling and scary, and it was really detrimental for me."

To survive, Emmie took a big step: "I stopped going to church. I even stopped engaging in the idea of God. It was too painful for me to engage with God at that point."

While at Winthrop, a yearning for spirituality and a supportive community surfaced in Emmie: "I was going through a really rough period. I needed something to lift my spirit." A trusted, close friend told her about WELCM and encouraged her to give it a try. It was good advice.

Emmie recalls what difference WELCM made: "I made a lot of friends here, and since they knew I was going through a rough time, I got checked in on a lot. People went out of their way to spend more time with me and be there for me. There was a sense of community and a sense of 'we've got you.'"

During a worship time in the 2024 Spring semester Emmie had a spiritual breakthrough by making a special connection with a song: "I felt immensely relieved. It didn't feel like a scary thing anymore to be connected to God. It felt good, relieving, supportive, the way it was supposed to be."

Emmie has many good things to say about WELCM, but her summary is apt: "WELCM lives up to its name." And: "the food is really good!"

"WELCM lives up to its name!"

– Emmie Tatum



SERVICE PROJECT

This semester, WELCM students volunteered at the Bethel Men's Shelter. Together with the WELCM Committee's current chair, Bob Stonebraker, we helped to select, sort, and organize clothing donations that will soon be shared with the men this organization serves.



Pictured (l. to r.): Emmie, Constance, Grace, Hannah, Bob, Savannah, and Clara. Not pictured: Pastor Hahn.

THANKS FOR THE SUPPORT!





In addition to our stalwart supporters from Grace Lutheran Church , members of Epiphany Lutheran Church in Rock Hill (upper photo; l. to r.: Judy Krenzer, Morgan Smith, and Erin Wiedel) and Amazing Grace Lutheran Church in Waxhaw (lower photo, with students) served as dinner hosts this semester. The members of Epiphany Lutheran also delivered a grant check from their congregation! We are very grateful.

A NOTE FROM THE PEER MINISTERS

Emmie Tatum (she/her)



Hi, I'm Emmie! I have been attending WELCM since spring of this year, and this is my second semester as a WELCM peer minister. So far this spring, I've loved spending time with all our WELCM members, both outside of and within WELCM. I feel like this group has really come together within the recent weeks, and we've formed a strong little community that I am extremely grateful for. I look forward to our upcoming service project and group outing!

Savannah Rennell (she/her)



Hi, my name is Savannah and this is my second semester being a WELCM peer minister, but my third year attending WELCM. I absolutely love the group of people who attend WELCM and have enjoyed spending time with them this semester. I have enjoyed exploring my faith even more this semester and I have made the decision to get baptized! WELCM has not only given me an amazing community of people, but has also helped me strengthen my faith.

NEW AT WELCM: EVENING PRAYER

This semester at WELCM, we started a new program we call Evening Prayer. Taking place at 7 o'clock on Sundays in Grace's Sanctuary, Evening Prayer is a time for us to gather, worship, and study the Word of God before a fresh week of class starts. Featuring a blend of traditional and contemporary music alongside community, prayer, and Bible study, Evening Prayer has become our favorite way to start the week.



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