



Fall 2025

Mission

WCM is on campuses to listen, pray, worship, and nurture students and faculty in their faith. We provide opportunities for learning, leadership and service to help build a solid foundation and encourage missional expression.

Vision

WCM is a Christ-centred community that encourages students and faculty to confidently question, discover and grow in a life of faith.



WATERLOO CAMPUS MINISTRY

SERVING UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO AND LAURIER
CAMPUSES

Do you have a few minutes?

As the snow is falling outside the window, I am reminded of how much work winter can be. Getting to work in the mornings or coming home at night to a pile of snow to deal can take a lot of time out of our day.

You might find that you only have a few minutes to browse through this newsletter, but it will be good use of time. Inside, there are many stories of how God's is at work building a community of students on the Waterloo University/College Campuses. You will see the passion of many students for the work that God is doing here.

As you engage with these stories, please pray for the WCM students to continue building the community that God wants to develop in Waterloo in the coming year.

**By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it.... each one should build with care.
1 Corinthians 3:10**

What's inside?

Within this newsletter there is a collection of student testimonies focusing on the programs we offer with WCM. Students share about the groups that brought them into WCM and what pushed them to keep participating in this community.



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Chaplain's Corner

Exercising Faith over the Long Haul

On a campus where there are so many different world views, it may seem that there is a real faith-threat for students of any faith tradition. Are students apt to lose faith when they come to campus? Whether they realize it or not, students are exercising faith in the practical avenues of life all the time. They exercise faith that they will pass their first set of exams, that the course of study they have chosen is leading somewhere, that they will find a co-op job and more.

Reflecting on my own journey through a math degree at UW to a teaching degree at Redeemer University and then on to a Master's of Divinity at Tyndale, it was one of twists and turns. There were moments that were so tough and I felt directionless. But, frustrations turn into deep joy this fall. In October 2025, I became the Reverend Melissa Burmaster. So, in my head there is like a thousand "Wow God" praises that have been lifted since that event. *Did I just do that???* **Yep, I did** - but with much help along the way from God and others. A big thanks to all who supported me on that journey.

Coming back to the context of WCM, students are realizing the benefits of trusting God with the challenges of studies and finding work. God's blessing comes as a result of their act of trust and not always in the way they expect. He demonstrates his ability to provide for their needs over and over. WCM is a ministry that walks alongside students on their journey providing a space where students can question, discover and grow in a life of faith with others. Students develop friendships and alliances for their journey in our hospitality spaces like Table Talk, Book Clubs, Outreaches and Social Events. As you read the stories of these students, their community at WCM is truly an asset! On behalf of the students and WCM Board, I thank you for your support of this ministry in the past year. May you be blessed by these student stories.

Reverend Melissa Burmaster 

Leader's Retreat



Our Exec Team had the opportunity to attend a 24 hour retreat where we were able to slow down and connect with one another, and God. During our time, we started planning a future retreat for all WCM students and envisioning what that could look like. Through thoughtful conversation and prayer, we created a basic outline and some guiding themes for the retreat. This was a meaningful experience for the Exec Team.

WCM will be going on retreat as a large group at the end of January focusing on the concept of wholeness and what that looks like in our lives. Student leaders will be engaged in leading portions of the retreat as part of their leadership development.

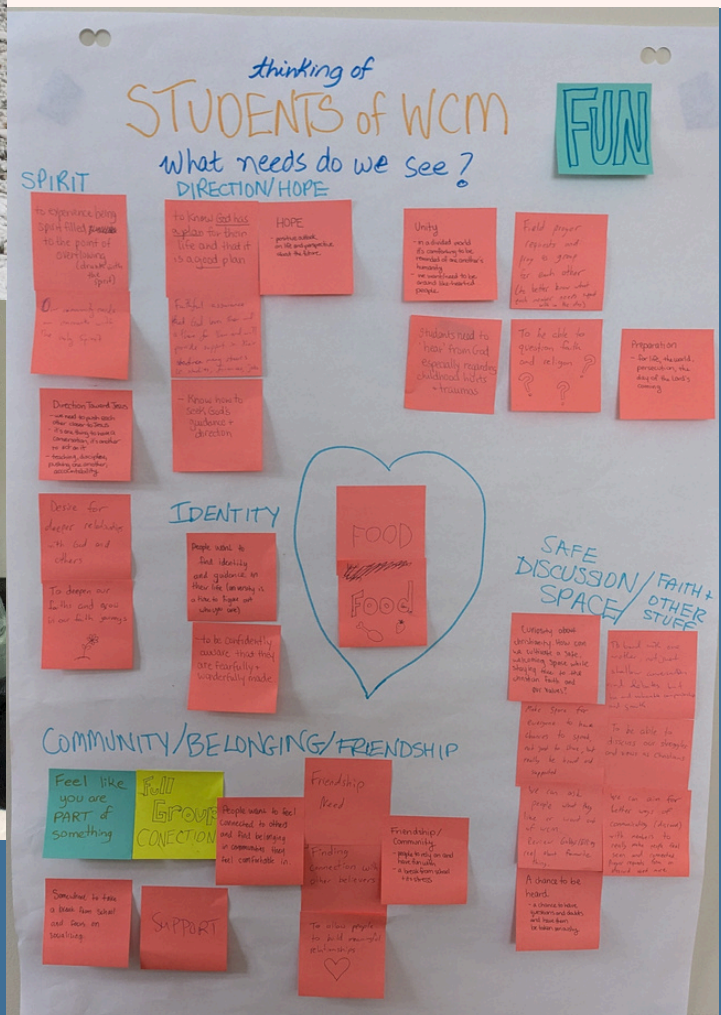




Table Talk- Matthew

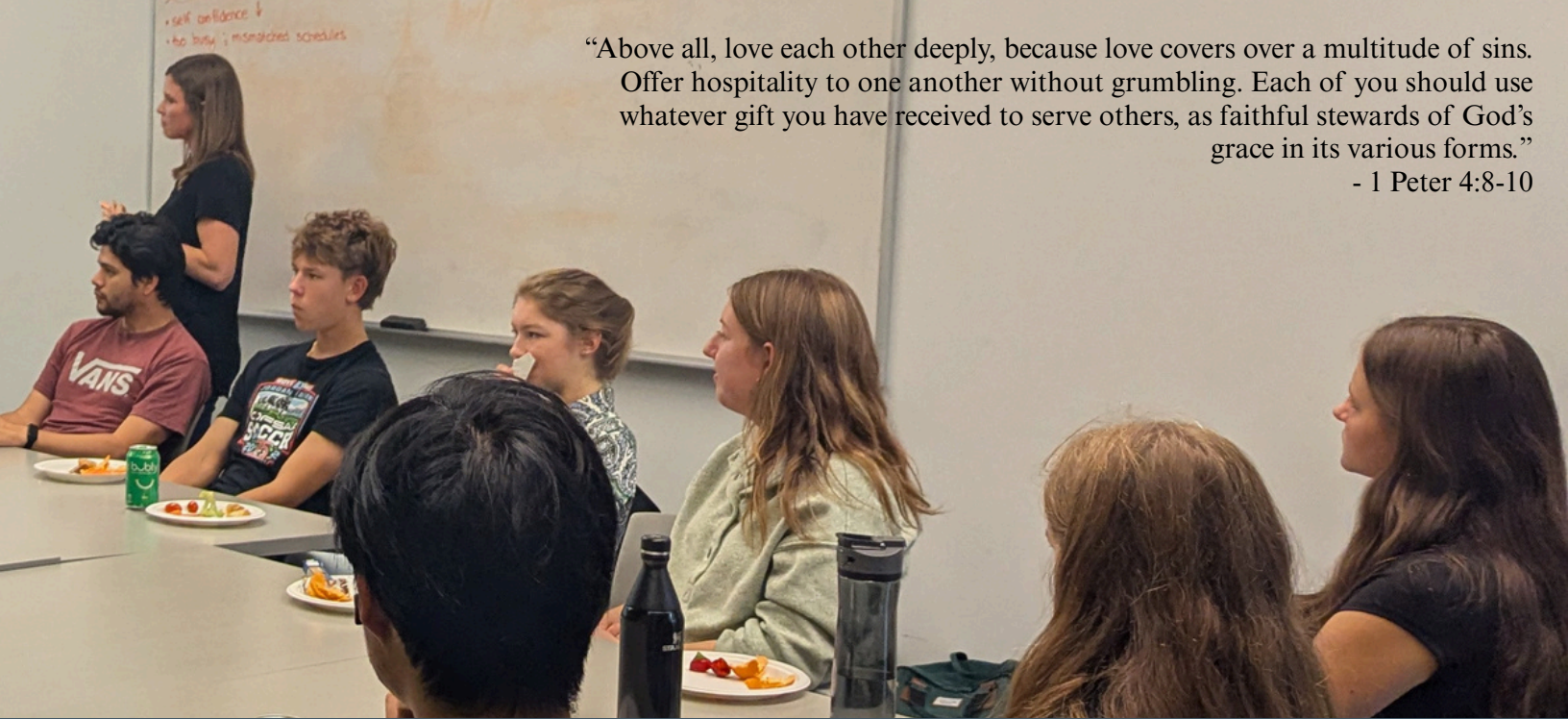
One Waterloo Campus Ministry event that had a significant impact on me this term was a weekly discussion session focused on economics, tithing, and the role of money in modern society. The conversation explored how financial systems influence our behavior, community well-being, and even spiritual priorities.



What struck me most was the discussion on how tithing is not simply a religious obligation but a discipline that trains generosity, gratitude, and detachment from materialism. But also challenged me to think critically about my own relationship with money, particularly as a student balancing financial pressures, career aspirations, and personal values. We explored whether tithing is only financial or tithing in the form of volunteering and sacrificing time and effort is also viable. Another thing that stood out is the social weighting of economics to different people. Around the table, we had so many different opinions that strongly opposed each other and yet to me they both seemed valid. Some things that kept me coming back:

- The food and snacks, free food as a student is a must,... also the fruit punch!
- Open debate and freedom to express ideas: I appreciated that discussions allowed for genuine questioning, disagreement, and exploration without judgment, and people going on long rants about stuff.
- Consistently deeper, meaningful conversations: each evening moved beyond surface-level topics and encouraged thoughtful reflection on faith, ethics, and real-world issues.

“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”
- 1 Peter 4:8-10



WCM Hospitality- Laura

I’ve had the honour of being part of WCM for quite a while now, and it’s been such a joy to watch our community grow. Recently, I was talking with another WCM member about Thursday Table Talk, our weekly gathering for dinner and faith conversation. He jokingly referred to it as “social time with croissants.” While the brief description does not perfectly describe our Thursday nights, I think it points toward something WCM is good at, which is hospitality.



As a leader at WCM, I’ve learned so much about the importance of hospitality and how making a person feel like they are a part of something is the most effective way to bring them into Christian community. Through our weekly Table Talks, I’ve learned that developing godly friendships can be as simple as having conversations with a person about life and faith, and sharing food with them. The Bible so clearly calls us to show hospitality to everyone we meet. At WCM, we greet everyone with a smile and food, and that has led to the creation of the most unique community, with many Christians and others who are still searching but feel at home with us. This provides opportunities for asking questions, sharing different perspectives, and building each other up in the faith.

It’s the practice of hospitality, openness, and intentional invitation that is the starting point for people to connect and feel comfortable in our WCM community. From there, we are able to do so much together. This term, we had deep conversations in book club, ran a hugely successful food drive, had barbecues and game nights, welcomed first-year students, and watched our group grow significantly in size. All of this is possible because of Christ-like hospitality and a willingness to serve each other. I’ve been so blessed to give and receive from the WCM community this term.



Book Club- Bukola

Laurier Campus 26, 2025.

I am a Laurier student who attends the Fiction, Fantasy and Faith Book Club that takes place on Wednesdays at 4:30 pm at Laurier. It has been an amazing experience. I have been enriched by listening the differing opinons and outlooks on life offered during our discussions on he books we read. I have also been able to expand my book range as some of the books we've touched on have become some of my favourites like Wings of Fire, The Chronicles of Narnia, and so much more. Being able to intertwine talk about faith into our discussion has been super beneficial as they have helped me look at things or situations in my life a bit differently.

Three things that I have learned from this experience are time management - knowing/seeing how much of a book I can read alongside with doing my assignments, communicating ideas - discussing my thoughts and opinions on a book clearly and concisely and handling differences of opinions – when others may not have the same opinion as me I am learning to take the steps to understand where they are coming better.

Three things that have me coming back to WCM are is the book club - I love getting to read new books, Pastor Melissa's welcoming atmosphere and getting to be around other Christian youths who I can relate with. I'm looking forward to leading an off-shoot group developed out of this club that will focus on reading the Pentateuch in the Winter term.



Fellowship and Community - Ellie

WCM has been such a blessing for me over the last year. Serving on the Exec Team this term has been a fun and fulfilling experience that has helped grow my faith with God and find ways to use my gifts to serve others. I joined the bible study this term where we read 'The Practice of The Presence of God' by Brother Lawrence, and had meaningful conversations about the book, and how it reflected in our own lives. I really appreciated this time to consider how I can include God in my everyday life and ways to connect with Him more often. It was inspiring to discuss the book with other students and hear what they had learned that week.

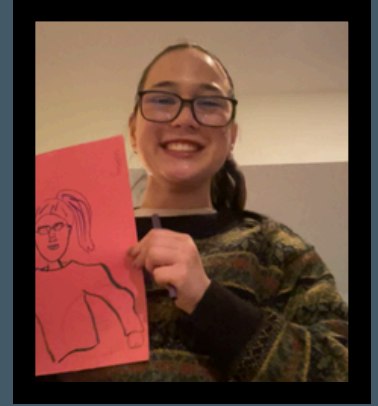


I also became more involved with events and outreach work this term, including the Fall food drive, and helping to host our welcome back BBQ and end of term party. Our term parties, and other weekend events have been a highlight for me because it's a time for students to relax, enjoy a home cooked meal and get to know one another in a comfortable setting. It has been really encouraging to see the relationships that have grown because of these events.

Lastly, I have learned and grown so much from being on Exec Team. Not only have we collaborated so well as a team, but we have formed great friendships with one another. We had the opportunity to attend a 24 hour leadership retreat where we prayed, discussed plans for next term, and grew closer in our relationship with God. It's really inspiring to see other students so passionate about ministry and the work we are doing on campus, and I'm excited to see WCM continue to learn and grow in the future.

Connection & Faith Development - Gabby

I attended WCMs Thursday Table Talk weekly and it has pushed me to think deeper about the world around me. Table talk with WCM focuses on discussing philosophical topics that impact the world we live in. These conversations included topics like truth, relative truth and objective truth as well as the illusion of perfection. I also enjoyed being a part of the Exec Team and getting involved with the media page for WCM. Being involved has helped me find deeper community with WCM. A group of us would participate in a bible study group following table talk meetings. I learned many things from WCM and my experience with them.



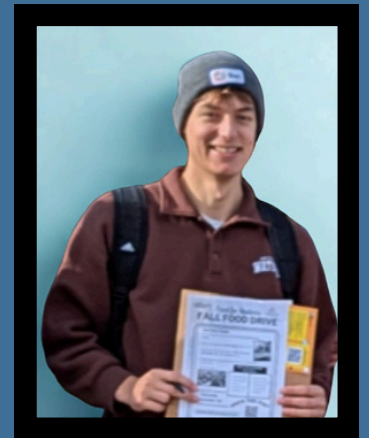
Firstly, something that stood out to me was my time with the bible discuss our reading from “The Practice of The Presence of God” by Brother Lawrence. This group study brought up a lot of new perspectives. It taught me how to rethink the way I practice prayer by making prayer time more constant throughout my day. Table talk taught me the importance of listening to other perspectives and opinions so I can grow in my faith. Finally, Table talk showed me the importance of community and fellowship. When I had first joined WCM in January of 2025, table talk was the first group that stood out to me. The community and relationships they built had drawn me in. Another thing that pushed me to continue attending was the conversations. I really enjoyed coming every week and diving into a new conversation. The opportunity to hear different people’s stories and experiences is not something I get to experience the same elsewhere. Lastly, the connections made through WCM encouraged me to continue attending and made me excited to step up and become a member of the Exec Team.





Community Outreach- Scott Adema

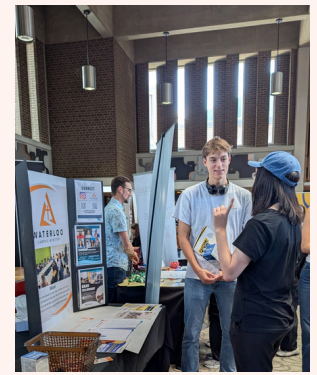
I was part of the Exec Team this fall, participated in the weekly table talks, book club and weekend events. Some highlights for me were the volunteering at the St Johns soup kitchen, the Fall Food Drive, game nights, and the end-of-year party. Being part of a community that strives to grow closer to God and serve others is something I've come to treasure these past few years. It's been amazing to serve as a leader helping to develop this group.



For the food drive, seeing the local community support UW students with food donations, connecting with different groups on campus that support students and watching WCM members volunteer time and energy to these outreaches was super impactful on me. What I value in my experience with WCM is the opportunity to serve the community. Using my spiritual gifts with a group that allows to help others do these outreach events is a tremendous joy for me. Thank you for supporting this ministry on campus and enabling WCM to do something to help those in need in our community.



Community Life with WCM



Thank You NOTE

A special note of thanks to student leaders Ellie Harpster and Gabby Masengi for their work on assembling our Fall Newsletter.



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Would you like to support WCM so we can do more on campus ?
More information about Giving Pathways will be coming in the new year!