

**Memphis Wesley Report**  
**Rev. Tondala Hayward, Memphis Wesley Campus Minister**

Our mission at Memphis Wesley is to be a diverse and inclusive multi-campus faith community welcoming all students. Our vision is to strive to be a student movement developing spiritual leaders for justice and equity in Memphis and beyond. Memphis Wesley believes in authenticity, diversity, generosity, inclusivity, and integrity. Our strategic initiatives are spiritual growth, building partnerships, cultivating relationships, developing leaders, promoting equity, and welcoming students.

Since we are a multi campus community with students from Rhodes, Christian Brothers, LeMoyne Owen and University of Memphis, we have a multicultural ministry. Their presence promotes diversity and inclusion. On Tuesday Community Nights, the students fellowship over a meal provided by local churches or Memphis Wesley. After the meal, students engage in scripture and life skill lessons by way of table talk or a guest speaker. On Thursday, students attend Lunch & Love for a meal, mini bible lesson and to play board/card games, pool, ping pong, watch television, study, and relax in a welcoming environment. Special needs students from TigerLife attend Lunch & Love. International students come on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The average attendance for dinner and lunch is 35-45 students, which averages 70-90 students weekly. Our mission engagement is Serenity Towers, which is an income-based residential facility for adults age 52 or older and Colonial Park UMC food pantry.

During the Spring of 2023, Memphis Wesley implemented Wednesday bible study and a third Sunday worship experience with Terrice Thomas, Memphis Director Project Transformation, and Pastor Jarod Gunter, Youth Pastor New Direction Christian Church. Both of these events have a low number of attendees; however, Terrice, Pastor Jarod, and I believe the numbers will gradually increase. God is calling us to reach out to the young adults to help them to become faithful followers of Jesus. To accomplish our mission, we have to help them understand scripture as well as model and teach discipleship. Therefore, meeting young adults where they are without judging their intellect and behaviors is vital.

Since Memphis Wesley believes in diversity, equity, and inclusion, we engage in social justice advocacy. Students participate in events hosted by MICAH (Memphis Interfaith Coalition of Action and Hope), Project Transformation, Black Methodist for Church Renewal (BMCR), Voices United at Christian Brothers University, NOISE at Rhodes College, University of Memphis NAACP and Black Student Association, and others. Recently, Memphis Wesley was featured in the Commercial Appeal, Daily Memphian, and news stations because of its prominent presence at the University of Memphis Kyle Rittenhouse protest. Here is a link for the Commercial appeal article: <https://www.commercialappeal.com/picture-gallery/news/politics/2024/03/20/200-university-of-memphis-students-gathered-to-protest-the-appearance-of-kyle-rittenhouse/73048829007/>.

All in all, Memphis Wesley is making a difference in the lives of students and non-students at the University of Memphis, Rhodes College, Christian Brothers University, and LeMoyne Owen and the City of Memphis. The campus ministry is teaching about spirituality, adulting (life skills), and student organizing for social justice advocacy. The goal is to help students develop a relationship with God as well as equip them with tools and resources for life post-graduation. It is also important for them to have a platform to use their voice to advocate for change. They love being change agents. Therefore, teaching them how to use their words is a vital lesson for them to learn, understand, and exercise in the present for the future.

Thank you for supporting Memphis Wesley!