

COLUMBIA WESLEY FOUNDATION-METHODIST STUDENT NETWORK

What can a group of students and teachers do on a university campus if they open themselves to the Spirit of God? One needs only to look at the beginnings of the Methodist church on the campus of Oxford, England in the 18th century to find a “campus ministry” that gave impetus to the movement now known to us as the United Methodist Church. That combination of faith, students and university life still exists today and is empowering a new generation of students to become the church’s new leaders. With the largest number of students ever on our campuses what an amazing opportunity we have for mission and ministry. Many new and para-churches are raising great sums of money to be on campus. Sadly, there is not the level of support from the United Methodist Church to properly fund and equip campus ministry to do all the work, yet we have been faithful with what we have been given. What has our ministry been this year? How have we been faithful?

- The Wesley Foundation at USC (Methodist Student Network) puts its faith into action. Seven times a week students go into the community to serve at a soup kitchen, an after school mentoring program, Habitat –for-Humanity, an evening community children’s program and a newly begun ESL program for Latino women in the West Columbia area.
- Methodist Student Network has been to New Orleans on three occasions to be in service to and solidarity with its battered residents.
- We took a team of 31 to Peru to work with street children and provided ministry with the young people, a VBS, helped to build the village for street children and provided a health clinic for the community.
- On campus we provided many opportunities for study and worship and support. Through various small groups, a program evening tackling tough issues of faith and life and Quiet-time, students can be spiritually grounded and transformed.
- Sunday evening worship is a reconciling and unifying adventure as students of various nationalities, cultures, races and faith traditions discover a oneness in Christ that is real.
- The faith community and Center provide hospitality and a place where life long friendships are formed and life/faith issues can be explored.
- Three students have been admitted to seminary to begin studies for ordained ministry.

Thanks to all the students who live out their faith and lead in ministry at MSN. Thanks to faithful friends and supporters who believe in the mission of the Wesley Foundation. Thanks to all those churches, UMWs, Circles and Sunday School classes who have given money and food to sustain students on their faith journey. What a joy it is to accompany these students.

Tom Wall-Director, Campus Minister