

December 5, 2023



Dear Wesley Alumni, Family, and Friends:

As we wrap up another Fall semester at Wesley, I have been reflecting on my past 14 ½ years in this ministry. When I started at Wesley, I was only 29 years old and Erin and I just had our first child, Clara. I am now 44 and Clara is a freshman in high school! Wow...how time flies! As much as some things have changed during that time, there are so many things that have stayed the same.

Just this past Sunday, Wesley held its annual white-elephant gift exchange. Yes, the same Wesley Gift was given (my letter as the recipient my first year was 15 pages down the stack!) and I told the new recipient about the lore that awaited as she read the letters and looked at the items left behind. There are ministries like our Spring Break Mission Trips (or the Singers Tour prior to my time), Cracker Barrel breakfasts on reading day, intramural sports, worship with Faith Unshaken, small groups, Fall Retreats at Camp Dickenson, volleyball on the sand court, Thanksgiving Family Dinner, Cake Mix collection, lobby conversations, or playing sardines, mafia, or fruit basket that have stood the test of time. So much of what Wesley means to people is still witnessed daily in the lives of students.

However, I also recognize that over my time as campus minister at Wesley things have changed. Students are different every year! Virginia Tech gets larger and the stresses of higher education seem to grow more challenging each and every year. The needs and desires of students change and bring about new challenges for ministering to them in the ways that they require. There are new ways of doing things and the influence of social media and technology is ever present (both positively and negatively). Things like Wesley Singers and Coffee House aren't around anymore, but Wesley now hosts a Youth Retreat for the District Youth and runs a food pantry (209 Marketplace) out of our building for college students.

But here is the beautiful thing about Wesley. No matter how long time has passed, this amazing faith community is still the same vibrant and loving ministry that means so much to all of you. The impact that Wesley has made in so many lives is indescribable. Wesley has given students at Virginia Tech (most of you) a community of hope, peace, joy, and love over the years. These Advent themes are not just witnessed during this time of year at Wesley, but always and in everything we do. I know that during my time as campus minister I have experienced all of these and so much more.

I am blessed to witness daily the incredible ministry that students provide on this campus through Wesley. This has been a reality for decades and I am proud of our current students who continue to model the love of Christ to this Virginia Tech campus. We stand firm on our values of love, grace, spiritual growth, and being affirming as we live out our mission to "Love Out Loud." Our vision is to "be an affirming, grace filled community that develops and sends out disciples rooted in faith." This has been true for a long time and will continue to be true as we seek to send leaders into the UMC so that this faith tradition can be a manifestation of God's love for many years to come. I am grateful for all of the students that have walked through the doors of Wesley during my time, for all of the alumni that built a strong foundation of ministry that continues to this day, and for those who will come to carry on the legacy of Wesley for years to come! That is why I want to THANK YOU for all of your support during this time and always. Your generosity and faithfulness sustain our ministry and students in so many ways.

We do, however, need your support now more than ever. We continue to seek ways to grow our ministry so that we can make disciples of Jesus Christ and provide the safe, loving, and spiritually nourishing environment that so many college students need. To do this we are growing our staff, trying new ministries, and looking to improve the building that is so vital to the ministries we provide students. As you read this edition of the Flame, I hope you see how your support is transforming lives in the name of Jesus Christ.

So, we also ask that you consider supporting the ministries of Wesley in the following ways:

- 1) **Your continued prayers!** Pray that our students will experience the grace and love of Jesus in new and transforming ways. Pray that we will be open to the Spirit of God in our midst. Pray!
- 2) Connect with us through **social media**, keeping your contact information up-to-date, and by your presence in the ministries of Wesley! Instagram (vtwesley), Facebook Page, our alumni listerv (doesn't have to just be alumni), and our website (vtwesley.com). Our social media is VERY active, so please connect with us in that way.
- 3) Support our ministry through your **gifts!** Any gift is appreciated and needed! Please see our Development Team Lead's article for more information. You can also do so through these different ways:
 - a. **Give Online or by Mail:** Contribute to Wesley by making an online donation or sending a check. Explore online giving details and find appropriate mailing addresses on our website at vtwesley.com/donate.
 - b. **Give Securities or Property:** Consider donating appreciated stock, mutual funds, or real estate for a lasting impact and potential significant tax and financial benefits.
 - c. **Give Tax-Free Distributions from your IRA:** If you're 70½ or older, you can give any amount up to \$100,000 per year directly from your IRA. Explore making a gift from your IRA as a straightforward and tax-wise way to support Wesley.
 - d. **Research Your Employer's Matching Gift Programs:** Check if your employer offers a matching gift program. Your contributions may be matched, sometimes on a 2-for-1 basis, amplifying the impact of your generosity.
 - e. **Legacy Gift:** Gifts through your will, trust, or beneficiary designation cost you nothing today and can be updated if your circumstances change. Please let us know if you would like to invest in Wesley's future with a legacy commitment so we can ensure your wishes are carried out.

If you make any monthly donation \$23 or greater, you can become a Wesley 23 Donor and receive a monthly email detailing our ministry and hearing from students about Wesley's impact!

So, once again, THANK YOU!! You enable Wesley to be a blessing on this campus and transform the lives of students in amazing ways.

Be Blessed and Go Hokies,



Bret



2023-2024 CMT

SCM

Jacob Henshaw

Discipleship

Riley Kaufman

Fellowship

Thomas Klein

Missions

Ella Fitzgerald

Outreach

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Budget Update

January - October

(Numbers accurate as of
10/31/23)

2023 Annual Budget:

\$132,948.90

Income from Endowments:

\$19,845.27

Income To Date from

Giving:

\$53,647.87 (target
is \$64,833.63)

Expenses To Date:

\$111,930.85

A Letter From the Chairman of the Board

We hope that you have enjoyed a beautiful Fall and Thanksgiving season as we begin Advent and the celebration of the birth of our Savior. The end of the Fall 2023 semester approaches, and Wesley at Virginia Tech has enjoyed an excellent first half of the academic year. Bret and Kelly have led and inspired our dedicated students, just as our Core Ministry (Leadership) Team and all Wesley students have inspired the Staff and our Board. As several Board members enjoyed the Wesley “Family Thanksgiving dinner” on November 12th following our Board meeting, we loved seeing the interaction of about 70 students as they enjoyed dinner and eagerly anticipated learning the location of Wesley’s next Spring Mission trip.

Our Board meets in-person and via Zoom, or sometimes just via Zoom, as we have Board members who live outside of the New River Valley, expanding our Board team to alumni and friends living from Georgia to Tennessee to Colorado. We have great diversity of our experiences, with a common faith and dedication to the unique Wesley ministry that helps our Virginia Tech students grow in their faith, their life, and their demonstration of Jesus’ love to others. The Board remains heartened and amazed as students report their activity at each Board meeting, with Discipleship in action such as:

Wednesday night worship

Combining meetings with Hillel, the Jewish campus ministry, during the recent difficult times

Tutoring high school students in need,

Operating our food pantry for those experiencing hunger,

Outreach by cooking and giving away 400 hot dogs in a half hour, or

Angel Tree shopping for young children, among many other fellowship and small group activities.

The Board continues a strong focus on providing the resources necessary to grow the Wesley ministry at Virginia Tech. Thanks to you, our continuing work to raise funds to support the ministry has kept annual giving at needed levels, though we strive to grow our contributions to the ministry as we face the very significant capital costs to renovate our 61 year old building. The Board will continue to link more closely to you, our alumni and friends, with regional alumni gatherings during the coming years, along with coordinating with Virginia Tech alumni weekend activities.

The Virginia Annual Conference of the UMC, and our Valley Ridge District, have continued to explore ways to help with our \$1.5 million need for building renovation with the hiring of consultants. This effort will serve to examine the best way to address capital needs across the seven Wesley Foundation Virginia campus ministries with buildings. We will continue to need your support in that process as alumni and friends of our ministry as well; we have a very important and awesome location bordered on two sides by the Virginia Tech campus that could never be replaced.

Our Wesley Board wishes you a wonderful Christmas Season! We are so Blessed to have wonderful leadership for our growing and passionate ministry by Bret, Kelly and our Student leadership. We know that the positive impact on the lives of our college students will live in them and with them for the rest of their lives. Your participation in the ministry with prayers and connection allows us to thrive and grow in the work of Jesus Christ – we cannot thank you enough!

With all our Blessings,

David Riggan
Board Chair



SCM Report

Jacob Henshaw

Hello friends! It's your Student Campus Minister, Jacob Henshaw, writing to tell you about some of the awesome events and things Wesley has been doing this year! This semester has seen what I would consider a rejuvenation of our ministry areas, as well as interest from Wesley as a whole.

CoGs **Riley Kaufman**

Hello! My name is Riley and I am the Discipleship Minister at Wesley. We have 9 Communities of Grace, or "CoG's" going on this fall that span all throughout each week with varying points of interests so that there are options for hopefully everyone interested! Our CoG's have been busy building safe spaces through time spent with one another to have honest conversations about faith and life with room to question, doubt, and just flat out not know anything. Our CoG's have participated in fun Wesley events such as the Interfaith Cake Baking Competition that took place as a fundraiser for our Missions Team goal of raising money to purchase cake mixes for

I think this is mostly in part to our awesome Core Ministry Team. Our ministry area leaders have been crushing it this semester, gaging community interest and taking risks that have paid off. Ministry leaders have also put together really good teams, each group representing various perspectives within the Wesley community. CMT and their teams have done great at planning and

the Montgomery County Christmas Store and it was a blast! It was a great way for our smaller communities within Wesley to come together and support a great cause with the bonus of eating cake! In addition to our CoG's, we also have our Friends in Grace, or FiG's! We currently have 18 students paired with one another with the intention of meeting together to continue those 1v1 conversations to challenge faith, talk about life, and just spend time in community with one another every week. Finally, our end-of-semester prayer vigil service and 24-hour prayer vigil took place on our last Wednesday worship of the semester. With the theme of "What's Next," we talked about commitment and follow through of what is coming next in our se-

executing events. For example, last year, intramurals began to feel stale to me. Interest seemed to be dwindling. However, this year we have seen strong numbers for intramural sports. This rejuvenation has been especially refreshing for me as SCM, because it has made me realize how much I love this place, these people, and my role at Wesley.



mester, lives, break, etc. Following the service, Wesley students filled the prayer chapel with 24 hours of continuous prayer over exams, next steps, and anything else needed. It has been such a fantastic semester and year for the Discipleship team, I can't wait to see what my team and I get to do next!

Worship **Jackson Moyer**

Every week, Wesley's community looks forward to Wednesday night worship. It gives us a chance to join our friends in singing, learning, listening, and growing. We see our building come to life on Wednesday nights, with the band warming up and our community gathering in the lobby to catch up before worship. After worship, the fellowship continues as folks stick around to study, talk, and play games like four square and volleyball (unfortunately, the volleyball weather seems to have passed now). Weekly worship is an event that we love to advertise to our campus. We have invitations painted on our windows, we have A-frames with worship advertisements, and we even organized a roaming group before our first couple worship nights to wave signs and invite students! We love greeting new people in worship because it is so foundational to our ministry. I know that for myself and many others, one of the best ways to introduce new people to Wesley is to invite them to worship. This semester out with Welcome to Wesley, where we spent 3 weeks delving into our foundational beliefs and what makes our community special. We emphasized our community by welcoming 4 students to give testimony and having our ministry areas advertise in an ice cream social event. Next, we discussed Jacob wrestling with God

in Genesis 32 and learned how we can lean into our struggles to grow in faith. Even though the semester had just started, it was time to head off to Fall Retreat at Camp Alta Mons! After spending the weekend together to enjoy song, worship, and nature, we invited students to give testimony at worship about their time at Fall Retreat. Our community was eager to share how they made new friends, learned about faith, and had fun together. During the



next four weeks, we centered our sermons on traditions in the church with our "What's the T?" series. We discussed topics like baptism, communion, liturgical Traditions, creeds. We welcomed Rev. Lance Pres-

ley, pastor at Asbury United Methodist Church in Christiansburg, to share about his experience with the connectional approach in the United Methodist Church. Our next sermon topic was "Growing Through What We're Going Through", where we focused on how to have resilience in the face of adversity and difficulty. We welcomed two students to give testimony on the topics of grief and embracing struggles. In addition, we were happy to host guest preacher Drew Ensz, the director of Arise Campus Ministry and GMU. The semester had flown by, and it was almost time for Thanksgiving Break! Before travelling back to our families, we spent one worship talking about humility and gratitude to center ourselves on the meaning of the holiday. After break, we celebrated our two seniors graduating in December! They had a chance to give testimony on their time at Wesley, and we presented them with personalized gifts of appreciation for all they've given to our community. Finally, the discipleship team hosted our semi-annual prayer vigil, where Wesley students spent 24 hours in continuous prayer for upcoming finals, our ministry, VT's campus, and whatever else was on their mind! Worship team worked so hard to plan our worship experiences this semester, and it truly paid off every week when our community came together to praise God joyfully and authentically.



New Staff Position—Paige Presley



We are so excited to announce that Wesley is hiring Rev. Paige Swaim-Presley as our Part-time Director of Development! This hiring is something the Wesley Board has desired for some time, but after receiving the report from our Capital Campaign Consultants, The Monument Group, we decided that now is that time.

Paige brings someone who has campus ministry experience and so many gifts for Fundraising and Alumni Development. She is an Ordained Elder in the UMC and a graduate of Candler School of Theology at Emory University. Paige was the chaplain at Millsaps College for 5 years and the pastor at Gateway UMC and Saucier UMC as well.

Paige's husband, Rev. Lance Presley, is the pastor at Asbury UMC in Christiansburg, VA and they have a daughter, Julian!

Paige will be responsible for:

- Developing opportunities for Bret and Kelly to maintain deeper connections and relationships with alumni
- The production of a new Flame newsletter
- Planning and coordinating our Annual Fund strategies.

She will start on January 1st.

We look forward to you getting to know Paige and welcoming her to this wonderful Wesley community!

Development Update

Jenny Orzolek - Development Team Lead on the Wesley Board of Directors

Thank you for your unwavering support of Wesley at Virginia Tech! As we approach the conclusion of another exciting year, we extend deep gratitude for the steadfast support of our alumni and donors. Your support has been a driving force in empowering our students to live out their faith in a community rooted in grace and love. Last year, your generosity brought in an impressive \$82,000. This year, to date, we have exceeded **\$53,000**. Your continued philanthropic support is vital as we strive to surpass last year's contributions by year-end and, more significantly, make a lasting difference in the Wesley community that allows us to extend our blessings to the campus and beyond. As we enter this season of giving, we invite you to consider the meaningful impact your support can have and explore ways to maximize your contribution.. Here are several impactful ways to make a difference: Give Online or by Mail: Contribute to Wesley by making an online donation or sending a check. Explore online giving details and find appropriate mailing addresses on our website at vtwesley.com/donate. Give Securities or Property: Consider donating appreciated stock, mutual funds, or real estate for a lasting impact and potential significant tax and financial benefits. Give Tax-Free Distributions from your IRA: If you're 70½ or older, you can give any amount up to \$100,000 per year directly from your IRA. Explore making a gift from your IRA as a straightforward and tax-wise way to support Wesley. Research Your Employer's Matching Gift Programs: Check if your employer offers a matching gift program. Your contributions may be matched, sometimes on a 2-for-1 basis, amplifying the impact of your generosity. Legacy Gift: Gifts through your will, trust, or beneficiary designation cost you nothing today and can be updated if your circumstances change. Please let us know if you would like to invest in Wesley's future with a legacy commitment so we can ensure your wishes are carried out. Thank you for thoughtfully considering these giving options. If you would like to learn more, please don't hesitate to reach out. With heartfelt appreciation and warm wishes for a joyous holiday season!

Fall Retreat

Jacob Henshaw

Your SCM is happy to report that Fall Retreat 2023 was a success! After a considerate and productive planning process, CMT was able to once again deliver a fulfilling and fun weekend hosted at Camp Dickenson. Our theme this year was “Comfort Zones,” but in a subversive way, our deeper meaning was the idea of “being comfortable with being uncomfortable.” We began our time with icebreakers, allowing everyone in Wesley to get to know each other just a little bit better.



CMT wanted to make freshmen and new students feel as part of the group as everyone else. The session following focused on how to start conversations, ending with a game where students were asked to hold “meetings” with one another, in which topics were given and then discussed. Our Saturday night session built off of our previous topic, with our discussion revolving around how to have hard conversations. CMT shared small testimonies on pieces of advice for having



hard conversations. Our final session of the retreat was based around our theme: being comfortable with being uncomfortable. Bret shared the message, focusing on Jesus sitting at the Last Supper with his disciples, knowing one would betray him, one would deny him, and one would doubt him. Overall, Fall Retreat proved to be yet another highly fulfilling experience.



Discipleship

Riley Kaufman

Hello! Your friendly neighborhood Discipleship Minister is here to tell you how well Discipleship within Wesley has been going this fall! We started out strong with CoG Kickoff Family dinner where the Discipleship Team cooked a breakfast feast and introduced everyone to our 7 different CoGs that would be happening this year. CoG leaders have been excited about the communities they

have been building each week and collaborating with one another to give support and new ideas throughout the semester. We tried a new collaborative approach to Prayer Circle this semester so rather than having a designated prayer circle “star,” members of the discipleship team signed up to lead different weeks which allowed for a positive and diverse experience in how different prayer can look like. Our FiG’s, also known as Friends in Grace, have been going strong with 20 student pairings meeting on a regular basis to

grow deeper in community and faith together. Our end-of-semester Prayer Vigil Worship was full of reflection on the past semester now that we are back in a “normal” post-covid world, how students are feeling right now, and what they are looking for in the future after this season of finals and stress comes to an end. My team and I are excited to collaborate over the break and plan for new and exciting events for the spring semester, but for right now I am proud of how this fall has gone.

The Impact Wesley Has Had on Me

Savannah Greene

I have been involved in Wesley since my freshman year of college, and I am so thankful to my younger self for taking a leap of faith into ministry and people I was unfamiliar with. Through Wesley, I’ve found a home on campus, friends that have inspired me and supported me, and a love for God and the world that I would not have learned in another experience. I think God’s kingdom is here on earth, represented by the people around us. Wesley embodies this in our attempt to live a life like Christ, and I have seen so much goodness come out of this community. Our missions ministry has been a root of such joy, from tutoring amazing children in Fun143 to serving beyond our community on Spring Break trips. I’ve grown in confidence and leadership through serving on teams, like Discernment, Core Ministry Team, Spring Break, Youth Retreat, Missions, and more. I have grown personally in so many ways because of my friends through the years, the avenues

Wesley opened up for me, and through events and services that make Wesley the affirming, safe, and community-driven ministry that it is. I don’t think I’ll ever be in a community that is quite as unique as Wesley is. I am so incredibly grateful and blessed that my life led me to Virginia Tech and Wesley, and I cannot wait to see how this ministry continues to Love Out Loud to students and community for years to come.



Outreach Emily Murray



Hello again! I'm Emily Murray, the outreach minister! Thank you for reading my portion of the Flame! This semester kicked off as usual with Weeks of Welcome! We started with an awesome Pool Party at the Shawnee Swim Club for returning Wesley students planned by Emma Anderson. Then, on Wednesday during move-in, we had a cookout! Huge thank you to Kelly and Eric Wiseman for grilling the hot dogs and hamburgers for us! After the cookout, we had a good amount of hotdogs and hamburgers leftover and Savannah Greene had the wonderful idea to do a spontaneous hot dog handout! We took a group of students around the residential side of students and handed hot dogs to students playing on the quads and walking by! The new students loved it! The first week concluded with a movie night co-hosted with Fellowship (shout out to Thomas Klein!) and an Interfaith Tabling event! The second week of welcome weeks started with Classroom Quest where Wesley students helped new students find their classes. Then,

we had a tie-dyeing event on the drillfield before the first Worship. During this event, we had students tie-dye Wesley shirts on the drillfield by Bur-rus. This event was so popular that we ran out of shirts! The next day, we had a dog party with 5 dogs! The students loved this and enjoyed being able to see so many dogs! The second week concluded with having a game night on the Eggleston quad. We played gaga ball, giant jenga, spikeball, and more games with new students and invited everyone back to Wesley after for ice cream, board games, and volleyball! After weeks of welcome, Wesley attended two shabbats at Hillel at Virginia Tech - Anti-Semetism Shabbat and Pride Shabbat. Anti-Semetism Shabbat was the most attended shabbat. There was an Anti-Semetism discussion before the Jewish Services where both Hillel and Wesley students discussed how their respective religions influence their everyday lives and decisions. Then students attended Jewish Services- services mostly in Hebrew. A favorite of Wesley students was at the end when a song was sung to the tune of "I Want It That Way" by the Backstreet Boys. Then students went to the Shabbat Dinner. Students remarked on how experiencing the Jewish religion in this way made them realize similarities and differences between Christianity and Judaism- a great learning experience for Wesley students. To promote the Wesley Halloween party, the outreach team also tabled outside of Squires. Olivia Turner and Emma Anderson had the great idea to have a guessing game where participants guessed the number of candy corn in a jar. This was a huge hit. We saw students trying to do calculations on the area of candy corn and the jar to get the most accurate guesses as well as students put a random number. Either way, great conversations were had about what Wesley is and what we stand for. As far as the social media and graphics team, my team is killing the game. Olivia Turner, Emma Anderson, and Riley Kaufman have been making professional quality reels highlighting each ministry area. This has been creating a lot of traction - with students looking forward to being in the reels and looking forward to the next ones. I have been posting pop-culture related reels featuring Wesley students which students also have fun starring in and coming up with new ideas. Overall, the Outreach team has definitely been busy figuring out how to connect with new students as well as connect Wesley students with new students. I am very proud of everything that my team has accomplished and excited for everything that we will be doing!



Leadership Development Emily Murray—Outreach Minister

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?' Then I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'"Isaiah 6:8

When I was first discerned for Outreach I wrote Isaiah 6:8 on the whiteboard in my room. I was a part of discernment and felt as if I was called to be the Outreach Minister. I was never on the outreach team. I always preferred the missions team due to the capacity to help people (shoutout Savannah Greene who was the Missions Minister at the time). However, I felt God calling me to think about 1 Corinthians 12:25-26 which reads "In that way, the parts of the body will not take sides. All of them will take care of one another. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it. If one part is honored, every part shares in its joy." God was calling me to be the Outreach Minister, but I was telling him no because I wanted to help people through Wesley. He was telling me that Outreach is needed to help people. How can people learn about 209 MarketPlace or Fun 143 if not through outreach? How do people learn that Wesley is a safe place for them- no matter any personal identifying characteristics- if not through outreach? Thus, when God asked, "Who shall be Outreach Minister?" I said, "Here I am, send me! Throughout my time at Wesley, Wesley has felt like a dream. No way that a space so close to campus could be so loving and welcoming. A food pantry, a study space, and friends, all in one place a 5 minute walk from Squires? No way. Wesley is so malleable in a way that you don't see other organizations. As a naturally ambitious person (whose ideas are often told no to) this shocked me. I asked if my birthday party could be renovating 209 MarketPlace- I was told yes. I asked if I could lead a book study cog in one of my favorite books (Inspired by Rachel Held Evans) - I was told yes. I asked if 209 Market Place could partner with Hokie Wellness to provide health items that Wesley may not prioritize - I was told yes. Being told yes, that I could see my ideas become a reality, inspired me to keep pushing the boundaries and seeing what else Wesley could do. To see my ideas become a reality, I had to become a better leader. I had to figure out how to organize people and resources and to meet a goal. This may not sound like a lot, but for a college student, you don't get many opportunities to exercise these types of skills. I had to develop as a leader. The leadership development that I have received at Wesley has aided me in many different ways. I am the business sub-team leader of ChemE Cube. A chemical engineering design team that placed second internationally in November. Through Wesley, I have learned how to better lead a team towards a specific goal. How do I ensure that my teammates feel heard and not bulldozed? Wesley taught me how to. Would I have gotten as much as I did reading "Five Dysfunctions of a Team" by Patrick Lencioni if I read it by myself? Probably not. Did CMT Retreat help me understand the principles more? Definitely. Through the ability to talk about interpersonal conflicts in the team - as well as the recommendation of books (specifically "The Anatomy of Peace" by the Arbing Institute)- Wesley helps students become leaders. Learning to lead in a Godly way, is a skill that Wesley has taught me that I hope to never forget.

Missions

Ella Fitzgerald

Hey y'all! My name is Ella Fitzgerald, and I am the Missions Minister this year at Wesley. Our Missions team has been hard at work this semester Loving Out Loud in Wesley and in the greater Blacksburg community.

We kicked off our Missions activities before the semester even began with the start of our cake mix collection to support the Montgomery County Christmas Store. We announced the start of our collection with a 2 week long "Christmas in July." At the end of the 2 weeks, we made a whopping \$498 which was a great start to the semester long fundraiser.

September was a busy month for our Missions team. We started with a Missions-sponsored family dinner. We made nostalgic school cafeteria food and had Safe Sanctuary training after dinner to get people trained to work with our Fun143 kids. Later in the month, we had a Missions day to clean up the Fun143 trailer. 15 Wesley students spent the morning sanding and painting cabinets, organizing the supply room, washing dishes, putting together snack bags, and making the trailer look nice for the kids that come for tutoring. We

closed out the month by making an announcement about the cake mix collection at BUMC and letting the children there "cake" our missions team in the face.

In October, we had a Hotdog Handout after the homecoming game. In an attempt to make the hotdogs last longer than last time, we cooked 400 hotdogs to handout downtown. However, one should not underestimate hungry Hokies because we still ran out within 30 minutes!

November started off with our annual Angel Tree shopping with the youth group from First United Methodist Church in Salem. This year we bought Christmas gifts for 5 children in a family that regularly attend Fun143. Then, for Prayer Circle, we wrapped the gifts so that they could be given to the family. Later that same week, we had our second annual Cake Baking Competition to raise money for our cake mix collection. Friends, CoGs, and individuals came together to bake cakes that would be judged based on creativity, execution, and taste. There were some powerful contenders, such as a Barbie cake, Jesus cake, Bret cake, and a Winter Wonderland cake, but ultimately the Benny's pizza cake baked by the Q&A and SCM Hangout CoGs came out on top. After the Competition, members of the Missions team went to Kroger to pick up 1,033 cake

mixes for the Montgomery County Christmas Store.

Our final Missions event of the semester was our Spring Break Announcement at the Thanksgiving Family Dinner. After weeks of community guessing, we finally let everyone know where we would be going for our annual mission trip. In the form of a game show, hosted and created by planning team member Ben Boles, we announced that this year we will be headed to Wilmington, NC to work with The Wilmington Area Rebuilding Ministry. Not only that, but this year we will be joined on our trip by UVA's Wesley Foundation as a way of helping them start up their own version of a Spring Break mission trip. I'm so proud of all of the amazing work this community and my team have done this semester, and I can't wait to see what we will do in the Spring!



New Student Bio: Gabby Vtipil



Hi, I'm Gabby, a freshman from Northern Virginia. I am a Communication Major. I enjoy writing, sewing, and arts and crafts. I have two younger brothers. I heard about Wesley from the pastor of my home church and a few weeks before I moved in I received a package from Wesley in the mail. I stayed at Wesley because everyone there was really nice

and I felt very welcome. After a couple of weeks, I made some friends and really felt like I belonged here. I spend a lot of time at Wesley. I am often here at least three times a week for various activities and sometimes I come just to hang out while doing homework. I am from Springfield Virginia and I went to Sydenstricker UMC for most of my childhood. I was really active in my home church's youth and it was a huge part of my time in high school. Wesley has filled the void that youth group left. During my time at Wesley, I am a part of the Freshman Affinity COG, Community COG, and Harry Potter COG. I am also on the Spring Break Team and Discernment Team. I attend Family Dinner and Worship every week. Thanksgiving Family Dinner has been my favorite thing so far. All semester long, the upperclassmen were hyping it up and it definitely lived up to the hype. The food was some of the best food at family dinners so far and I was so full as I walked back to my dorm

room. The Spring Break Team announced where we are going on the Spring Break Mission Trip during this family dinner by playing a game show. The winning state was Hawaii and we convinced some people that we were actually going to Maui Hawaii. However, a few seconds later someone pulled a piece of paper out of their pocket with the correct location of the mission trip and I enjoyed watching the reactions.



209 Marketplace

Nathan Michaelson

Another successful semester of 209 Marketplace is coming to a close! 209 has been seeing an average of 18 shoppers per week and a total of 27 new shoppers, which is significant increase compared to the last few semesters. It has been a struggle at time to serve all of these individuals, but we have had the support of Wesley students, New Life Christian Fellowship (NLCF) members, and other individual to staff the food pantry. Additionally, we have had generous monetary, food, toiletry, and clothing donations from the Virginia Tech Women's Club, Blacksburg Methodist Women, and a number of individuals. In early November, 209 Marketplace was visited by a Living Learning Community (LLC), Galipatia. Around 10 members of this LLC stopped by to volunteer with various tasks throughout the pantry, including sorting clothes, entering food donation, and tidying the space. I truly appreciate all of assistance and support over

the past semester. We would not be able to provide this service if it weren't for the generosity of our donors and the selflessness of the volunteers. It has been a pleasure serving as 209 Marketplace Star, and I look forward to this upcoming semester!



Thank you to our 209 donors:

Disciples Womens Ministry—
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Kimberly Messner

Virginia Tech Women's Club

Omega PSI Epsilon Sigma Alpha

Zach Ewen

James and Janet Rakes

And all our volunteers!

Fellowship

Thomas Klein

Hello, my name is Thomas Klein and I am the Fellowship Minister and Intramural Sports Star! I am a senior dual majoring in Aerospace Engineering and Physics; I enjoy playing chess, biking, and hanging out with my friends. Fellowship team consists of 5 amazing people who have helped me put on a ton of great events this semester. We went on two great hikes earlier this semester when it was a bit warmer out – we hiked Bald Knob and the Cascades. A few of us, including myself, went into the very cold water (in late October)! We put on a few movie nights including Top Gun, Hocus Pocus, and Shrek. We had Family dinners nearly every Sunday, some of which had fun themes like Hawaiian, Country vs. Country Club, and Formal/Christmas. We hosted a couple internal tournaments – a volleyball tournament (winners were the team consisting of myself, Ben Boles, and Josh Hansell) and a four square tournament (winner Andy Hansell)! Lastly we hosted a couple very fun holiday parties for Halloween and Christmas :). As for intramural sports we played two seasons of volleyball, outdoor beach volleyball and indoor volleyball, and even though we weren't very successful we all had lots of fun (and got

better every game!). Our ultimate frisbee went 3-1! We also played innertube water polo which was extremely fun and very tiring! Overall we've had a very busy semester filled with great community building, both structured and not. As the semester comes to a close we have just two more events – our traditional reading day visit to Cracker Barrel and a gingerbread house building competition! In the spring we have plans to go skiing, put on more tournaments, watch more movies and play a lot more sports!



Fun143

Emma Anderson



This year, we started Fun143 by having a mission's day to clean up the trailer for the kiddos! We were able to finish projects that were started last year,

organize, and clean! We put together goodie bags for all the homes to expand our reach to others so we can continue to help and impact young lives. Angel Tree this year was very successful and special! We were able to purchase gifts for five siblings in a family that participates in Fun143.

The First United Methodist Church of Salem's youth group was able to join us again this year and we are so thankful for their support! Without their help and donations, our Angel Tree would not be what it is.



Alumni Announcements



Our son, Theodore James Montague, was born on June 1st, 2023. Jacob and Tara Montague, Class of 2016.



Katelyn Lydens ('15 & '16) is engaged! She and fiancé, Stephen Rossi, will be married late October 2024 in Hampton Roads.



Alumni girls weekend trip with Holly Tyson, Jessica Dodson, Sara Cheatham, Nina Miller, Anna Bosco and Lizzie Fletcher.



Eleanor Minoka Yonts, born October 23, 2024. Daughter of Minoka Gunsekera Yonts, class of 2013 and Christopher Yonts.



Joshua (OJ) Peters (Class of 2011) and Raoul Ross Belches wed August 19th in Baltimore, Md during a beautiful backyard ceremony!

Donors: April 2, 2023— November 30, 2023

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Karen Finch	Cody and Jessica McCurry	Christopher and Minoka Yonts
	Rick and Natalie Miller	

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Become a Wesley 23 Donor! (Check out www.vtwesley.com/wesley-23 for more information)

Donors will receive a monthly email with highlights and prayer requests for the ministry.

By joining Wesley 23, you are committing to making a \$23 donation to Wesley at VT that would be taken out automatically on the 23rd of every month.

\$7 goes towards our Building Fund

\$7 goes toward our Development Fund

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\$2 goes towards building our Reserves

Donors through Virginia Tech (not on the other list)

April 2, 2023— November 30, 2023

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