

CHARLESTON WESLEY FOUNDATION

Purpose:

We are committed to creating disciples of Jesus Christ for the world and are dedicated to serving any and all college student in the Charleston area in three ways: 1. Connect them with Christ. 2. Connect them with each other. 3. Help them through college.

Key moments from the previous year:

1. We have seen record attendance from College of Charleston and the American College of the Building Arts. We have the highest attendance in the past 5 years at Charleston Southern University and Trident Technical College.
2. In 2023, we distributed more than 40 Study Bibles to students who wanted to grow deeper in their relationship with Christ.
3. We have 7 students working in local churches, 25 Student Leaders who are committed to discipling their peers, 8 students leading our Worship Team, 3 students serving on our Board, 2 students discerning/pursuing a call to ministry, at least 2 students desiring to be baptized, and an average of 110 students served every week.
4. A challenge has been the loss at least 2 partner churches due to the current UMC climate.
5. We have seen a growth in support from local churches. We celebrate the fact that we are supported in either prayers, presence, gifts, service, and/or witness by at least 34 UMCs, 1 AME, 1 Nazarene church, and 1 GMC.

Objectives for the coming year:

1. We will lean into Trident Technical College and discern how to best serve this largely commuter population.
2. We will maintain our current level of involvement at each of the campuses we serve and take hold of advantages when they arise.
3. We will connect with more local churches (UMC and beyond).
4. We will fundraise an additional \$30,000 in anticipation of future Conference funding changes.
5. We will restructure of Leadership hierarchy in order to be more student centered and driven, relying on their input more often.

Action(s) required from the 2024 Annual Conference:

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

God is alive on the campuses of College of Charleston, Charleston Southern, The Citadel, Trident Technical, and the American College of the Building Arts. There are students who love Christ and seek to live in better relationship with Him.

The Charleston Wesley Foundation is creating spaces for students to explore their faith, discern their calling, and lean into the sanctifying grace from God.

We need prayers, we need presence, we need gifts, we need service, and we need witness.

Narrative:

One student we have connected with is from California. She grew up in a family that does not profess Christ. She recounted a story to me of how she tried to share

her faith with her family as she began to take it seriously in later high school, and she was met with resistance and disregard. She only leaned deeper into her faith when she connected with Wesley. Now, she works in Children's Ministry at a local church, is a professing member of that church, and is a Student Leader. This past Christmas, she felt called to gift her brother a Study Bible for Christmas. She chose a Study Bible like the one that Wesley gave her. Since he received that Bible, he has read it every night. Her mother, seeing his excitement to read, went out and bought a Bible for herself. My student was so excited that she burst with excitement to share with me after Christmas break.

What God is doing in these students hold worldwide repercussions. Because of what God has done through Wesley, a family in California is called into deeper relationship with Christ. Because of what God is doing through Wesley, this young lady is invigorated to share the Gospel with more.

Respectfully submitted:

John Sterling Poole, Director
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Rev Rob Rabenstein, Chair
Rev Dr Vivia Fowler, Vice Chair

CLEMSON WESLEY FOUNDATION

Purpose:

Clemson Wesley is the United Methodist campus ministry charged with serving Clemson University. Our purpose is to create a Christ centered community where students find belonging, grow in their faith, and learn to love God and their neighbors in concrete ways.

Key moments from the previous year:

- Clemson Wesley (CW) connects with approximately 100 students on a weekly basis through our worship and small group opportunities.
- CW has reached over 1500 individual students through our various outreach events.
- 85 students attended two spiritual life retreats.
- 2 of our graduates from last year are now attending seminary.
- 24 students participated in a weeklong mission trip to Nashville this past spring break.
- Over the course of this past year, CW updated the Wesley Student Center across from Campus. This update has helped produce an increase in our ministry numbers and impact.

Objectives for the coming year:

CW's objective remains the same for this coming year. We will continue to create a community where all students can find belonging, be challenged to grow in their faith, and be encouraged to love God and neighbor in concrete ways.

While our objectives remain the same, the "How?" is ever changing. We are evolving with a new generation of students and learning how to best be in ministry with them. We find our students to be service oriented and as such we anticipate finding more ways to serve other students on campus as well as the surrounding community.

We will continue to offer more opportunities for authentic conversations and growth to take place. Today's students are seeking real conversations about tough issues. They are also hungry to dive into scriptures and find meaning there and in their lives.

CW also has the objective to increase its fundraising and development. With the changing landscape of conference funding and the increased ministry needs, we will be seeking to increase our partnerships with local churches, members, and alumni.

Action(s) required from the 2024 Annual Conference:

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

What we do matters and your support of campus ministry is making a real impact on the lives of students! This May we will send approximately 35 graduates into your local communities and churches ready to serve. Every year we also welcome students who find belonging and purpose for the first time. For many students college is not the best four years of their life. Instead it is a time of high anxiety, stress, transition, and finding their way during a critical point in their lives. CW is grateful, with the conference's support, to be able to meet these students where they are. Year after year we see great transformation as students receive God's love and learn to share that same love to their surrounding community.

Narrative:

From the students:

"When I first got to Clemson, I had a hard time finding a Christian community where I felt comfortable being my authentic self. Finding Wesley made such an impact on my time at Clemson. It's been so nice belonging to a group where I feel fully accepted and welcome just as I am. The friendships I've made here are so special to me; I love having a community of people I can rely on."

"Clemson Wesley has been the best part of my college experience. Wesley has introduced me to a community of believers who push me to ask difficult questions and grow in my faith yet also enjoy watching football games or going on spontaneous late-night snack runs. I am truly blessed to have a group of friends that earnestly pursue Jesus and create an inviting space for students to belong. With all the change this stage of life can bring, I can rely on my Wesley family to provide consistent support and point me toward a never-failing God."

"My favorite aspect of the Wesley mission is that we are "challenged to grow." I love this because it perfectly explains how Wesley has shaped my last four years. Small groups taught me to dig deeper in the Bible and conversation with friends gave me new perspectives on faith. Clemson Wesley has such a special place in my heart and I hope everyone can find a place that feels like home the way Wesley has been for me the past four years."

Respectfully submitted:

Rev. Steve Simoneaux, Executive Director
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COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY WESLEY FOUNDATION

Purpose:

The purpose of the Coastal Carolina University Wesley Foundation is to provide a place where young adults ages eighteen to twenty-six can find community, grow deeper in relationship with Jesus Christ, and put their faith into action, through mission and outreach.

Key moments from the previous year:

This year CCU Wesley has continued to grow and we have seen the movement of the Holy Spirit at work among us. Evangelism and outreach have been a direct focus for all participants within the ministry. This focus has helped to reach out to incoming freshmen in the Coastal Carolina University community, as well as re-engage individuals who had previously stepped away from the ministry.

In the fall semester, a partnership with Rev. Hillary Taylor and the South Carolinians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty allowed for our outreach and mission discussions to become concrete action items. Rev. Taylor, and representatives who had direct experiences with the South Carolina death row, shared their stories and allowed for faithful discussion on how our theological belief and political action correlate into what Jesus calls us as disciples to do.

CCU Wesley participants continue to be active participants in the life and ministry of First United Methodist Church Conway. Serving in all areas of ministry from Bible study, Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry, and Worship. The First UMC Conway congregation has welcomed and built deep relationships with the members of the ministry.

Continued challenges with our fundraising efforts have been seen throughout this 2023-2024 academic year. A direct charge to our Coastal Wesley Foundation Board of Directors has been given to help in securing funding for future ministry and mission, especially and in light of the continued growth of the ministry.

Objectives for the coming year:

In the coming year, CCU Wesley seeks to continue to grow its membership, to reach young adults throughout the Grand Strand. As membership grows and more become alumni of the ministry, effort in the coming year will be made to connect with alumni and extended family of current members to help with fundraising and giving efforts.

Overall, CCU Wesley continues to strive to be a place of inclusion and welcome to all who are seeking a relationship with Christ, those who have questions about faith, and those who Christ has called for us to care for within our part of God's kingdom.

Action(s) required from the 2023 Annual Conference:**If you take away nothing from this report, know this:**

CCU Wesley stands on the promise that everyone is broken; however, everyone belongs, is welcome and wanted at the feet of Christ and within the CCU Wesley family.

Narrative:

Respectfully submitted:

Rev. Emily Kirby, Director
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COLUMBIA WESLEY FOUNDATION (METHODIST STUDENT NETWORK)

Even now, Jesus proclaimed, the kingdom of God is breaking in upon us. The reign of God is breaking into the lives of students at the University of South Carolina and into the campus ministry called the Methodist Student Network (Wesley Foundation) as we worship, serve each other and especially the "least of these", learn about the mysteries of faith, offer hospitality, work for justice and work for the full

realization of God's rule. It is a community striving to be hospitable to all regardless of background, language, sexual orientation or maturity/expression of faith. We are young, very imperfect but passionate about the spiritual life and are intentional about living it out in practical and faithful ways. These are some of the signs of the reign of God breaking in among us.

We serve. We regularly go to the Washington Street Soup Cellar to serve food and offer words of encouragement. We provide a breakfast for the homeless/food insecure on a Saturday morning once or twice a month. We prepare the food at 6:30 am at the campus ministry center and serve it in a parking lot in downtown Columbia. We also serve dinner, interact and play games with the patrons of the formerly homeless pallet program at the Rapid Shelter. Additionally we serve on other one-off occasions at places such as the Tucker Center.

We are in **mission** a number of specific times each year though we are called to be in mission 24/7. We do not exist apart from mission. This past year we took three different mission trips to demonstrate and share the gospel in word and deed and so learn from others from their unique perspective. We took a group to serve in Ecuador offering a medical-optometry-health clinic serving 2000 people. We went to the Texas-Mexico border for a service-learning-solidarity trip working with and walking side-by-side migrants and hearing their stories. And we went to Oklahoma for a service-learning trip supported by the Indian Missionary Conference.

We gather in small groups throughout the week support one another and to **learn more about the faith**. We do bible study, share our lives and pray for one another. We have a number of small groups for special interest populations and also a bible study specific group. This year we held two retreats (Lake Junaluska and Edisto Island) to allow students more time for building the community and intentionally connecting with God. We have an older graduate plus group (**Joyful Hour**) that regularly meets to provide friendship and faith support.

We **worship** Sunday evening in a lively and joyous manner utilizing the various gifts of students and a diversity of traditions from the global church. Afterwards we eat together a meal donated by a local United Methodist church or prepared by staff or a local church.

The Campus Ministry Center is a place of hospitality where many students gather to socialize, eat, study and meet to talk. It is also home to other groups and ministries. We have founded several interfaith groups that meet at the center. The "Table of Abraham" (Christian, Jew, and Muslim) has expanded to become **Carolina Interfaith A to Z**. The Jewish student group, Hillel, is now sharing the building renamed **Carolina Faiths Center** which has one of four interfaith prayer spaces on campus. We meet together as various faiths several times a month learning from one another and witnessing (from our Christian viewpoint) to our God who considers every person to be a child of God.

Sincere thanks to all the people and churches that support this connectional ministry. This ministry would not be possible without it. Thanks to the Board members, local churches, Sunday school classes, UM Men's and Women's groups. We are grateful that they are so helpful. And, of course, thanks to students and staff.

Tom Wall, United Methodist Campus Minister
Columbia Wesley Foundation Director

FRANCIS MARION UNIVERSITY WESLEY FOUNDATION

Purpose:

Francis Marion University Wesley Foundation also known as Alive in Christ Student Ministries on Campus, exists to help students grow stronger in their faith, share the love of Christ on campus, in the community and as they journey through life.

Key moments from the previous year:

This past year our group had the wonderful opportunity to have a weekend Fall Retreat at the coast. We used the theme “survivor” for our weekend. It was a great time of fellowship, worship, bonding, and fun. Like most retreats, this retreat provided the students with an opportunity to slow down, relax, explore nature and listen for God’s voice. Retreats are always a great event for all students. The impact of our weekend was wonderful and students are looking forward to going on retreats next year.

Our group had the opportunity to participate in community service this past year. Our favorite was working in the book warehouse of OM Ships International Ministry, a nonprofit here in Florence.

The support from local churches supplying meals has greatly increased this past year. Our meals are an important draw for a lot of the students in our group. Who doesn’t love a great meal? These churches are doing a great job with the meals and we are grateful for their support.

Objectives for the coming year:

Some of our objectives for next year are to continue to help our students grow in their faith with retreats, worship, fellowship, community service, laughter, Bible study and showering them with the love of Christ.

We will continue to be visible and reach out to students on campus with every available opportunity. Participating at a recent FMU Block Party resulted in nine new students attending with eight of them being Freshmen. This is most we have ever had for students attending our ministry after events like this on campus. We are hoping to continue with growth in our ministry at FMU and every campus ministry across our state, so please spread the word to anyone you know going off to college about joining a Wesley Foundation if they can.

Action(s) required from the 2024 Annual Conference:

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

The ministry at Francis Marion University Wesley, will continue to shower God’s love upon our students and will continue to reach as many students as we can. The support we receive in various ways is very much appreciated, because without it we could not exist. Thank you for supporting campus ministries.

Narrative:

In closing I would like to share with you thoughts from one of our students.

What does this group mean to me? Where do I even start? I will go back in time, when I was a freshman, not knowing what I truly wanted to do or where to belong. I then discovered Alive in Christ Student Ministries (The Wesley Foundation) at the student involvement fair and I immediately fell in love. I thought, “Wow, free food, I don’t have to eat ramen noodles today.” Around that time I did not take the word of God too seriously. I thought to myself that God was trying to tell me something. He

wanted me to seek him but I had not been. I realized that God loves us and he is the one and only.

Being apart of this group throughout the years really felt like a new home. I was excited for every Monday, while other people hated Mondays. Getting to know different people, personalities and perspectives helped me for the future. I can agree to disagree and still be your friend. I also gained a lot of knowledge when it comes to love. It taught me that there is nothing wrong with having genuine relationships and learning about God together, in fact it feels good that we have that in common. I learned to never lose my salt and light. Alive in Christ taught me to stand tall and firm in my belief and that no one can take that away from me.

-Maia

Respectfully submitted:

Lou Jordan, Campus Director
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FURMAN WESLEY FELLOWSHIP

Purpose:

The ministry of Furman Wesley Fellowship serves the Furman University community in the values of the United Methodist Church. We seek to be “A Place to Be, Belong, Connect, & Engage” for the student of Furman.

Key moments from the previous year:

This year represented one of the best we have experienced during my time at Furman Wesley, in fact, we are experiencing an amazing 3-year stretch! We are having more students attending our Tuesday night gatherings. We currently have about 7 international students participating in our ministry. We continue to be a visible presence on Furman’s campus by participating in University wide events...

- Our facilitators participated in the Baccalaureate and Orientation Worship Services.
- We hosted our annual hospitality event, Warm Up w/ Wesley, in which we gave out coffee, hot chocolate, and doughnuts to students, faculty, and staff at the beginning of December.
- We partnered with our Furman Heller Service and Furman’s Best Buddies organizations in mission outreach events.

In addition to our on-campus presence, we have led worship at local church events and at the state-wide Wesley Gathering held annually at Asbury Hills.

So, what does this all mean? It means that Furman Wesley [and all our Wesley Foundations] sits at a crossroads. We are experiencing some of the best ministry in our history while at the same time facing the tough challenge of building a sustainable model of ministry. I know the future is unclear and that there is anxiety, but I pray that we lean into the promise that we do not venture alone. I am excited for all that we are doing as a Wesley Fellowship. I am encouraged by our students and their dedication. And, I am honored to be the campus minister of Wesley.

Objectives for the coming year:

Our continued priority is finding creative ways to stay connected to our students, campus, and community. Our group has sought new ways of connecting with

students, as well as, partnered with a few other campus groups to provide outreach to the community. Another priority is being strategic about how to provide a sustainable ministry at Furman University. We have been blessed in our ministry with gracious supporters who see the value in our ministry. However, we recognize the importance of being proactive in the ever-changing environment of the UMC and the world in which we live. Our Wesley Board is continually looking at ways to remain a healthy and vibrant ministry. We continue to seek ways to speak into, and connect with, all of our wonderful students at Furman. We have a diverse campus, and it is important for us to live into the whole of United Methodism. We value our role in leadership development and vocational discernment. As each student finds their way into our ministry, it is our desire to help them identify their gifts and discover the ways God may desire to use them for the kingdom. Finally, it is our strong desire at Furman Wesley Fellowship to find ways to engage the larger Greenville and UMC communities. We recognize the connectional nature of our church, and honestly our world, and desire to reach beyond the walls in order to give back to the people who are so gracious in supporting our ministry.

Action(s) required from the 2024 Annual Conference:

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

The ministry at Furman Wesley Fellowship, and all our collegiate ministries across the denomination, is some of the most important work we do as an Annual Conference. Our Furman Wesley Fellowship desires to pour into the lives of young people, and we pray that our Annual Conference will join our collegiate ministries' mission by making ministry with young adults a priority in our church.

Narrative:

"I have grown up with zero religious background at all. However, after talking with a few friends, I decided that I would try and join a spiritual life group and after talking to all of them I felt that Furman Wesley had the most welcoming atmosphere. I think joining Wesley has been the single best decision I have made in college so far. I have met many great friends who are all in different spots on their own spiritual journeys and have been able to learn more about myself through them. I have attended the Wesley Gatherings where we strengthen our connections with each other and learn more about the values of the faith. I have also attended the Wesley Freshman Group where the leaders discuss their own experiences and values regarding their faith and help us better understand the Bible. Since joining Wesley on the first night, I have felt a sense of peace that other members had told us Freshman that they had before. If there are any takeaways from my reflection, it's that college is a time of drastic change for everyone as they are exposed to new ideas and people. Wesley has changed me so much for the better in ways I can't even describe, in ways much larger and better than any other group on campus, spiritual or otherwise. So I want to say thank you to the Wesley Leaders whom I met at the Religious Life Fair and invited me to join them at Wesley." [Cole Houser, Anderson, SC]

Respectfully submitted:

Rev. Edward Lovell McCutcheon, Director and Campus Minister,
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The names of our Furman Wesley Board
are listed in the nominations portion of the Journal

ORANGEBURG WESLEY FOUNDATION

Purpose:

The purpose of the Wesley of Orangeburg (#The W.O.O.) is to create a space where Claflin University and South Carolina State University students can discover and live out their purpose through worship and fellowship with a community that accepts them just as they are. And to help them grow deeper in their faith through discipleship, service to the community and world through outreach, and witness.

Key moments from previous year:

- Students provided community service in support of the 2024 Granville Hicks Academy
- Students enjoyed the Conference Wide Campus Ministry retreat at Asbury Hill
- Students attended the GBHEM 2024 Exploration
- Weekly Worship attendance during Power Hour was at an all-time high, with over 100 students.

Objectives for the coming year:

- Continue to bring awareness of ministry opportunities at The W.O.O. to students of Claflin University and South Carolina State University.
- Continue to work with newly established student leadership mentoring program for the continuity of the ministry of The W.O.O.
- Partnering with the African American church will make students aware of the ministry of The W.O.O.

Action(s) required from the 2024 Annual Conference: None

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

Campus Ministry at the Wesley of Orangeburg is vital to our students; it is a ministry that allows young people with different life situations to find a place to explore life spiritually. And as always, to know that Jesus is at The W.O.O. and Jesus will meet at the W.O.O. and He will surely woo you, so meet us at The W.O.O. (The Wesley of Orangeburg).

Narrative:

The Wesley of Orangeburg, #The W.O.O., continues to provide a place and space for students to feel at home. We have seen many of our students need prayer and pastoral care. I am blessed to be able to provide such a service in the name of the Lord. Sharing the word of God with those who are seeking, wondering, and not sure of their spiritual life is truly a blessing. This year, our giving campaign was for all pastors, members of the church, and church to give \$20.23 every 5th Sunday. We continue to spend time bringing awareness of the Foundation's ministry to African American churches throughout the state as well as to the students of Claflin University, South Carolina State University, and Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College.

Respectfully submitted:

Rev. Shirley P. Gordon, Director and Campus Minister,
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WINTHROP WESLEY FOUNDATION

Purpose:

We exist to create a nurturing Christian community where students may express, explore, and nurture their faith.

Key moments from the previous year:

One of our key values is including those often excluded. 2023 saw significant investment in our accessibility, including addition of a wheelchair ramp to our main entry and updating a bathroom to be handicap accessible.

We held our first Fall retreat since COVID, helping students grow closer to each other and to God.

Weekly meetings where students are fed by local churches and engage in exploring their faith continue to be the backbone of our ministry. Connections forged here result in students caring for each other throughout the week.

Objectives for the coming year:

Family matters have led to the early retirement of our current Director effective July 1, 2024. We look forward to renewed energy and ideas from our incoming Director.

Action(s) required from the 2024 Annual Conference:

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

We are committed to behave authentically, use the Wesleyan quadrilateral, and intentionally include those often excluded. These core values distinguish us from other campus ministries at Winthrop and provide a place to make disciples of Jesus Christ in the Wesleyan tradition: people who will transform the world.

Narrative:

Respectfully submitted:

Charles Farnum, Director
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