

Blaze

From The Flint

January

2016

The Abbey Campus Ministry Columbus State University

Each month, Blaze will highlight a member of Flint River Presbytery in the hope that a greater sense of community will assist all of us in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This month we spotlight The Abbey on the campus of Columbus State University in Columbus, GA.

Thank you so much for all the support that Flint River Presbytery gives to The Abbey Campus Ministry. It truly is a powerful opportunity to reach out to students on the Columbus State University Campus. Each week we invite the students into the Abbey space for a delicious (usually) home-cooked meal, a powerful time of worship, good times and fellowship, as well as and to get some needed items from the Student Food Pantry.

We offer lunch to the students each Tuesday from 11:30 to 1:15. We have seen an increase in the number of students joining us for lunch, as serving more than 100 lunches became the norm during the fall semester. It took some strategy and careful shopping, but we were able to add more seats so that no one has had to eat standing up. It is a good feeling to know we are using the space to the fullest. (And lunch on Tuesday is truly THE FULLEST!) You should see the looks on the faces of first time volunteers when there is a line out the door! For me, it was a joy to work alongside so many amazing volunteers from the Presbyterian Churches here in Columbus. I am so thankful!!!

It has also been a blessing to see so many students at worship on Thursday nights. The Upper Room, as that time of worship and fellowship is called, is a shared ministry with First Baptist-Columbus. Each week, about 25 students from a roster of more than 50 students gathered faithfully. There were as many as 4 different denominations represented each week with some students coming because they heard about the service at lunch on Tuesday. Still, the majority of students came because their friends invited them.



In January, 12 students will attend the Montreat College conference where they will be challenged to consider the significance of John 3:16 for their daily lives. The Abbey Board is thankful to be able to provide scholarships for the students so that their attendance is not a financial burden. We hope that there will be a good group of Abbey students at Celebration of Faith in March. Due to COF, The Abbey will not be planning a Spring Break mission project in 2016. Last year, a good group traveled to explore Habitat's work in the world by visiting the Global Village in Americus and then working on a building site in Valdosta. Thanks again to Trinity-Valdosta for hosting us overnight!



*Spring Break
Mission Trip
2015*

Spring 2015 marked the return of the Student Food Pantry. Items like soup and ramen noodles were made available for easy pick up during lunch each week. In addition, this fully stocked food pantry was available, by appointment to students who were having trouble making ends meet. Students referred each other to the pantry which gave me an opportunity for one-on-one contact with the students. We hope this food ministry goes a long way in further establishing The Abbey as a pastoral presence at CSU.

In addition to times when students are in the Abbey space, I am

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The Abbey continued...

thankful for the opportunity to be invited into their space. Attending music and theater performances as well as art exhibits is a great way to get to know the student a little bit. The experience of the Fine and Performing Arts is a great perk of this ministry position. Most of all, though, I am thankful for the time I get to spend with students in pastoral care. Since starting in the summer of 2014, the pastoral ministry has grown consistently. I find that I am meeting with students for pastor care between 6 and 8 hours per week outside of scheduled events and performances. This pastoral ministry is a great privilege that I hope never to take for granted.

Besides all of the amazing volunteers and the work that I get to do as paid staff, we have a very faithful Board who meets monthly to support, direct, and hold accountable The Abbey ministry. The Board is chaired by Paul Kauffman (Beth Salem), Andy Moye (All Saints) serves as treasurer, and Dan Van Kley (St. Thomas-Episcopal) is our faculty liaison. Other faithful members are: Tena McQueen (First-Columbus), Liz Allison (Edgewood), Michelle Cobb (All Saints), and Mark Jarrell (First-Columbus). It is also important to note that Truman Cawthorne (First-Columbus) has rarely missed a lunch at the Abbey since it started!!!

It is a great opportunity as well as responsibility to serve these students at CSU through The Abbey. These students are in college for only a season - yet it is a significant season of their lives. The short time we have to encourage them in their faith is all a part of God's plan. I pray God will hold us faithful as we continue to reach out in Christ's name.

Many Blessings!
Pastor Stephanie Boaz



Students just hangin' out.



**International Students
from
Poland, Venezuela, and
Serbia**

**The Abbey as it
was
ready for the
Italian Night
Fundraiser.**



Amelia Barton

**Scenes from worship
in The Upper Room.**

