

Wesley Journal

WJ

11 09 15

all CHILDREN OF GOD



BELOVED and FAITHFUL

I had more than a little trepidation when someone suggested that we do one of our Fall issues on the topic of race. It's not that I didn't think the topic is important or that the conversation shouldn't be had. However, I did feel incredibly uncomfortable with publishing an edition on this topic when the entire editorial staff is White. How would that be perceived? What could we possibly have to say to people whose lives are undeniably affected by racism every time they walk out of their own doors when I can go for days without even thinking about race?

I was afraid of offending people. I was afraid of negative backlash. I was afraid of opening a can of worms. And maybe this issue will accomplish exactly all those things that I feared.

But I personally have been so blessed and enriched on the journey to this edition's publication, that even if it is deemed a huge failure, I have been changed by the experience of bringing it to print.

I was overwhelmed with positive responses by people who were excited about the potential of this issue and the invitation to be part of our guest editorial board. At the same time, I also received correction and admonishment (in a loving way) from a friend about my own misconceptions about race, particularly in the way my perception about someone can differ from how they self-identify.

Most importantly, I was privileged to be witness to people's stories about how racism has had an impact on their lives. I was reminded of the power that telling our stories has, both in empowering the teller and transforming the listener. And so, this edition does not try to answer the big questions about racism nor have we tried to offer solutions.

Instead, this edition gives voice to members of our Wesley community to share their stories. Some will break your heart. Others will make you angry. Some will make you think.

What I hope it will do, most of all, is start conversations. So go ahead and read... then share your story and listen to another's. May you be empowered and transformed in the process.

Denise

Share your own stories with us on Facebook.

Editor-in-Chief, Denise Haskins
Managing Editor, Alex Woody
Design Editor, Michael Potesta

Wesley Journal is the monthly publication serving Wesley Theological Seminary students, staff, faculty, and administration. It is published four times per semester during the academic year when classes are in session by the Student Council and made available for free to the Wesley community and others upon request.

Although the editors and publisher have made every effort to ensure that the information in this publication was correct at press time, the editors and publisher do not assume and hereby disclaim any liability to any party for any loss, damage, or disruption caused by errors or omissions, whether such errors or omissions result from negligence, accident, or any other cause.

The views and opinions expressed in the Wesley Journal are those of the contributing authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Wesley Theological Seminary or its Student Council.

Wesley Journal
November 09, 2015
Vol. 64, No. 3

Copyright ©2015 by Wesley Theological Seminary Student Council; 4500 Massachusetts Ave, NW; Washington, DC 20016

For editorial concerns, please e-mail wesley_journal@wesleyseminary.edu.

⁸ RUMINATIONS

¹⁰ PERSPECTIVE

⁴ UNCLE BEN

¹¹ RESOURCES

⁹ REPENTANCE

⁵ CALENDAR

^{6 & 7} REFLECTIONS

by Siera Toney

I am a very old man

Skin the color of mahogany
Face wrinkled with time
Eyes riddled with crow's feet
Tonsured head of grey
And I have never been called by my full name

Never been referred to as Mr. or Sir

I am supposedly revered as a part of the American family
Though never treated as such
Invited into their kitchens but never into their dining
rooms

I have been
3rd degree burned by the American families that I cooked
for
Cheated out of my fortunes
Hoodwinked by hooded night riders and given fame in-
stead

They gave me a bowtie in exchange for my apron
Told me to pose for the camera and posted my picture
everywhere

I wear a Mona Lisa smile

I am trapped in these orange Ziploc cages
In restricted bust depictions
No longer the namesake of a tribe of Israel
But the manifestation of a doubting disciple turned traitor

My hands are sore
They carry the aches of my forbears who spent centuries
in the rice fields of Mississippi and Louisiana
Picking

My hands are tired
Calloused from the labor of feeding millions
Slaving over a stove in hell's kitchen
To perfect one of the most popular side dishes in the world

The Chinese might have treated me better

I have diversified the flavor of a simple grain
Taken it from the Mother Land to the bayou
To the Caribbean to the Silk Road
To the land "down under" and brought them all back
To the land of the free and the home of the brave

I am the bowls and bags of rich flavor that have graced
billions of American tongues for centuries
I am the quick fix for mothers who never learned to cook
for the generations of mummies and maids and nannies
that their families used for that labor
I am the same for those families whose heads work this
job and that job and barely have time or money to eat
I am every grain of rice that was ever force fed to an Afri-
can slave who refused to eat as a sign of rebellion

I was once a sharp and wild crop
Since watered down and artificially flavored to appeal to
a majority

Sometimes they let me be myself
During fleeting marketing specials
Offering the unadulterated product for a limited time

Just long enough to fall in love

I married an old Aunt
Everybody's favorite mammy

She was just like me

Another old chef given a cook's life
Old and plump with wide smile that was missing teeth
An old face
Salted and peppered with coarse hair that was half -hid-
den by her chef's cap.
Big eyes and fat fingers
Good for making pancakes but better for negotiating with
maple trees and extracting their sweet menstrual blood

It was mahogany like me, and sticky, and sticky, and
sticky.

She too was "revered" in those American kitchens
But never heard "Miss" when she was beckoned for or
"ma'am" when she was answered

Still they got to her, too
And exploited her jolly nature for coonery

They slathered her in this thick, sticky, sticky, thick,
sweet deception
And feathered her with lies about her worth that she for
years believed
She was in deep when I met her
That's why her smile is so wide and mine so narrow
But she knew our plight was the same somehow

So she married this old man with tonsured head and
crow's feet
And loved him and poured syrup on his wild oats to
sweeten his smile
Old were we when we united so she bore me know chaps
But we loved
And became auntie and uncle to many nations

But despite our service
And our love
They keep this couple of lovers
This pair of old cooks
Locked up in their cabinets

Put us up high in their pantries like trophies:
Grain and sap
Brainless saps they've used for almost a century

You've abused us four centuries!

Revered us as your kitchen's most prized possessions
Endeared us with sudden nostalgic recollections
And enslaved us
Without the quietest of confessions

And so I sit
In my orange Ziploc cage
In this restricted bust depiction
Bowtie choking me almost to death

And I think to myself:
Benny,
What have you lived for?

America?

Week of Nov 9-14	Tues Nov 10	Chapel, 11:00am-12:00pm. Preaching: Rev. Dr. Ianther Mills, Lead Pastor, Asbury United Methodist Church; Washington, DC.
		Chapel, 5:15-6:15pm. ABS Worship Service
	Wed Nov 11	Chapel, 6:15-7:00pm. Wednesday Night Worship.
	Thurs Nov 12	Elderdice, 4:00-5:00pm. Community Forum, Theme: "Last Call: From Serving Drinks to Serving Jesus" This is the title of the Rev. Jerry Herships' first book, which will be released Nov. 6. Jerry had an unlikely path toward the ministry, including being a stand-up comedian, working in show business, and tending bar. But all of those experiences ended up blending together when he started AfterHours Denver, a faith community in a bar, and began reaching people who never would darken the doors of a church. The community is most known for its outreach to and partnership with the homeless community in Denver. Come talk with Jerry about how a passionate, risk-taking ministry is born and sustained – and be challenged and encouraged.
		Elderdice, 9:30-10:30pm. KSA Prayer Meeting.
	Fri Nov 13	KG-01, 3:40-5:50pm. PM&M Information Session. Contact Desirée Barnes if you plan to attend. Mount Vernon Place Dance Studio, 4:00-5:00pm. <i>Asah</i> Outlet Workshop: Dance.
Week of Nov 15-21	Tues Nov 17	Chapel, 11:00am-12:00pm. Preaching: Dr. Paul Cho, Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible.
	Wed Nov 18	Chapel, 6:15-7:00pm. Wednesday Night Worship.
	Thurs Nov 19	Chapel, 12:00-12:30pm. Transgender Day of Remembrance Memorial Service. Sponsored by Of Sacred Worth.
		Elderdice, 4:00-5:00pm. Community Forum, Theme: Embodied Theology
		Elderdice, 9:30-10:30pm. KSA Prayer Meeting.
Week of Nov 22-28		Thanksgiving Break! No Chapel Services or Community Forum
Week of Nov 29 - Dec 5	Tues Dec 1	Chapel, 11:00am-12:00pm. Preaching: Rev. Dr. Carol Cook Moore, Assistant Professor of Worship and Preaching, Chapel Elder Elderdice, 4:30-6:30pm. Information Session for General Conference Course (CM-571) Are you interested in attending the 2016 UMC General Conference in Portland, OR? Learn about the spring class, travel logistics, costs, and other important questions during this informational session. To join online between 5:30-6:30 pm, email Beth at bludlum@wesleyseminary.edu for login information.
	Wed Dec 2	Chapel, 6:15-7:00pm. Wednesday Night Worship
	Thurs Dec 3	Elderdice, 4:00-5:00pm. Community Forum. Elderdice, 9:30-10:30pm. KSA Prayer Meeting.
	Fri Dec 4	Elderdice, 3:40-5:50pm. PM&M Information Session. Contact Desirée Barnes if you plan to attend.
		Mount Vernon Place Dance Studio, 4:00-5:00pm. <i>Asah</i> Outlet Workshop: Improve & Theater Games.

FYI

Marketing and communications needs two (or three!) short-term student workers to help us out 15 hours a week for the next four weeks. The position will be dedicated to helping us populate and test the new website. No special experience needed beyond regular familiarity with Microsoft Office programs. We will train. Contact Amy Shelton, Director of Marketing and Communications.

Register Now

Fusion: The Future of Worship in the UMC conference by Discipleship Ministries. February 4-6, 2016. Raleigh, NC. Student rate: \$89. www.fusionworship2016.org

Hispanic Summer Program. June 18-July 2, 2016. Seven, 3-credit, accredited courses geared toward master-degree level Latina/o seminarians & graduate students. The program also welcomes a limited number of non-Latina/o students who have an interest in learning more about the US Latino community and may have an interest in working with this demographic. \$425 includes room and board, travel, and three transferable credits. <http://hispanicsummerprogram.org>

Through Hispanic Eyes. June 26-29, 2016. A cross-cultural seminar for non-Hispanic faculty and administrators. For more information, contact Dean Martin or Dr. Sokolove.