

Testimony of Campus Ministry by Emily Logback, Emporia State student

Hello, my name is Emily Logback. I am here with Kurt Cooper and the Emporia State Campus Ministry. Today I would like to share with you some of my experiences from my first year at college. I grew up going to the same church my whole life (Calvary UMC in Wichita in case you were wondering). So naturally, I was worried about making new connections at college and just really wanted to find a great church to go to on Sundays, but I ended up getting so much more! Let me explain. Within the first few weeks of school, I met this really nice girl named Erynn and she told me she was a United Methodist and that I could go to church with her. I was relieved to finally have someone to go with. A few days later, before Sunday had even rolled around, she invited me to a meal at the campus ministry house, which I didn't even know was a thing. I had no idea that going to this single event would lead me to so many amazing people and that I would gather with them several times a week for the rest of the school year and even go on multiple trips with them. One of these was a weekend trip to Atlanta for an event called Next where we got to worship with people from across the country. The other was a spring break trip touring the Civil Rights Movement. We got to see how churches impacted the movement and how they provided so much care and inspiration to their congregations. Some of our weekly activities included Monday night meals, multiple Wednesday small groups, Thursday night worship, and of course, Sunday school. These weekly events are what guided me through my freshman year. I learn a lot about myself and who I want be, by connecting with friends that I met through campus ministry. Any time I was missing home, questioning my future, making tough decisions, or just feeling down in general, I could always look forward to diving into faith and fellowship with my friends from campus ministry.

Testimony of Campus Ministry by Grace Woods, Student at University of Kansas

Hello my name is Grace Woods! I grew up in the Kansas City area, specifically in Tonganoxie, KS. I was lucky enough to have a supportive and cultivating church community growing up. I've been blessed with many opportunities because of which have shaped my faith. By my senior year of high school I became comfortable leading in my church and in my congregation.

About halfway through my senior year I hit what I like to call my high school graduation crisis.

As I was applying to colleges giddy with excitement for the new change, I had a minor melt down. I was getting letters and postcards in the mail inviting me to campus ministry programs and it was a bit overwhelming. I suddenly realized I would no longer be able to do things like holding the babies in my church nursery or being in fellowship with the congregation that raised me on a weekly basis. I remember walking up to my youth minister Carissa with the ugly Kim Kardashian crying face in distress. I believe my exact words were... "CARISSA HOW AM I GOING TO LIVE WITHOUT YOU?!?"

You suddenly realize that your entire life is changing. All sense of comfort is about to be ripped out from underneath you.

Welcome to college! Leaving my home church is scary for me. I will no longer have the same accountability directly from my family or my church family. When you go to college you're tested. Whatever your values are, regardless of if who you know who you want to be, these values will be tested. I know if I'm not intentional about pursuing my faith once I am separated from my safe home town environment, there is a possibility of it declining.

Knowing that I can be involved in a United Methodist Campus Ministry program brings me peace. The opportunity of fellowship and growing in my faith in a new atmosphere is so exciting to me. Not only will Wesley KU become my church away from home, but it will provide me with new opportunities my home church cannot replicate. The vibrancy and gusto of a college campus inspires a passion that is unique to young students ready to change the world. My excitement to be apart of a community of faith that is on a college campus and shares the core Methodist values of my home church is immeasurable.

After meeting with Susan Mercer, the Wesley KU campus minister, I have learned about all of the unique opportunities a campus ministry has to offer. Each campus has its own culture and style of ministry that is specific to the campus. My personal choice was influenced by the way Wesley KU makes social justice issues and outreach a priority. The beauty I see in Wesley KU is that they are still molding what the ministry will be. I want to be apart of that creation and formation and can't wait to help establish a Methodist ministry at KU.

Campus ministry is important for people like me. I would encourage anyone who is interested in attending a college in the Great Plains to talk to a campus minister and get involved with ministry on campus. I am looking forward to growing in my new environment