

The McMaster Campus Ministries Council (MCMC) is a unique blend of students, staff, faculty and community volunteers. We are enriched by the shared knowledge and experience of such a diverse group who provide such a welcoming ministry for the campus community. They are also the body who provide support to and a context for the Ecumenical Chaplain.

The Council's mission statement of love is reflected in all its activities, including: Spiritual care, worship, engagement in the life of the campus and fostering ecumenical/interfaith cooperation. Students are the priority for the majority of programs, but even these benefit the wider staff and faculty, with some events designed to serve everyone on campus as well as the local community.

In a pressure-filled academic environment, the Chaplaincy Centre is an "oasis" for students to simply drop by for some refreshment and a visit. The treats which await each visitor (tea, cookies, candy) make it inviting for anyone to enter, and is often the starting place for making deeper connections. Pastoral support and counselling is offered to anyone on campus for any reason, but especially those coping with anxiety, depression, financial crisis or career discernment.

The Centre is a cooperative and collaborative space. It is shared with a Roman Catholic priest and Christian Reform Chaplain. It is also the catalyst for a diverse number of groups and services on campus – from the various Christian clubs to the Student Union Diversity Services; from various Inter-faith groups to Social Justice/Human Rights organizations.

Though the Chaplain who has enabled and enriched so many ministries on the campus (and local community) is now retired after 20 years (the Rev Carol Wood), it is anticipated that several of these programs, and the "presence" of the Chaplaincy, will be on-going with the next Chaplain (the Rev. Andy Crowell).

Some of the on-going programs we hope/intend to see continued are:

- "Exam hospitality" that reaches approximately 2000 students each year during the December and April final examination periods.
- Worship at "high" Christian observances at Advent, Lent and Easter (if during school term).
- "Soul Food Fair" which is a one day coordinated effort with 7 other campus services reaching a 1000 students that speak to matters of holistic health.
- International student programs highlighted with a Thanksgiving dinner in the fall and smaller social opportunities for students in the winter.
- Student leadership development in programs such as "The Mac Students for Social Justice", the "Daughters of Abraham" (an inter-faith community of Judaic, Christian and Islamic students), International Students, and "Youth Connexion" (which is an Inter-church based youth outreach with local churches supported by Mac Students, now beginning its fourth year on September 27<sup>th</sup>).

-

Beyond these existing “programs” the MCMC hopes to have a presence , through its Ecumenical Chaplain by serving on the Inter-faith Issues Working Group which is part of the President’s Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community (this has led to the creation of an “accommodation policy” for Religious, Indigenous, Spiritual Observances in potential conflict with course work or exams); The Anti-Violence Network, the McMaster Community Poverty Initiative, the Committee to Support Students with Difficulty, the Research Ethics Board, and then of course to work in partnership with groups such as Campus Community Engagement, Gender and Feminist Research, Human Rights and Equity Services, Campus Wellness and Student Financial Aid.

In short, this coming year’s goal(s) is to allow for as smooth a transition to the extraordinary presence of the previous chaplain, and remind the people of the campus that this caring and open-hearted ministry will continue with the caveat that the next Chaplain, though not new to the work, will be new to the campus.