

When the Dust Settles: Inside the Asbury Revival with Student Reporter Anna Lowe

I sit in the back row of the Hughes balcony. My legs are starting to ache from stiffly sitting in the same position for so long. Voices echo throughout the high ceilings as the pounding beat of a drum rattles my bones. The light shifts with the sun through the yellow, artfully crafted, stained-glass windows facing me.

“Our affection, our devotion, poured out on the feet of Jesus.”

Over and over again, this refrain repeats.

I sat here on Wednesday, I sat here on Thursday and I sat here on Friday. Hopeful to connect with Jesus in the earth-shattering way it seems everyone else has. Or at least in the way their Instagram stories make it seem.

After my 1 p.m. class on Wednesday, I felt called to go to Hughes. Lately, my heart has been incredibly hardened. It was full of frustration due to so many situations in my life that I felt unheard and unvalued. For the sake of complete transparency, it had even been impacting me physically with a tightening in my chest, a bodily response from being unable to access my emotions. When I arrived at Hughes, my immediate inclination was to take photos and record what was happening through interviews, as my job typically requires. In my heart, I felt an outer nudge to be still. And so that’s what I did.

Nothing immediately happened to me or changed in my heart. A beam of light did not cast itself upon me, and thank goodness, the Lord did not immediately smite me out of existence even though I deserved it. I did not let the lack of immediacy

deter me, even though I thought about leaving. All that mattered at that moment was our Creator. The transfer of my focus nudged me to ponder how infinitesimally small we are. The situations that enraptured my mind were mere specks on the horizon compared to eternity.

My heart shifted, and a resentment that had followed me for months was lifted by the grace of God alone. Walls of bitterness and agitation released themselves from my mind. I felt them cast out of my mind and heart to the point where I have almost completely forgotten the prior feeling. Knowing myself, I am confident this shift is not of my own volition. I was set and satisfied in my resentment, but God had different plans for me.

This moment of absolute peace shifted my reality. My conversations with friends are deeper. Reconciliation is genuine and pure in heart with no intent to harm. God-prompted, open discussions are strengthening beliefs in ways I never could achieve on my own.

But I am still apprehensive and cautious regarding some aspects of this revival.

Revival is a gift from God. He takes the initiative, which means we must be careful when assigning credit for what is taking place. Across campus, there is already a toxic stigma of "revival shaming." I've heard things such as, "How many hours have *you* been here? I've been here all day. I am *sooo* exhausted. I even skipped class." What do you notice in these comments? Jesus is usually not mentioned. We must be careful with self-centered responses based on who is "showing up for Jesus" and who is not.

My goal is always to report the truth, not making assumptions about anything, much less someone's profession of faith.

But I have been to many a summer camp in my life, some fully present, others not as much. One concept constantly discussed

before, during and after each camp is the idea of a “Jesus high”: an adrenaline rush from lack of sleep, excitement from newfound knowledge and the fulfilling promise of the Holy Spirit.

The most dangerous aspect of this Jesus high is that it wears off.

Once the dust settles, there is exhaustion from lack of adrenaline, agitation from disagreements and overall burnout from the lack of community encouragement. And eventually, I forget everything I learned until I am reminded again in this toxic and tiring cycle.

We must ensure that our community does not drift in a similar direction.

When the dust settles, and Hughes is empty, what will remain?

We must answer honestly, are we pouring out our affection and devotion on the feet of Jesus or onto ourselves?

Jesus is working, and the Holy Spirit is moving in Hughes. But He is always moving everywhere. God is using this revival in incredible ways. There is reconciliation, confession and soulful worship. But I pray we do not turn this revival into a prolonged event for its own sake and forget that genuine revival is initiated and sustained by the living God.

There is a deeply rooted history of revival in our community. The influence of the 1970 Revival has an incredible weight that cannot go unnoticed. The records on Asbury’s website indicate that revivals occur mainly during February, with two in March.

This month, my mind constantly returns to The Call of Wisdom in the first chapter of Proverbs. A question Wisdom cries out in verse 22 calls to me in particular, and it floods my thoughts constantly.

“How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple?”

We cannot think about this revival simply. Think deeply about the call in our hearts and this moment in the perspective of eternity. Seek understanding contextually, historically and spiritually in this moment. A holistic mindset is required when seeking the Truth. Before you post, before you pray over others, before you share your testimony, please seek Wisdom. Do not be complacent or accepting of what you hear at face value. Deep comprehension will make this revival a more fruitful and lasting experience for everyone.

Anna Lowe, Managing Editor, The Asbury Collegian, is a member of the Courageous class and a Journalism major. She is RA of Kresge 1st East this year and is excited to assist in helping students on campus stay informed. She loves to tell others' stories and hopes she can continue representing others as an immigration attorney in the future.

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