



GUIDING LIGHT

Campus Ministry and Lilly Center Newsletter

As we celebrated the season of Epiphany in the church, in which we remember the ways that the wise men were led by a star to Christ, I am struck by how this story is alive for our students and for many of us. From the moment they walk on Catawba's campus students are trying to find their guiding lights, those things that will help lead and direct them in the ways that God is active in their midst. Students are asking deep questions of themselves and this world. Sometimes they feel, like those wise men, that they are walking through dark nights and barren deserts. But through campus ministry and the Lilly Center we are able to help point students to the light of Christ, a light of truth, beauty, and wisdom. Students will often lament that they do not know where a particular path will lead them. I remind them that the wise ones didn't know exactly what they would find at the end of their long journey and neither do we, but that we take the next most faithful steps and trust that God walks with us.

Last year as I closed my ministry at the First Congregational Church of Glen Ellyn I felt like some of our students, excited and nervous about what would come next as I followed my own guiding star, God's call, which led my family back to Catawba College. As I stepped into the role of Chaplain and Director of the Lilly Center I felt the importance of this role that has shaped the lives of generations through the ministry of Rev. Dr. Ken Clapp and Pastor Seiwel. I am honored to be part of that legacy and to carry on the important work, holy work, of helping students discover their purpose and passion in a world that desperately needs them.

Many of you, alumni and friends of campus ministry and the Lilly Center, know the walk of our students. You too felt the pull of that light in your lives. We want you to know how that work is still happening. In this newsletter you will hear of the ways we are serving students through meaningful worship, volunteer opportunities and the building of community here at Catawba. You will hear of the ways we are forming young theologians in the Discover program and helping clergy thrive in ministry through the Catawba Clergy Network. We want to celebrate this work with you, and we are grateful for you, as you all are the legacy of our work in the world.

REV. KENDRA JOYNER-MILLER '11
CHAPLAIN
DIRECTOR OF THE LILLY CENTER FOR VOCATION AND VALUES





Day of Service

On September 13, 2023 Catawba College embarked on a historic journey by hosting the first-ever Day of Service. It was an event that embodied the college's unwavering commitment to community engagement and a culture for service.

Throughout this day over 481 Catawba students, faculty, and staff came together to serve the Rowan County community through a multitude of projects in collaboration with 23 community partners. The monumental occasion signified a significant milestone for Catawba College as it marked the birth of the first "Pillar Day," signaling the beginning of a new tradition deeply rooted in the College's identity.

Activities for the Day of Service included a wide range of volunteer opportunities, including tutoring and mentoring students, local food bank and shelter support, park cleanups, tree planting, beautification projects, and senior citizen outreach. More than 1,028 service hours were generated over the course of this day alone. This inaugural Day of Service was a huge success thanks to the hard work of Johnathon Boles, the director of Volunteer Catawba.

Catawba is truly living out its commitment to service and inspiring the next generation of change makers.

Alternative Spring Break

In March 2023, eight Catawba students revived the college's tradition of using spring break for service by visiting Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, MS. Affiliated with the United Church of Christ, Back Bay Mission serves the unsheltered through various activities. The alternative spring break trip profoundly impacted the students, shaping their perspectives on service, homelessness, climate change, and civil rights. Engaging in daily service activities, such as assisting at the Micah Day Center and participating in construction work, the students found the experience transformative. Evenings were filled with diverse programming, including worship, sessions on climate change and civil rights, and reflection time. The students formed lasting friendships with Heidelberg University students. This spring break, a group from Catawba plans to return to Back Bay Mission with Heidelberg University, thanks to the support of the National United Church of Christ and generous donors who are passionate about fostering a culture for service at Catawba.





Student Service Leaders

Creating a culture of service on and off our campus is core to the Catawba identity. We are a people who serve. Students are eager to engage in service and help lead their peers. In the Spring semester of 2024 we are going to work intentionally with four students as Service Scholars who will partner with community leaders to coordinate service opportunities for our college, recruiting and inspiring their classmates to serve. These Service Scholars will also receive leadership training and opportunities for reflection.

We have noticed economic barriers to service as Catawba brings in increasing numbers of students who are of high financial need. The Lilly Center is committed to service not being exclusively for the affluent. We have students working jobs to allow for their basic needs at Catawba or to send money home to family members. It is inspiring that these students still want to find time to serve. Borrowing from the Bonner program model, this program will compensate students for their service allowing us to select students with a deep passion for service apart from financial ability. We are in the trial phase of this program and are excited for the ways this could transform our students and campus culture through service.

Freshmen Retreats

This signature program of the college has been offered for over 20 years and has contributed greatly to the formation of many Catawba students. We are working across departments to explore how these retreats might be integrated into the freshmen experience for all students, not just a self-selecting few. How can every student be given the opportunity to frame their entire college experience around these deep questions; "who am I," "what do I value," "what gifts do I have," and "how can those be lived in the world." These are questions that will help our students have a groundedness in who they are so that as occupations change, which they will, their sense of vocation, calling, will remain steadfast. Beginning a student's time at Catawba with these questions helps to prime them for what is to come in the next four years, an education that will give them the tools needed to succeed and also the framework to live a meaningful life. We are working to build out this program, knowing that a goal of full freshmen participation is ambitious, but we also believe in the ways that this message is counter cultural and essential to our student's formation.

Johnathon Boles



Johnathon Boles is the Director of Volunteer Catawba, Freshmen Retreats, and Retreat Leadership Corps. If you are interested in learning more or connecting to the program he would love to talk with you
jcboles@catawba.edu



Discover is one of about 200 youth theology programs at colleges and seminaries across the country. These programs emphasize faith development through study of scripture, theological reflection, and vocational discernment. Discover does this through a different theme each summer, as well as through practical theology tracks. These tracks give students the opportunity to reflect on how God might be calling them through their various gifts, skills, and interests. In past years we've had tracks in sport management, worship music, and service and ministry leadership, and this year we debuted a science track, which focused on how the skills of science- like asking questions and paying close attention, can help us to grow in our faith. Students explored chemistry, biology, environmental science and environmental advocacy all through a lens of faith. Some highlights were visiting a local organic farm for a session with a Catawba graduate and using natural indigo to dye our Discover t-shirts (pictured above).

All of these experiences are a part of a program that encourages exploration of self, God, and creation, as we each seek to discern what we are called to do with our "one wild and precious life."

Discover's leadership is in a time of transition, but we have two more years of funding through a matching grant from the Lilly Endowment. Your gift to this program helps us to do this work as we discern how to move into the future. Please visit www.catawba.edu/discover to learn more and see videos of past years. Feel free to ask us any questions at discover@catawba.edu.

CATAWBA COLLEGE



Clergy Network

It was a great fall semester for the Catawba Clergy Network. Almost 200 people attended the keynote lecture for Clergy Days as Dr. Kate Bowler shared her experiences as a cancer survivor. While everyone connected with Kate's remarks, she pointed out that clergy particularly knew the challenges of walking with those who struggle and deal with many types of pain.

Sixty clergypersons from different denominations participated in two days of workshops, meals and meetings for spiritual growth and refreshment as they took a break from the duties of the parish and enjoyed fellowship with other clergy. Meetings are beginning this month to plan for Clergy Days 2024 in the fall.

We have new Communities of Practice forming for Clergy to share and grow in small cohort groups. These groups meet in person and over zoom as the groups stretch from Salisbury to Hawaii. If you or your pastor is interested in our work, please email clergynetwork@catawba.edu

Our Staff

Rev. Dr. William "Bill" Hoyle

BA, MDiv, ThM, DMin



Bill began working with the Catawba Clergy Network this past year after moving to Salisbury. Bill served over 21 years as the Pastor of the Clemmons Presbyterian Church. He served congregations in Chapel Hill, Winterville and Raleigh NC and one in West Virginia. Bill and his PC(USA) ordained wife Felicia, have two children, Jacob in Charleston, SC and Sarah in Newark, NJ. Bill grew up in Catawba County, NC and is an avid, though struggling, golfer.

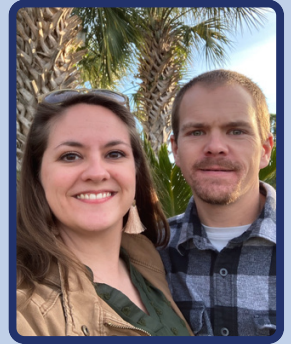
wmhoyle@catawba.edu

Rebecca Wrights

Rebecca joins our staff as the Administrative Assistant to the Chaplain and the Lilly Center. Rebecca is a native of Salisbury and a member of First United Church of Christ. She graduated from East Carolina University and worked as a public-school educator for 10 years with Rowan-Salisbury Schools. She and her husband, Nate, '09, reside in Salisbury. Rebecca enjoys hiking, archery, gardening and reading.

Rebecca is looking forward to continuing her family legacy of scholarship and service at Catawba College!

rwrights@catawba.edu



Your Generosity

Campus Ministry and Lilly Center programming is made possible entirely from the generosity of grants and you, our friends and alumni, from the salaries we pay our passionate staff, to the freshmen retreats, spiritual growth retreats, welcoming coffee house space and more. If interested in making a gift to Campus Ministry or the Lilly Center to keep this work going please reach out Pastor Kendra and our amazing Development team at Catawba. Every gift makes an immense difference, so thank you for gifts of time, talent and treasure.

Save the date for Discover 2024!

Catawba College Youth Theology Institute



How is God calling you?

High School: July 7-12, 2024
Middle School: July 17-20, 2024

<https://www.catawba.edu/discover>

Lessons and Carols

a Catawba tradition



This was the 36th year of Lessons and Carols at Catawba College as we prepared our hearts and minds for the Advent season and the coming of Christ. Vocalists and musicians from Catawba College and Rowan County, under the director of Dr. Phillip Burgess, Dr. Ben Jones and with conducting help from President Nelson created an experience of wonder and praise. There is an unparalleled beauty in these services of songs and scripture. We would love for you to join us next year.

December 2 and 5 2024