A Magical Spring on Campus and around the World!

A mentor program, a spring break trip to Guatemala, weekly home-cooked meals and worship made for a special spring semester for Lutheran Campus Ministry.
Weekly Homemade Dinners @ Bread+Belonging
Our weekly homemade meal on Tuesday night is at the heart of our ministry on campus. Many thanks to the following people who provided a dinner this semester! We’re always looking for dinner hosts. If you’d like to help out, contact Pastor Zach at (720)583-3857 or lcmpastor@colorado.edu.

The LCM & Canterbury Colorado Boards
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A Reflection on Graduation - Lindy Noecker, Class of 2015, Boulder, Colorado
I still haven’t fully processed graduating yet. The weekend of graduation itself was a whirlwind of action: family visiting, dinners and parties to attend - the ceremony itself was almost a sideshow. My sister’s ceremony had been earlier that afternoon. Surrounded by my family in Macky Auditorium, Pastor Zach and I murmured comments to one another about the boring speakers as the hours dragged on. My own departmental ceremony later that day was held outside in an obnoxious light drizzle, and it went by much more quickly. The graduates took their seats to “Pomp and Circumstance” piped in over loudspeakers, listened to a few short speeches and award presentations, filed across the stage one at a time, shook an old professor’s hand, and that was that. Then I was off for more fun with friends and family. I hardly had time to breathe, much less come to grips with what had just happened. I only remembered later what Pastor Zach had said after my own ceremony about the appropriateness of rain on that day, since it is a symbol of baptism. A baptism - into what? A new stage of life, of faith, of maturity? I haven’t figured that out yet. But I don’t think I need to have all the answers just yet. I’ve got my whole life ahead of me to find out.

Bread+Belonging Update - Brandon Antoniak, Junior, Longmont, Colorado
Bread and Belonging has been a great way to get to know new people, get free food, and receive a little bit of soul bread. We get together every Tuesday night at 6. The nights start out with chatting with people in the group to get caught up on the week, tell stories and just decompress. Then Zach tries out new and innovative calls to worship (sometimes threatening to recite the Athanasian Creed), we pray, then eat some amazing food provided by the people of the local Lutheran and Episcopal congregations, and talk some more. After dinner we begin with “Good news, Bad news, and Notable Potables” where the best news and the news that people need to get out and get support for is shared. After dinner we will often have guest speakers, games, bible studies, or activities. The guests we have range from Bishops to Holocaust survivors to local homeless shelter volunteers, to school officials, and even a climatologist! Every guest has something new to share and they can be a lot of fun to talk to.

This year especially was a lot of fun because compared to last year the group has gotten MUCH larger. The retreats we went on to Mt. Messiah and Glenwood Springs along with the awesome folks up at CSU’s Lutheran Campus Ministry and UNC’s pastor were awesome. We had a lot of time to think about faith, “discernment”, and relationships; and a lot of time to relax and enjoy the people we were with. Plus due to Pastor Zach’s fake economy and the help of the donations from the local churches, the retreats were dirt cheap to attend, even for us poor college kids! This was definitely a growing year for Bread and Belonging. There was a lot of growth, and changes, but it was all for the best!
Until the spring break of my freshman year of college, I had never been to another country (the border of Canada when I was like eight years old doesn’t count). I had always been curious, but never able. I had only been part of Lutheran Campus Ministry for several weeks when I hurriedly decided to join the Guatemala trip at the last second. I can’t explain why I felt the need to go on this adventure with people I had just met, but I knew that God wanted me to go. So I did. We arrived at the airport nervously the morning of our departure. I didn’t know what to expect. Hours of traveling by plane turned into a short night at a hotel, which turned into more hours of traveling by bus into San Lucas. The mission was welcoming and we were exhausted. Our first day in San Lucas consisted of tourist-like activity, and I could tell that I and other members of our group slowly became uncomfortable with our own wealth as we passed by vendors on the streets and small shacks with tin roofs. Once the mission familiarized us with the sites at which we would be working, we became excited! We saw and learned about the progress that was being made in San Lucas, and it felt like relief. The programs were wonderful, including a women’s center where women could take free classes and children played freely, a hospital funded by U.S. donors, a coffee business that aided poor family farms, and the building of stoves for family homes. And finally, it became time to actually work. And…we sucked at it.

It was harsh, but true. Some of us were better at the manual labor than others, but most of us just plain sucked. It spurred conversation in our nightly devotions. We asked ourselves, “Why are we here?” We clearly are not helping these people speed up their process of selling coffee, pouring cement, or anything for that matter. We were even told that the men finished a stove for a home in the same amount of time with or without our help. My guilt increased every time I spent my time staring at the beautiful landscape. I was a tourist, not a missionary. Did God really approve of us coming here? Could our money have been better spent donating food and water to these people? We discussed and discussed our opinions on the matter, but I just didn’t have an answer.

The women’s center will always have a special place in my heart. Although I didn’t speak the same language as the children, I connected with them in a special way. I am a camp counselor, after all. It’s my job. I explained to one of the girls that I wanted to become a teacher and teach abroad after I graduate, and she begged me to come back. We played and played with those children until we had to leave. I will always remember two of the girls in particular. The next week, I went home to my parents’ house and attended church with them. After the service, people from VisionTrust were outside, waiting for the generous Christians to agree to sponsor a child in Haiti. Curious, I went over and asked questions. When I walked away, I was sponsoring a five year old girl named Fabigaille in Haiti in order to help her go to school. And that’s when it hit me. If I had not just gone on this trip, I probably wouldn’t have considered sponsoring a kid when I’m still one myself. The difference that we made in Guatemala probably didn’t come from the roads we helped make, or the coffee beans we helped sort. Although no difference is too small, our physical labor was trivial. No, the reason why it mattered that we went to Guatemala is because our hearts have been forever changed. We know now that it is our job to make a difference. God wanted us to go so that we could take what we learned there, break it into tiny pieces, and spread bits of it everywhere we go for the rest of our lives. We became exposed to a deeper side of God’s love, a side so deep that all we can do is drag the rest of the world down into that pit of love with us. I hope that Fabigaille learned a lot in kindergarten this year.
A Student’s take on El Camino Colorado
Betsy Noecker, Senior, Boulder, CO
It starts way before senior year – sometimes even in high school: constant questioning about what comes next. “What’s your major? What jobs will that get you? What are you doing after graduation? What’s going to be your career?” Everyone from your mom to your hairstylist wants to know. Figuring out the answer can keep you up in the middle of the night for months. The University of Colorado gives some career counseling help, but there are deeper questions that go unanswered – why work? Is this job really helping others? How am I helping spread the word of God’s kingdom? What does it mean for my faith if I’m just working as a computer programmer for the rest of my life?

El Camino provides the space for those kinds of conversations to take place. It’s a mentoring program matching students with someone working in the professional field students hope to one day join, and it aims to answer questions for which many students yearn to know the answer. Meeting over the course of a semester, the pairs create “mind maps” to target events and activities students are passionate about, then discuss how to integrate that passion into a career that serves God and the needs of God’s people. Scripture and spirituality guide where a student’s path may lead.

My own experiences with El Camino have been transformative and guiding. My mentor helped me focus on events that changed how I saw Christ working in the world, from childhood to now, and she helped me see how those experiences can be used in the working world as well. As a recent grad, the best gift I’ve received was discerning how I can help God’s people with my own skills.
A Note from Pastor Zach...

It’s been an incredible year for LCM-CU. Our partnership with the Episcopal campus ministry continues to bear fruit as our weekly home-cooked dinner and program took off. We launched a program to help students discern the futures and careers to which God is calling them. Twenty students were paired with non-students who mentored them throughout the year. We hosted an interfaith panel discussion on the meaning and value of work. We travelled to Guatemala where students tested their learnings against the backdrop of the wider world. There was a fall retreat, a winter retreat, and we washed students’ feet in the UMC on Maundy Thursday. Just this week four LCM-CU students returned from a trip to the Holy Land (which two of our students organized and led). We also bid farewell to five of our students at Spring graduation. I could go on and on, but in this edition of *Grounded* you’ll see the past year through the eyes of students, the ones we minister to, but more importantly, with. They’ve written some good stuff. Check it out and may we all have a relaxing and rejuvenating summer, before we do it all again.

Peace, pz

Save the date for...

**LCM’s Fall Beer Tasting!**

Everyone had a great time at our first, annual beer tasting. There was great food, music, beer, and the opportunity to learn about our work on campus. Get this year’s date on your calendar and stay tuned for more details!

**Sept 25th, 2015**

**ALUMNI NEWS!**

- Christina Zarza will complete her residency on June 13, 2015 and will then be serving in a faculty fellowship at St. Anthony North in Denver.
- **Lost Sheep** - Could you help us connect with these folks whom we’ve lost touch?
  - Marybeth & Alan Candland, San Diego, CA
  - Timothy Morgenthaler
  - Michael J. Penka, Lakewood, Colorado
  - Lee Peterson, Santa Clarita, California
  - Michelle Prout, Lyons, Colorado
  - Jackie Ross, Seattle, Washington

Refer a Student to LCM-CU!

Do you know a student who will be headed to Boulder in the fall? If so, let us know! Pass along that students contact information to Pastor Zach (lcmpastor@colorado.edu) so that we can welcome to campus in August.

Also check our our online presence!

[www.lutheranbuffs.org](http://www.lutheranbuffs.org)

facebook: ‘Lutheran Campus Ministry at CU-Boulder’

YouTube: LutheranBuffs

Help support Lutheran organizations you care about through Thrivent Choice℠.

Members of *Thrivent Financial for Lutherans* have an easy way to help support Lutheran Campus Ministry! Through *Thrivent Choice* members can help choose where Thrivent Financial distributes some of its charitable funds each year.

When you direct Choice Dollars, you can request funding for Lutheran Campus Ministry, ELCA, Boulder, Colorado, in the Campus Ministry category. Potential designated Choice Dollars amounts range from $25 to $500 for each eligible member.

If you’re eligible to direct Choice Dollars, you can direct them right now. If you are uncertain about your eligibility, visit [www.Thrivent.com/thriventchoice](http://www.Thrivent.com/thriventchoice) or call 1.800.847.4836 and say “Thrivent Choice” at the prompt.
Four LCM-CU Students Travel to the Holy Land
- Emily Kisser, Junior, Frederick, Colorado

This May a group of young adults ages 19-28 travelled to the Holy Land with Peace, Not Walls. We visited several of the traditional holy sites like The Sea of Galilee, The Holy Sepulcre, The Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth, and other locations in Bethlehem and Jerusalem. The idea of walking where Jesus walked was amazing, but realizing that walking how Jesus walked was, and is, more important. All of these places were incredibly meaningful but were not where I personally experienced holy moments.

The most meaningful portions of the trip ended up being the aspects that focused on the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians. There is literally a wall that separates the two groups of people. A huge wall you cannot climb or see over. It completely separates the people and without the two groups humanizing each other it is hard to believe that a positive solution will ever be reached. We visited the city of Hebron which demonstrated how it is illegal for Palestinians to walk or drive along certain roads. The children of both groups are not allowed to communicate or cross paths, completely severed from each other. At the Aida Refugee camp we learned how the Palestinians were forced out of their homes in 1948 and never allowed to return, some keeping the key to their front door as a symbol of hope. We were taught to make a traditional Palestinian meal by mothers of disabled children that reside in the camp as a form of raising awareness. Though the Palestinians live incredibly difficult conditions, they still find time to be normal people. They laugh, joke, love, and eat ice cream. It is