FALL 2026 · ISSUE 30

WINTHROP ECUMENICAL LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Since graduating in 2020 Samantha McCall has been enjoying life with her kindergarten students at Hunter Street Elementary in York, SC. She took time from a busy week filled with parent-teacher conferences to meet and talk about her life and WELCM.

She says that every day at school presents new challenges. She loves talking with her students and "seeing them grow and learn to be little people." "It's so much fun to see them starting to form and shape their minds. I'm in the right spot!" Samantha grew up in the Lutheran Church, joined WELCM during her first semester and stayed active all four of her years at Winthrop.

To Samantha, WELCM provided a "college-accessible version of church." It was close to campus, but not on campus, so she could get away and learn to explore her faith and spirituality independently. And there always was a lot of support available -- from the other students, from the campus minister, "even from people you'd never see or meet."

T**he best parts?** The programs, the meals, the worship all worked. But Samantha really enjoyed activities like apple picking that took place outside of the weekly Tuesday Gatherings. These helped to build and bond the group into a true community. Her advice to new students? Do it! You don't have to be Lutheran; all are welcome. It's a relaxed, comfortable place to talk about your faith and beliefs and to explore why they are your beliefs. Give it a try!

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

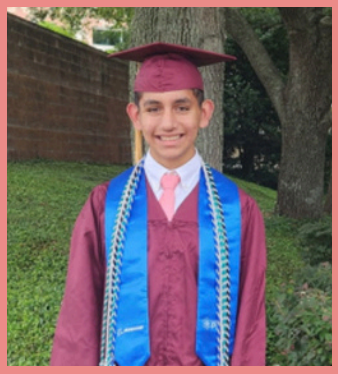


Meet Shelby! She is a junior music performance major, here is what she has to say about her first semester experience at WELCM: "I first went to WELCM because of my friend. At the time I was only expecting a gathering that would bring me closer to God, but it was so much more than that. Not only have I gotten stronger in my faith, I have also met some truly amazing individuals. I love having a safe place to study, gather, and worship. Not only have my peers been a delight but the adults that have provided us with meals and mentorship have been wonderful to meet."

MEET MORE NEW MEMBERS



This is Casper! He is a freshman music composition major and he is new to WELCM this semester. Fun fact: Casper grew up in Florida!



This is Casper's roommate Devin. He is also a freshman and new to WELCM! Devin is a computer science major and a baseball team manager at Winthrop.



Sami is a junior choral music education major! She joined WELCM this semester and has been blessing us with her beautiful voice and great sense of style!

AND OUR PEER MINISTERS



Hey everybody! My name is Roxanne (pictured left) and I am a sophomore music major. I am so excited to be in my first official semester as a peer minister. I have gained so much from this ministry and I cannot wait to help other students strengthen their faith! I am looking forward to the rest of the year with WELCM!



Hi everyone! My name is Vanessa (pictured above) and I'm a senior English major here at Winthrop. I've been a peer minister for two semesters now and can't wait to continue my journey at WELCM. We have such a special community here and I can't wait to see it grow!

Scan below to support us!

WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO



A favorite program so far this semester has been talking with Dr.Cynthia Roddey, the first African-American student at Winthrop.

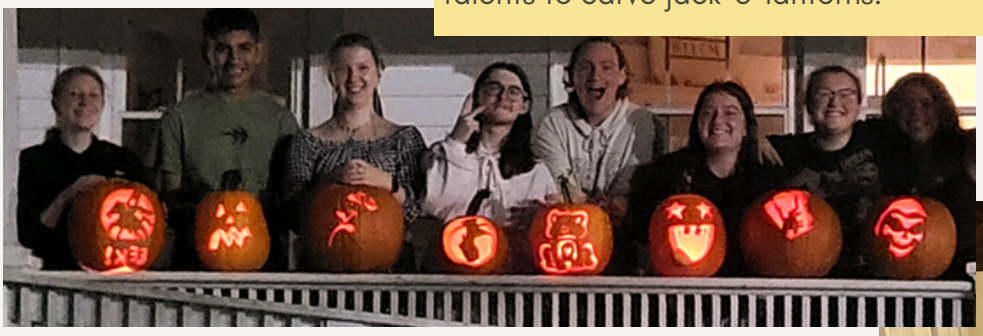
Scan to see more photos





Earlier this semester, students took a day trip to the Catawba River followed by a Chick-fil-A dinner.

On Saturday, October 10th students braved the rain to pick pumpkins at Bush-N-Vine. After returning to the WELCM house they played board games and cooked a spaghetti dinner before using their creative talents to carve jack-o-lanterns.





After "sleeping" over on the sofas and floors, the students (most!) still managed to make it to Grace's 8:30 am Sunday service before returning to cook a sausage and egg breakfast.

WELCOME MR.ROGERS

(A.K.A. our interim leader Bob Stonebraker)



A note from Bob: I'm a planner. Vacation? I've set the itinerary and reservations long before departing.Teaching a new course? I've finished the lecture notes and course materials before the semester begins. Surprises? NO! And, as my wife learned years ago, NEVER give me a surprise party.

Then why am I here? Why is this retired economics professor unexpectedly leading a campus ministry? Surprise! But, as my wife reminds me, "life is what happens while you're making other plans."

When Pastor Hahn retired, someone had to take over until a new campus minister could be brought on board. Given my long involvement with campus ministry, both with WELCM and at my previous university, I was the logical choice (and no one else volunteered). So, surprise, here I am. And I love it.

I've always been energized by college students and the ones at WELCM are amazing. They are enthusiastic, bright and inquisitive. Our discussions are honest, open and non-judgmental. More importantly, within just a few weeks they coalesced into the welcoming, supportive, and diverse community that campus pastors dream about. When our Tuesday evening gatherings end, they stay! Together they talk and laugh, they watch movies (they did a sing-along to *Hamilton*) and stream TV shows. Once they even traipsed down to Spirit Halloween and donned masks and costumes for selfies.

"They are a remarkable group and I am honored to be a part of their community."

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