

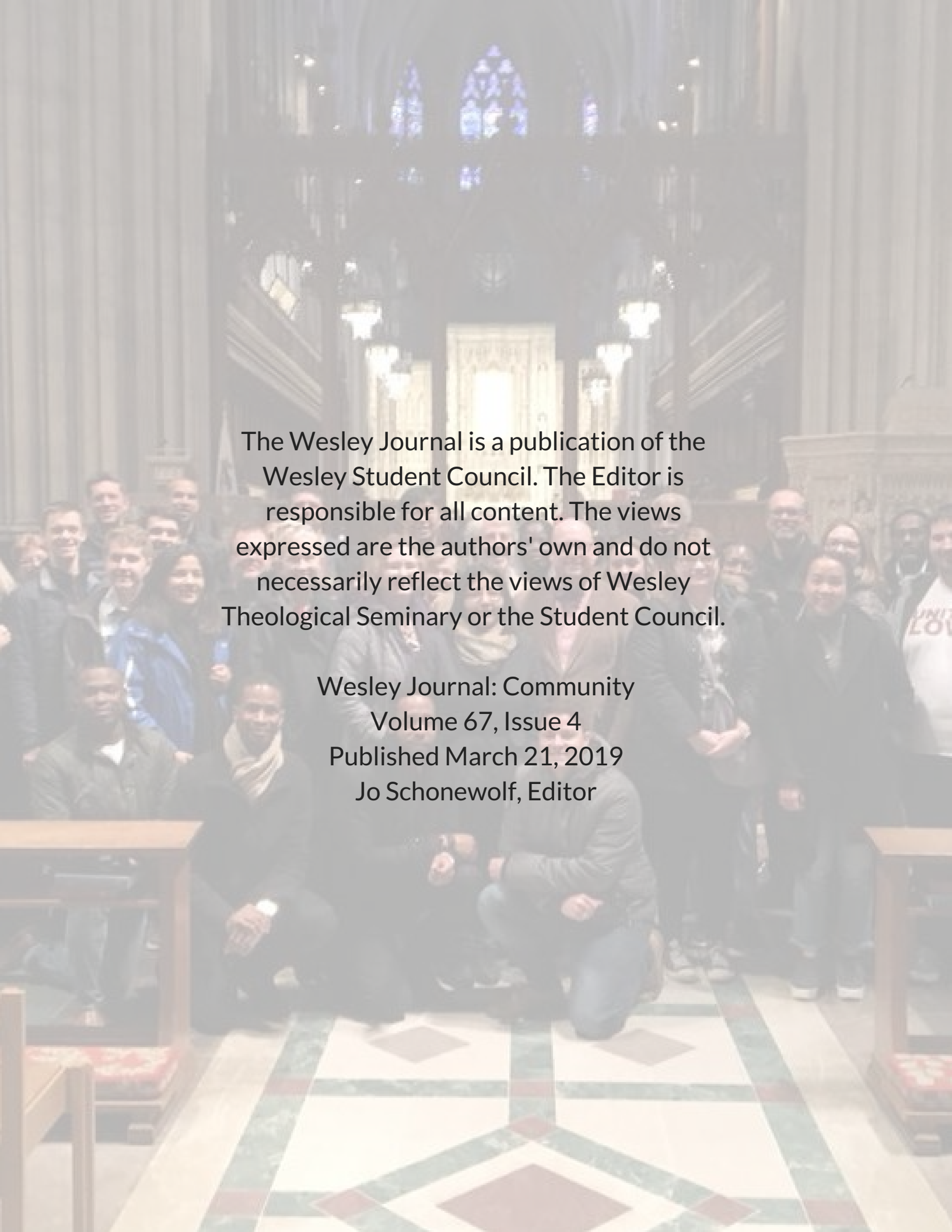
# *Wesley Journal*



COMMUNITY

REFLECTIONS ON HOW WE GATHER AND LIVE LIFE TOGETHER



A large group of students and faculty are posed in a church sanctuary. They are arranged in several rows, with some kneeling in the front. The background features a high, vaulted ceiling with ornate architectural details and a large, brightly lit altar area at the far end. The floor is covered with a patterned tile design.

The Wesley Journal is a publication of the Wesley Student Council. The Editor is responsible for all content. The views expressed are the authors' own and do not necessarily reflect the views of Wesley Theological Seminary or the Student Council.

Wesley Journal: Community  
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Jo Schonewolf, Editor

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The Journal is seeking an applications for the 2019-2020 Wesley Journal Editor





# EDITOR'S NOTE

When we were drafting themes for issues of the Journal, I settled on community for the March issue mostly because it would be election season for the Student Council. I wanted to give students the space to voice both affirmations of and frustrations with community on campus, knowing that we're stronger when we can speak truthfully to each other, with genuine concern about our life together. We need that space and the Journal seemed like the ideal place to offer it.

And then, General Conference happened. The Special Called Session of the General Conference of the United Methodist Church met in St. Louis on February 23rd through 26th to discuss the UMC's stance on human sexuality, a topic that has been dividing us for years. While some hoped that this General Conference would provide unity, unity was not what happened. In the wake of General Conference, for United Methodists at

least, community has taken on new meaning and new urgency. You'll see some of that in this issue.

There was a beautiful moment at General Conference. You'll see it in the background of some of the pages of this issue. During the opening day of worship, after hours without any mention of the LGBTQ community, those most impacted by the General Conference's decision, someone requested prayer, and a circle formed on the floor, holding hands and dancing with the rainbow flag while the band sang, "I need you to survive."

Friends, we need one another to survive. My hope is that in this issue, you'll find stories and thoughtful reflection to help guide you as you consider what community, here at Wesley and anywhere else you may go, means to you.

Jo Schonewolf  
Editor, Wesley Journal  
March 21st, 2019

# CALENDAR

a collection of events put on by  
Wesley's Student Organizations

## MARCH

3/21 Plumblin: Meeting at 5:15pm

3/25-3/29 Advising Week

3/30 Spring Outing: Cherry Blossom Kite Festival and Photo Contest by Student Council, gathering at 9am at UMC Building (100 Maryland Avenue, NE, Washington DC) and moving at 10am to the Washington Monument

## APRIL

4/1 Plumblin: Motivational Monday from 5-6pm

4/2 Gente Latinx Seminararians Association:

Romero Lecture and lunch. Lecture at 11am and lunch at 12pm.

4/4 Plumblin: Meeting at 5:15pm

4/16 Gente Latinx Seminararians Association: General Body Meeting at 4:45pm in the Refectory

Student Council: Meeting from 5:15-6:15pm

## MAY

5/2 Plumblin: Meeting and Graduation Celebration 5:15pm

5/13: Commencement

*Graduates, be sure to check your syllabi and note early submission dates for final assignments!*

### Weekly events:

Korean Student Association: Meetings every other Tuesday in K-114 from 4:30-5:30.

Wesley Fellowship: Weekly Prayer Service every Wednesday at 12:05 in the Chapel



# CALENDAR

a collection of events put on by  
Wesley's Student Organizations

## COMMENCEMENT

May 9 Graduate Eucharist, at 4:30pm in Oxnam Chapel. Class Photo and Graduate Orientation immediately follow eucharist.

May 9 Masters Graduate Reception, Awards Presentations and Presentation of Class Gift -- after Graduate Orientation, Refectory.

### **Commencement Day: Monday, May 13th**

8:30am Doctoral of Ministry Breakfast in the Refectory

10:00am Doctor of Ministry Graduate Orientation

11:45am Commencement Volunteers at Washington National Cathedral.

Volunteers are needed! Please contact student council if you are interested -- [studentcouncil@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:studentcouncil@wesleyseminary.edu)

1:00pm Graduands expected at Washington National Cathedral.

2:00pm Commencement begins.

For full commencement details, see

<https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/registrar/commencement/>.

# A MESSAGE FROM THE STUDENT COUNCIL

## Executive Board

In light of the United Methodist Church's Special General Conference, the Student Council Executive Board wants to continue to affirm that we are in prayer for our community. We are glad our institution, Wesley Theological Seminary, is one that welcomes all. We also affirm the young United Methodists' petition at last month's General Conference which said that we "are not of one mind when it comes to inclusion of our LGBTQ siblings in Christ. And yet through working together, sharing stories, and worshipping side by side we have seen each other's gifts and fruits for ministry! We have witnessed the incredible ways that God is working through each of

us in our own unique contexts. We believe that if we are truly a body we need each other. We need one another, in all of our diversity—to fulfill our call to be the Body of Christ."

As we continue through this semester and the stresses of classes intensify, please remember to care for yourselves and to actively love those around you. The Student Council is partnering with our Office of Campus Life, Henry Luce Center for the Arts, and Artist-in-Residence, Ken Krafchek to continue to provide spaces for processing anxiety, pain, grief, or any other emotions, both verbally and non-verbally. We invite you to join us for these opportunities as we continue to move forward in community with one another as the Body of Christ, uplifting and affirming our callings.

As always, you can reach us at [studentcouncil@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:studentcouncil@wesleyseminary.edu) if there are ways we can be of assistance to you.



The Wesley Student Council Executive Board consists of Kasongo Butler, Nicole Poland, Paola Lemus Bustillos, Shelly Ballard, Jonathan Fuller, Jaleesa Hall, and Teaira Parker

An aerial photograph of a large outdoor community event. The scene is filled with numerous round tables, each covered with a white tablecloth. People are scattered throughout the area, some sitting at the tables and others standing. The ground is a light-colored, paved surface. The overall atmosphere is one of a large-scale gathering or festival.

# community

reflections on how we live our  
life together



# JUSTICE CORNER: CONFLAGRATION OF COMMUNITY

# Lenora Whitecotton

There were many communities to be found at the Special General Conference of the United Methodist Church held this past February in St. Louis, some of them consolidated while others were in conflict. We entered The Dome as United Methodists and left feeling a deep division. I was in the thick of this broken community as an observer.

After the final plenary vote approving the

Traditional Plan was announced, protests erupted around the room. Opponents began to chant and sing portions of “Blessed Assurance.” In response, proponents sang “On Christ the Solid Rock I Stand.” These two hymns which espouse key tenets of our faith were being flung like fiery darts at one another and piercing the heart of our community, setting it all ablaze. This was not a gentle warming akin to what John Wesley described; this was an inferno fed by years of tension and lack of understanding between parties. The inferno continued, eating up all of the oxygen in the room. I found it hard to



breathe as I attempted to choke out the words to “Spirit of the Living God”, the hymn played by the worship band in an attempt to restore order and a sense of community. Still, chaos reigned and tears flowed like a river threatening to drown all who were gathered.

There are often fires that break out in nature; in fact, it is a necessary process and part of the life cycle of the forest. However, there are occasions where the fire grows too great and the damage is so severe that there is the possibility of great harm being visited upon humankind and animal alike. The first thing that the forest service does after a severe fire is to ensure that the foundations, the roots of the trees and their ability to grow, are secure. If not, there is risk of flooding.

Is our foundation secure? Are we going to be washed away as a denomination, like so many houses, overcome by the mudslide of our division? Or will we be able to once again take root, grow, and flourish like a mighty mustard tree?

While our future as a united community is still uncertain, I do know that we have a solid foundation. Christ does not belong to one faction, nor does the assurance that Christ is for us belong to another. The Holy Spirit unites us, even when we aren't able to sing the words. We are being tried by fire; a fire of our own making. I have hope, however, that beauty may be found in the ashes and we will rise like a phoenix into something new.

## SO, WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Marcus Matthews, Bishop-in-Residence  
Executive Secretary for the Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church

Dear Friends,

It was Jesus who said, “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:35) We must admit that leading up to the Special Session of General Conference and during most of it we, as United Methodists, have not always demonstrated the kind of love that marks us as true followers of Christ. Yet, through the grace of God, we must continue to hold on to our belief that the Church can still give evidence of faithful discipleship, capable of transforming the world in Jesus' name and spirit.

## AS BISHOPS OF THE CHURCH, WE HAVE NOT ALWAYS DONE RIGHT BY OUR MEMBERS.

On February 26th, the Special Session of the General Conference approved the

Traditional Plan, maintaining and, in some instances, tightening the language about sexuality currently present in the Book of Discipline. As we have seen in the weeks after the decision, members of our denomination have experienced a flurry of emotions. The Council of Bishops and I recognize these emotions and understand that for some members of the UMC, the church no longer feels like a safe space.

For those whose votes were affirmed by this decision, remember your siblings in Christ who are in pain. Likewise, for those whose votes were disavowed by this decision, understand that as a body, we are here to uplift you and love you, as Christ loves us.

The next steps for our church are uncertain. While the Traditional Plan was passed at General Conference, it has been sent to the Judicial Council for further review. The outcome of this meeting won't be known until the end of April. Until then, and even after then, many of us,

understandably so, may be left with unanswered questions about its implications for seminarians and individual churches. Also, the 2020 General Conference is just around the corner. It offers us another opportunity to show that we are truly a body of Christ.

So, what do we know? We know that as bishops of the church, we have not always done right by our members. We know that through our actions, we have not honored all the members of our church. For that, I am sorry. I am sorry for any hurt or pain we caused. I am sorry that we have not always affirmed the members in the way they needed to feel love.

As we move forward, I pray that we remember that God's love is supreme, and that God's spirit will lead us forward. I also pray that we remember John's words: "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love." (1 John 4:7-8).





# THE GIFT OF COMMUNITY

Duchanna Brown

## IF YOU WANT TO GO FAST, GO ALONE. IF YOU WANT TO GO FAR, GO TOGETHER. —AFRICAN PROVERB

I am the quintessential introvert and love being alone with my thoughts. It genuinely takes a lot out of me to be in spaces where I'm being pulled on from every direction. Clearly, I'm in the wrong line of work. Nevertheless, I have learned to retreat to the safety of my home at the end of the day to recharge for my next interaction with people. When I got to Wesley in the fall of 2017, I imagined that I would learn a ton about God, a lot about church, and quite a bit about leadership. What I didn't bargain for was to learn as much as I have about the power of community.

My first semester at Wesley was lonely and if it weren't for the smiling faces of my friends who were ahead of me, I would have bowed out of this experience altogether. As I wrestled with my call, it was passing conversations with people wrestling just like I was that encouraged me to keep wrestling. Conversations with

faculty reminded me that even though I'm still figuring this thing out, God was very present and as much involved in my education as he is in my spiritual formation.

Now, in the second semester of my second year, I know that community is as much a part of my learning experience as reading, studying, and writing. The shared experience of my fellow seminarians from all walks of life has enriched my own.

I came to Wesley because I knew that if I wanted to grow, I had to be intentional about surrounding myself with a diverse cast of characters to challenge what it meant to know God and to be known by God. There are people in this community who will never know what their hug, smile, prayer, or testimony has meant to my spiritual formation and how I have been better equipped not only for the work of ministry but for life as a young woman in such a polarizing time in American history.

The bible speaks of many gifts that God gives us: prophecy and teaching, faith and mercy... the list goes on and on. But a gift that is not explicitly stated is community. To have people who will bear with you in love, people to sharpen you as iron sharpens iron, and people to remind you that the love of Christ should be extended to all people of regardless of their race, religion, sexual orientation, or political affiliation. Community here at Wesley and beyond is just another one of the gifts God has given us, a gift we don't deserve, to remind us of His love for us.

# INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY

Ellie Crain

I have encountered many different communities throughout my relatively short life. It always looks different, though there are some consistencies across the board. Community is really hard. It is hard to live with people. Period. More importantly, community is really beautiful. In addition to the community we all experience by attending Wesley Theological Seminary, I have the privilege of living in the Birch Intentional Community at Wesley Downtown.

Intentional community is a pretty broad term - it can mean a lot of different things. There are intentional farming communities, intentional service communities, monasteries, communes, and a plethora of others. Different intentional communities have different shared rules and ways of living. Rest assured that Birch Intentional Community is far less intense than some of the types of communities. We basically operate as a family unit of adults. We are all students at Wesley at various points in our journeys here.

We spend time at the beginning of each school year drafting a covenant which we use as our standard of living. The covenant gives us an opportunity to name what kind of community we want to be and how we expect to grow in our relationships with each other. We share some meals together, and we have weekly meetings which we use as a space to check-in and

be together. We have weekly chores, we share the laundry and kitchen space, and most of all, we know how to have a lot of fun. I continue to choose living in intentional community because I believe that choosing to put intentionality in our

**COMMUNITY IS  
HARD. BUT  
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BEAUTIFUL.**

relationships gives us the framework to be more Christ-like in the rest of the world.

And yet, if you do not live in intentional community, it is hard to grasp what it really feels like. I hope this might help:

Community is cooking new things together, which is always exciting, but... does not always go according to plan.

Community is showing up at the airport with an obnoxious sign to greet (and embarrass) someone who was out of town for less than 48 hours.

Community is listening and sharing stories.

Community is radical hospitality that welcomes friends and family of other community members as if they were your own.

Community is holding space for pain and grief when someone is heartbroken.

Community is finding ways to compromise the way we organize the kitchen utensils, especially the whisks.

Community is remembering not to take ourselves too seriously.

Community is always making more room around the table.

Community is knowing what someone needs when they are at a breaking point, which might mean that you email a professor on their behalf.

Community is celebrating birthdays when it is not actually anyone's birthday because you may not be in the same city when the day actually comes.

Community is apologizing for the ways your words may have hurt someone even when you didn't mean for them to.

Community is rejoicing together.

Community is using our collective voice to stand up to injustice and oppression in whatever way they may present themselves.

Community is learning together, in school and in life, about our own selves and each other.

Community is Dutch Blitz, until that gets too heated and you have to take a break.

Community is celebrating the differences in our stories.

Community is refusing to "other" someone because they think differently than you do.

It is because of my experience in intentional community that I am able to be myself proudly and unapologetically. So, to Shelly, Sean, Julie, Jared, Nicole, and Olivia: thank you for being part of my community. Y'all make life really really great.





# A COMMUTER'S PERSPECTIVE

Teer Hardy

Wesley's relatively small campus allows the campus community to quickly connect with one another. As students arrive on campus for their first semester, more seasoned students quickly help those learning the ropes of campus find their way.

Where do you find food when the refectory is not open?

What in the world is a refectory?

Life on campus as an academic year begins offers new opportunities for friendship, some of which will become lifelong connections. Late night study sessions and sermon practicing in the New Residence Hall and finals week snacks in

## I'M A STRANGER SITTING NEXT TO PEOPLE ON A SIMILAR JOURNEY TO MINE.

the refectory (we know now what and where it is) will become lasting memories we cherish after we cross the stage at the National Cathedral. A year or so after graduation, you will be honored as you stand next to the person who helped

you move into campus as they now prepare to make lifelong vows to the person they hold closest, the person you have helped them discern this commitment to.

Or so I've been told.

As a commuter student, I do not have any of these memories from my time at Wesley. I am not holding a grudge against the seminary. As my time on campus begins to come to an end, and I look back, I realize as a commuting student I established a better relationship with the vending machine in the library than I did with my fellow students. My first year, relationships with fellow first-year students were intentionally curated by the seminary. Spiritual Formation for the Practice of Ministry forced us to interact with other students on a level above avoiding eye contact in the parking lot. After the required covenant group meetings were over, though, the relationships began to fade.

I can honestly say I have a close relationship with two people from my time at Wesley. I feel connected to maybe four people, one of whom is not even a student.

The DMV is a weird place to live. We live in closer proximity to one another than almost anywhere else in the nation. Outside of New York City or Los Angeles, there is not another place on this continent where people are more on top of one another than the DMV. We cram into Metro trains, touching one another, but do not dare to look at each other. We will sit next to one another at a Capitals game and avoid eye

contact for three periods. At the gym, we will sweat next to one another on the treadmill but would never offer encouragement or a high-five after we complete a difficult workout.

I guess Wesley is not any different. With the hurried pace of getting to and from campus, it is no wonder commuter students may feel disconnected from the rest of the campus community. Relationships are always about giving priority to another person or group of people, and in my case, in hindsight, I chose to give priority to my family off campus. It is not the fault of the seminary. The work done on campus creates a close-knit community from what I can tell, but as a commuter student, I have always felt like an outsider.

On May 13 as I sit in the National Cathedral, I will be a stranger sitting next to

people who are walking a similar journey to mine. Maybe they'll become colleagues of mine in the Virginia Annual Conference or maybe I will never see or speak to them again.

I have been on Wesley's campus since 2011 and I am just now realizing how disconnected I have been from it. Commuter students, get out of your shell and interact with the life of the Wesley community. Students living on campus, show some love to the commuters. Massachusetts Avenue will take the life out of you when you are hustling to make a 6:30 pm class. As we move into the next chapters of our callings, we will take our time at Wesley with us. Hopefully, you will take more than academics with you. Hopefully, you will take life-long friendships that will transform the way you enter into ministry or wherever our Creator leads you.



# COMMUNITY/ COMUNIDAD

Alfredo Santiago

This year, Wesley Theological Seminary has been generous to provide five Generación Latinx scholarships to allow newly-admitted students to enroll at Wesley without having to deal with financial stressors related to tuition. The message it sends to us is "welcome," "bienvenidos." Meeting Latinx students during orientation allowed for the building of community at the onset of our seminary experience.

"Hello." "Hola." "Good afternoon." "Buenas tardes." These simple but welcoming salutations allowed us to meet and greet

one another in English, Spanish or Spanglish. From the very beginning, Wesley was intentional about building community with a short worship service outdoors during orientation, but it has continued beyond that day. It has allowed the Latinx students who entered the 2018-2019 academic year to meet those who are wrapping up their studies at Wesley and continuing their ministries in their prospective communities. And now, what were unknown faces are classmates with whom we share classroom time, study groups, worship, meals, and more.

The newly formed Gente Latinx Seminarians Association was approved by Student Council at the November 13, 2018 meeting. This is the first Latinx student association at Wesley. In time, GLSA hopes to celebrate a Latinx-lead worship service and Hispanic Heritage Month in the





chapel. We have quickly become proud Wesley seminarians, hopeful and anxious of where the response to our call will lead us.

The biggest challenge for us thus far is not unique to Latinx students: adjusting to assignment due dates and commuting to and from campus. There is plenty of support within the Latinx student community and our fellow seminarians are quick to give advice on how they have adjusted or are adjusting to seminary life.

On a personal level, I have hopes of being an ordained deacon in the United Methodist Church. I am definitely a minority with regards to this vocational call in a seminary where many hope to obtain their M.Div. and become pastors. Currently, I am a clinical social worker at a community health center in Baltimore. My hope is to become an ordained deacon and minister through clinical counseling, in addition to my secular career. My motivational bible verse while at seminary is Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through him who strengthens me."

I am grateful to the Wesley president, deans, professors, staff, and fellow-seminarians. My prayer for all is an echo of Hebrews 12:1-2: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of throne of God."

## MENTAL HEALTH IN COMMUNITY

Laurel Capesius and Jesse St. Clair

What a relief it was when I finally accepted that we do not have to go through the struggles of mental health alone.

But how exhausting it was when I realized that "getting help" did not mean that resources would fall into my lap. Getting help meant doing a significant amount of research, including but certainly not limited to utilizing the resources on Wesley's website, the Psychology Today website, and endless Google searches. Getting help meant taking risks and being vulnerable with complete strangers.

How disheartening it was to put hundreds of dollars into therapists who weren't the right fit and medications that didn't work. It does not escape me that I had the privilege of being able to have insurance, and to afford what insurance wouldn't cover (which is a lot).

Yet even with all of these exhausting, disheartening, and downright frustrating aspects of the journey, it was still an immense relief to know I did not have to do this alone. It was worth it to reach out to professors, who were more often than not willing to extend grace (and sometimes deadlines). It has been reassuring for me (Laurel) to find a friend like Jesse who understands what it is to navigate the bumps of this road.

We can't help but wonder what it might look like if mental health resources and support were more than just a webpage and a brief session at

orientation. We wonder what would happen if the careful, caring work of Reverend Lisa Banks-Williams were celebrated to a greater extent. We believe that if we invested more time and resources in the mental and spiritual wellbeing of our students through a full-time staff person committed to pastoral care and counseling, this would improve the

challenging – we juggle jobs and internships, classes and homework, worship and spiritual disciplines, commutes, and spending meaningful time with loved ones. It does not come as a surprise that many seminarians struggle to find time to nurture themselves, not to mention making time for therapy, pastoral care, or psychiatric services. There remains a stigma around these



wellbeing of the whole Wesley community. We need both a Chaplain and a Chapel Elder to meet our spiritual needs.

I (Jesse) was lucky that Laurel was already here at Wesley when I arrived. Many incoming students won't immediately connect with a friend that walks with them (and their emotional support dog) along the journey toward wellbeing. Seminary is

resources, and yet these things can be a means of grace for so many, *especially* those in ministry.

We hope mental health care and counseling will be easily and equitably accessible for all people. We hope that we will overcome the stigma and discrimination surrounding mental health. But until that day comes, we hope that Wesley will act as a prophetic witness and meet the mental, emotional, and spiritual needs of this community.

# COMMUNITY IN EXILE

Nate Choung

When I first started my time here at Wesley, I didn't expect to have a community here. Growing up in Southern California, I knew I had to overcome many things as I got settled here in Washington, DC: finding new friends, living with snow, dealing with traffic, all that stuff. I believed my time here on the East Coast was my self-imposed exile. I was just here to get my master's and move back to the "Promised Land" that had all that I was comfortable with. But as I enter into the second half of my schooling, my perspective has changed. I have met people that I would never have met if I stayed comfortable in San Diego. I have shared conversations with those around me that have encouraged me to live in this land of self-imposed exile.

But I know this is only a small glimpse of what this community offers. I do not know many people here, and not many people know who I am. But the times in which I felt connected to this Wesley community happened in unexpected places. It was in random conversations over a meal in the Refectory that reminded me of the God that connects us to each other, despite where we come from or what we look like. It was in small comments made by professors and students during class that remind me I still have much to learn. We can never pinpoint how much of an impact a small gesture can make.

There's a song by my favorite band, Thrice,

that comes to mind, which references 1 Corinthians 13:12: "I am an exile, sojourner/ A citizen of some other place/ All I've seen is just a glimmer in a shadowy mirror/ But I know one day we'll see face to face." I still feel like I'm in exile. I still feel like a wanderer and a sojourner, and in some sense, I think we all have that mindset. We are dreaming of the church community that we will be charged with leading. We are also dreaming of the community in heaven that we will be a part of. We continue to see glimmers of that community throughout our lives and we long for that community to come as the days pass by.

But that doesn't mean we can idly sit by and watch *this* community that we are currently a part of pass us by. It's true that seminary was never meant to be a permanent community, and eventually, we will all be going our separate directions, wherever God may take us. But, while we are in "exile," we don't have to wait in expectation for the day that we enter into the place God has planned for us, both on this Earth and in heaven. In moments both big and small, we presently and continually grow in connection with God and one another. It is not right for us to remove ourselves from whatever community that we are placed in solely based on the fact that we are not feeling it.

I may view my time here on the East Coast as my "exile," but I have come to accept that I am here to learn not just in an academic setting, but in a community setting as well. I have to admit that I have my tendencies to keep to myself most of the time, dreaming of things that are comfortable, but I am continually reminded that God has called me to be a part of something bigger and greater and to be present in the community I am surrounded by.





WE'RE LOOKING FOR AN

# EDITOR

FOR THE WESLEY JOURNAL

The editor, working with the Communication Committee, gathers contributions, designs the layout, copy-edits, prints, and posts of each issue of the Wesley Journal, making this the perfect (paying) job for a slight extrovert with an eye for design and an opinion on the Oxford comma.

**EMAIL A COVER LETTER AND RESUME TO  
WESLEYJOURNALEDITOR@GMAIL.COM BY  
FRIDAY, MARCH 29.**

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Questions? Email Jo Schonewolf at [wesleyjournaleditor@gmail.com](mailto:wesleyjournaleditor@gmail.com).



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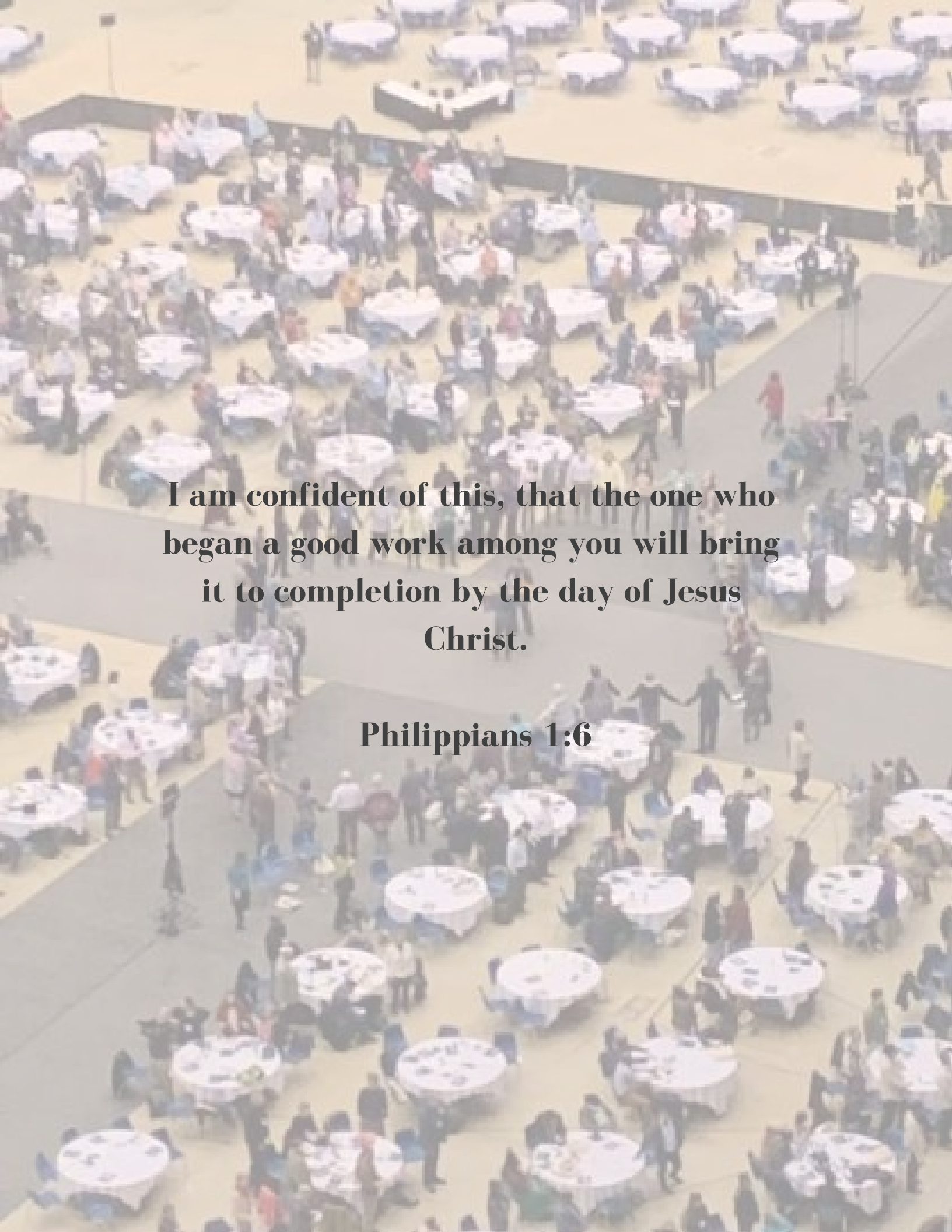
Alfredo Santiago,  
Seminararian



Jesse St. Clair,  
Seminararian



Lenora Whitecotton,  
Seminararian

A high-angle, wide shot of a large outdoor gathering, possibly a church event or festival. The scene is filled with numerous round tables covered in white cloths, each surrounded by people. The ground is a light-colored, possibly paved or sandy area. In the background, there are some structures and more people, suggesting a large-scale event. The overall atmosphere is one of a busy, organized community gathering.

**I am confident of this, that the one who  
began a good work among you will bring  
it to completion by the day of Jesus  
Christ.**

**Philippians 1:6**