

# PROTESTANT CHAPLAINCY

## newsletter

### You Are Welcome

Every week at Protestant Evening Worship, students walk through the doors of Goddard Chapel coming from any number of places and activities. They bring not only backpacks and coats into the chapel pews. They also bring joys and sorrows; all of who they are and long to be.

Before the service begins, the first thing I say goes something like this: "Whoever you are, whoever you love, and wherever you find yourself in your journey of life and faith, you are welcome here." These are not empty or idle words. They are at the very heart of our community as the Tufts Protestant Chaplaincy and Protestant Students Association.

We live them out as we worship the God who is Love, known to us in the Person of Jesus Christ, through song, scripture, and sacrament. We celebrate our diversity in the Body of Christ as we join together from different denominations to form one community. Our community gathers in weekly services, holiday celebrations, mindful retreats, service to others, and joyous moments of fellowship. I look forward to welcoming you in Christ's Name to worship and to the many other gatherings we in the Protestant community offer throughout the year.



**The Reverend Daniel Bell, Protestant Chaplain**



"I'm so grateful to the Tufts chaplaincy and chaplains, and to the people who made my experience with PSA such a significant part of my time at Tufts over the last four years."

**Mira Guha, A19**

Mira Guha, A19 takes a group selfie with PSA students and Chaplain Dan on their annual winter retreat to Rolling Ridge Retreat and Conference Center in North Andover, MA.



The Protestant Student Choir performs during PEW.

## Protestant Evening Worship (PEW)

There is always room for you in the PEW.

The Tufts Protestant community gathers at 7 p.m. on Sundays in Goddard Chapel for worship through prayer, singing, preaching, and reflection. After worship, students linger in the chapel's common room for refreshments and casual conversation.

At PEW, we often have guest preachers from different denominations, and students are invited to give the message as well. Chaplain Dan celebrates Holy Communion once a month, and all are welcome to receive. Our community seeks to embody this radical welcome in other ways small and large as well, such as using name tags that include pronouns, and celebrating LGBTQ+ Pride at a special service we hold in October.



Mira Guha, A19 preaches at PEW during Interfaith Month (February 2019).

## Bible Study Opportunities

We offer several opportunities for Bible study, reflection, and prayer on campus during the week. PSA President Alice Dempsey, A21, leads a weekly Bible study that engages students in informal conversation about different passages. Her group also has an occasional labyrinth walk on the Tisch Library Roof. Chaplain Dan helps to host *Sips and Scripture*, an interfaith scripture study offered in collaboration with Tufts Hillel. In addition, Chaplain Dan also hosts a Wednesday morning Bible study for faculty and staff in Goddard Chapel.

“I was drawn into [the Tufts Protestant community] immediately by the warmth and kindness of the members of PSA. A community that accepted those of all denominations, backgrounds, and experiences was incredibly important to me and a large part of my Lutheran-Hindu upbringing. I felt comfortable not only to continue growing in my faith, but also in discussing my faith journey with others and hearing their stories.”

Mira Guha, A19



## Welcome from the Protestant Students Association

By Alice Dempsey, A21 and PSA President, Fall 2019

My friends always get mad at me as I run away from dinner Sunday nights. "Alice!" they say, "It's Sundae Sunday! What are you doing? Where are you going?" But, as tempting as mint chocolate chip with extra whipped cream is, I always make it up to the chapel. Why? For me, the chapel is a place to escape from everything. College is crazy. I have days when I leave my dorm at 8:30am and return at 8:30pm. Dinner with one friend this night, board meetings for a club that night, ballroom lessons at 10pm, and an exam at 9am the next morning. On Sunday night, behind the Chapel's stained glass, the only thing that matters are the candles on the altar and the songs from the hymnal. The Protestant Students Association is a community of people from different parts of campus who gather to worship God and support each other with radical love through the hot mess of being in college.



"Apple-picking was fun," Alice happily recounts from last year's trip. "We spent most of the day frolicking through orchards, and it was a much needed break from school. I love how PSA gives me opportunities to unwind from school and remember to stop and smell the flowers!"



Chaplain Dan Bell, Sara Mitchell, A21, Calvin Kennedy, A23, Alice Dempsey, A21, Thomas Krush, A22, Rachel Callahan, A22, Teddy Robbins, E22, Elliot Pavlovich, E20, Dash Wedergren, A22, and Jojo Kuo, A23.

## A Reflection in Fellowship by Teddy Robbins, E22

Edward "Teddy" Robbins is a rising sophomore studying Mechanical Engineering. Teddy serves as Fellowship Chair for PSA. Below he shares his experience as a first-year student:

Entering my first year at Tufts, I was a bit worried that it would be difficult to find, and quickly be accepted, into a faith group at Tufts. Thanks to the PSA Executive Board's enthusiasm and well-organized events, I found it easy to meet and befriend members of PSA. The apple-picking event was a great opportunity to bond with members of PSA.

Throughout the year, spur-of-the-moment activities announced on the Facebook page, like getting bubble tea in Davis Square, allowed me to stay connected with PSA. I look forward to another year of fun activities with this group!

## Davis Square Meal Trips

Student leaders from PSA organize monthly visits to the Somerville Homeless Coalition to prepare meals for residents and join them for dinner. Alice Dempsey, A21 shares about her service experience with other Protestant students: "Instead of dropping off food or doing a food drive where you never meet the people you're helping, we spend time and build relationships with the residents at the Coalition. We all eat around the same table like a family, and we talk about everything from the cleanest Dunkin' Donuts near here to Civil War history."

## Interfaith Partnerships

The Tufts Protestant Chaplaincy deeply values and seeks out interfaith partnerships as an expression of radical welcome and God's boundless love.

For the past three years, we have cosponsored a field trip to Boston with the Tufts Muslim Chaplaincy. Students visit the Episcopal Cathedral of St. Paul across from Boston Common to experience Jummah, Muslim Friday prayers held every week in the church's sanctuary.



PSA Interfaith representative, Dash Wedergren, A22, responds to the Interfaith Student Council's Earthfest activity: "I want to live sustainably because I value the efficient use of resources."

Our main focus is on-campus opportunities for interfaith partnership, which abound at Tufts. As an incoming student, Dash Wedergren, A22 took part in the University Chaplaincy's interfaith social justice Pre-Orientation program. Dash shares more below about his interfaith involvements:

"This spring, as part of the Interfaith Student Council I helped organize an open mic night to give students of all faith and philosophical backgrounds a forum to share stories, poetry, songs, and all other expressions of their beliefs.

I was also involved in *Sips and Scripture*, a Bible Study group for Jewish and Christian students. This experience led me to help the Protestant Students Association, partnered with Hillel and Jewish Queer Students at Tufts (JQUEST), host a Queerness in Faith event. The event explored what a diverse set of sacred texts say about Queerness."





## Holiday Observances and Celebrations

Join us for annual dinners, concerts, and more to celebrate Thanksgiving, Christmas, Shrove Tuesday and Easter. We also offer special services for Advent, Lent, and Holy Week. During Commencement Weekend, Chaplain Dan hosts a luncheon for graduating seniors, their families, and alumni.

Gathering for Easter Sunday with PSA friends, from left to right, Sara Mitchell, A21, Elliot Pavlovich, E20, Alice Dempsey, A21, Mikayla Ver Pault, A19, and Dash Wedergren, A22.



## Retreats and Quiet Days

In the Gospel of Mark, the disciples are so busy at one point that they don't even have time to eat. So Jesus lovingly says to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." (Mark 6:31 NIV) Jesus' invitation still stands today for us amidst our busy lives. Every February, PSA and Chaplain Dan go on an overnight retreat for fun, fellowship, prayer and reflection. We also offer quiet days on and off campus throughout the year. These opportunities are excellent ways for us to say "yes" to Jesus' invitation.

Teddy Robbins, E22 "walking on water" on the frozen lake at a retreat center in North Andover, Massachusetts: "The retreat trip had the perfect pacing for an event to disconnect oneself from hectic campus life. It was on this retreat that I knew I would be interested in pursuing more responsibility within PSA."

## A Ministry of Music

**By Thomas B. Dawkins, University Chaplaincy Music Director and Organist**

It is my privilege and pleasure to enhance the weekly Protestant worship service with piano, organ, and vocal music. I highly value and welcome student input on the music. Students take part in worship by singing and playing instruments. In the past year, we have drawn on many different Christian traditions from Taizé chant and traditional Protestant hymns to spirituals and modern hymns, psalm refrains, and prayer responses. I look forward to expanding our repertoire in the coming year.





## Amanda Borquaye, A18 Former PSA President 2017-2018

Since graduating from Tufts in May 2018, I now live in Washington DC, and I work as a paralegal at a civil rights law firm.

After four years of community and fellowship with PSA, I knew I would need to find a church home here in DC. Thankfully, I have been able to do that and explore how faith can inform my professional life as well.



Chaplain Dan joins graduating seniors Mikayla Ver Pault and Mira Guha at Baccalaureate in May of 2019. Mikayla and Mira, who were PSA Co-Presidents, had the opportunity to lead the Class of 2019 in the Litany of Thanksgiving at the annual Baccalaureate service, a beautiful Tufts tradition hosted by the University Chaplaincy.

## Support Protestant Life at Tufts University

Please consider making a gift to support the Protestant Chaplaincy's vital ministry at Tufts. Here are some suggestions for how you can help make a difference in students' lives:

- **\$100** One Sips and Scripture meeting
- **\$200** Interfaith field trip to Boston
- **\$300** Ecumenical Easter brunch
- **\$500** Annual winter retreat
- **\$750** Fall welcome event
- **\$1,500** One weekly worship service



Mikayla Ver Pault, A19, PSA Co-President 2018-2019, shares why the Protestant Chaplaincy is important to her: "It has given me a place to explore and learn about my faith."

To give to the Tufts Protestant Chaplaincy online, please visit <http://chaplaincy.tufts.edu/giving>.

To discuss a major gift, endowment, or bequest, please contact Protestant Chaplain The Reverend Dan Bell or our Advancement liaison Rob Ayles. Thank you for your support.

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