

With Students as 'First Commitment,' Asbury to Shut Down Ongoing Services

The revival at Asbury University, into its 12th day Sunday, will come to an end this week, as school president Dr. Kevin J. Brown says there must be a balance between this incredible, "historic" move of the Holy Spirit and the students' academic experience.

The final public evening service will be held Sunday, Feb. 19, at 7:30 p.m. But public worship will continue in the afternoons through Feb. 22 at 2 p.m.

Brown said in a statement that, for some students, the past week has been "a disruption to the continuity of their academic experience. ... As a university, our first commitment is to foster the minds and hearts of students who have been entrusted to us and who are central to our mission.

"Students have not only had to juggle various campus commitments (academic, athletic, extra-curricular, internship) with our various campus services, but also the throngs of people who have entered the dimensions of their space. For some, this has created a sense of being unsettled and even alienation from their campus community."

As of Sunday morning, the official Asbury University 2023 Revival Facebook page had swollen to more than members.

Lines have stretched more than a half-mile long to get into Hughes Auditorium for services. Charisma News reported that "most visitors have traveled long distances, some of them throughout the night. The line of as many as 1,000 people seems daunting at first. Visitors learn early on that when one person leaves the auditorium, another one is let in. The

possibility of ever getting in seems improbable.”

Brown said in his statement: “As an Asbury University leader, there is a tension I am trying to faithfully navigate at this time. On one hand, I humbly recognize we are experiencing a historic moment on our campus. Never in my life have I witnessed such manifest spiritual hunger—from our students to the nations—to humble ourselves and seek the Lord’s face.

“Books could be (and will be) written recounting the incredible stories and experiences of inspiring humility, altar consecration, neighborly love, and life-changing commitments. When I walk into Hughes Auditorium, I have a firsthand picture of the fruit of the Spirit.”

The revival has attracted people from all over the world, leaving long lines to get in. This weekend, services will be only held in the afternoon and evenings with a priority for high schoolers and people 25 or younger.

reported that Canaan Yan, a sophomore at Asbury, says people from around the world have traveled to the college campus.

“Because of this people’s lives changed,” Yan said. “I know Brazil, I heard somewhere in Asia, Europe.”

Starting Monday, the afternoon service will be open to the general public, but the evening service will be reserved for high schoolers and people 25 or younger. According to the new schedule released, Starting Friday, Feb. 24, evening services will be hosted at other locations and no longer be held at the university.

The university will also no longer allow livestreaming of the service.

Yan told , “Sometimes it can be a little hard for students because we are more than used to having a small campus and having these spaces privately to ourselves and now it has

become more and more public. Sometimes it can get a little annoying.”

However, Yan said, “I feel as though maybe we were the candle and now we are just passing that flame on to other churches and other schools.”

Revival has broken out at other universities like Lee University in Tennessee, Campbellsville University in Kentucky, Cedarville University in Ohio and Samford University in Alabama.

reported that Abby Laub, communications director of Asbury University, said the campus will return to normalcy.

“We recognize life for the students had to return to normal, they have to go to school, they have midterms next week,” Laub said. “They know this is a gift, they have received it as a gift, so we are going to charge them with now you take this to your job, your family, your church.”

 With the new schedule, Brown reiterated that his students were first priority.

“While I remain profoundly grateful that staff, faculty and students get to be a part of God’s unique and powerful work on our campus, I want to be mindful of my mandate as a fiduciary of Asbury’s resources and student-centric mission,” Brown said.

Check out this “Fire in My Bones” column written for Charisma News by J. Lee Grady in 2017 titled, “5 Ways We Quench the Holy Spirit.” {eoa}

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Shawn A. Akers is the online editor at Charisma Media.