



CAMPUS NOTES

“FRIENDS OF THE MINISTRY” NEWSLETTER

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A BRANT NEW INTERNSHIP

As conversations unfolded about community development last November, it became clear that our student community was eager to find ways to serve not only on campus and internationally, but also in the city of Guelph.

The relationship between the university and the Guelph community can be both a blessing and a challenge. Students have tremendous gifts to offer their neighbours; however, their transient nature often dissuades them from sharing those gifts. Many students are unsure of how to engage with what they think of as their temporary home and struggle with balancing community involvement with their academic work. It was within this context that the students in GCM started to dream about how to change that relationship and be a true

blessing to the residents of Guelph. We brought the local church into our conversations, seeking wisdom and support from the long-standing partnership that they had with a local neighbourhood group.

Those conversations have led to an exciting new initiative intended to bridge the gap between students and those neighbourhood groups. With the support of the deacons at New Life CRC, a GCM student was hired this past May for a year-long internship position with the Brant Avenue Community Garden. The garden is located in a high density area that experiences



Brant Avenue Community Garden

significant poverty and related socio-economic challenges, including food insecurity. This internship is the beginning of what will hopefully be a deep relationship between GCM and the Brant Community, where students will have a new opportunity to serve in this community on an ongoing basis.

—Jenn McIntyre
Campus Ministry Associate



FRISBEE, SMILES AND WORSHIP: THOUGHTS ABOUT KENYA

After spending two months at Bukati Primary School last summer, I certainly felt like I had built relationships and created numerous friendships. But upon arriving back there a few short weeks ago, I couldn't help but wonder: Was it just me who appreciated those relationships and connections so much? What was the purpose of me returning to the community?

While it's true that I am a bit of a Frisbee fanatic, it's equally true that great friendships form on the field. Last year, Ultimate Frisbee was

one of my favourite leisure activities. It was a chance to connect with the students in a way that brought joy, which was so clear in the smiles on their faces during the game. Running barefoot across the field (while dodging cow dung and grazing sheep), all the while cheering, laughing and celebrating, certainly formed lasting memories. And we picked up this year where we left off last year—no longer strangers visiting the school, but friends.

One particular morning, as I
—article continued on page 2

TUMAINI 2011:

- After being in Butula for five years, Children of Bukati invited us to facilitate an evaluation of its work;
- This evaluation involved the whole community and will facilitate strategic planning for the school;
- At the end of the trip, an open house invited local farmers to learn more about the agricultural projects; and
- We started at a second school in Bwaliro, initiating a few sustainability projects.

GUELPH CAMPUS MINISTRY



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SEEKING SHALOM: A CAMPUS MINISTRY CONFERENCE

Every year, the Christian Reformed Campus Ministry Association hosts a conference for campus ministers. Though the theme changes, much remains the same. This year was different.

Nearly 50 student leaders attended this year's conference, in addition to the 20 or so campus ministers. The student-focus was intentional, and Guelph showed up . . . literally. Ten of our student leaders traveled with Jenn and me to Halifax.

This is one reflection, among many, on our experience: *The conference was a wonderful opportunity to learn from each other. I was encouraged and re-inspired to commit to serving in campus ministry while I am at university. What struck me the most about the conference, however, was the deep sense of unity that ran through us.*

Let me try to explain. I believe that something unique happens when you bring a group of people together who

share similar passions. There is an energy that runs through the room. When you meet people, you know that you are bound together not only because you are all involved in campus ministry, but you are bound in the love of Christ. You are all a part of something much bigger than yourselves. Last week, I read a quote by Jean Vanier that describes what I experienced at the conference: "We have to remind ourselves constantly that we are not saviours. We are simply a tiny sign, among thousands of others, that love is possible, that the world is not condemned to a struggle between oppressors and oppressed, that class and racial warfare is not inevitable."

At the conference, as we would gather together for a discussion or a meal, I was incredibly humbled as I would look around the room. Yes, we as individuals are special and have gifts to offer, but we are only "a tiny sign, among thousands of others" that Jesus is real . . . that his Kingdom is here and it is coming. I had a deep sense that I was a part of something, that we at Guelph were participating in something SO much bigger than ourselves. This felt like a little current of electricity running through me
At the end of an incredibly



Guelph & McMaster Student Leaders

long and challenging year, being reminded of these things was so valuable. I was reminded in a deep way that we are a small part of the body of Christ, that he has a plan for redemption and shalom. It is happening all over, all the time. I left the conference feeling like I had been blessed with a vision of shalom and I saw myself, I saw our campus, in that vision.

I left the conference humbled and inspired. I am excited and honoured to be involved in campus ministry at Guelph.

These are the thoughts that Catherine shared with the rest of us upon our return to Guelph. We all stand amazed at what God has been doing in our own midst—healing broken lives, building community as we eat together, speaking to us through the gift of music, allowing us to serve in his Kingdom, which clearly includes the city of Guelph.

—Jamie VanderBerg
Campus Minister
—Catherine Taylor
Student Leader



Together at Peggy's Cove

FRISBEE, SMILES cont'd

wondered whether they appreciated our relationship as much as I did, I walked through the front gates of the school. A student whom I had spent a lot of time with the previous year was standing at the water pump. As I approached, his smile grew. It was a smile of recognition, of memories and of friendship. It was a smile that affirmed for me the fact that the relationships we were building were truly valued. As we shook hands and greeted, I realized, that was our purpose in coming to Bukati.

God clearly brought two communities together for a reason, and it couldn't be more evident than when we were all found worshipping together. Although the entire service was in Swahili, it was easy to feel the entire church enter into a time of confession together, and then feel the spirit of the congregation change as we joyfully received God's assurance of forgiveness. The celebration that followed was alive with singing, dancing and clapping. Worshipping together with 1000 Kenyans, I stood amazed at the breadth and depth of God's grace and love—a grace and love that it is poured out for everyone, regardless of the language we speak. Together, we stand as one body in celebration of one incredible gift—Jesus Christ.

—Emily Ritz
Student Leader



YOUR DONATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THE FOLLOWING CAMPUS MINISTRY PROJECTS:

STAFF EXPANSION—\$30000 PROJECT BUDGET

WORSHIP SERVICES—\$2000

DISCIPLESHIP, INCLUDING WINTER RETREAT—\$1500

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 made payable to "Classis Huron" and sent to: Guelph Campus Ministry, University of Guelph, McNally House, Guelph, ON N1G 2W1