

THE WILBERFORCE CONNECT

A WILBERFORCE ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Friendship...

*"Why did you do this all for me?" Wilbur asked.
"I don't deserve it. I've never done anything for you."*

"You have been my friend," Charlotte replied.

Friendship is a constant topic at our dinner table: desiring friends, being disappointed or hurt by a friend, wondering how to be a friend. Exasperated declarations, confused recountings of awkward interactions, and mournful longings for more profound friendship all find their way into these regular conversations. Friendships are an integral part of school life, and of life in general. Most of us, as we look back on high school and college, acknowledge that our most poignant moments and fondest memories are connected to friendships.

A little over a year ago I read Justin Earley's book *Made for People*. At the beginning of the book Earley reflects on how Adam was in the Garden of Eden *with* God, and yet still God declares, "It is not good for man to be *alone*." Earley concludes from this conclusion that "Our fullest spirituality is only possible with others . . . In other words, you need friends to be who God made you to be. Friends are the anatomy of your soul." Most of us would have to agree that Earley's observation captures the way we feel.

Over time, many different understandings and definitions of friendship have surfaced. Surely during your time at Wilberforce you studied ancient texts on friendship (Plato, Augustine, and Cicero), and you discussed with classmates how the Bible defines a friend. ("Greater love has no man than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.") Maybe you have "friended" and "liked" one another on social media. I think that both culture and time impact one's definition of friendship. However, I recently was reminded of a timeless truth of friendship through a story about our alumni.

A faculty member was sharing how she met up with a few alumni over a break. She was encouraged to hear the group was meeting regularly to study the Bible together. She surveyed the collection of individuals meeting and was surprised by the divergent interests, courses of study, family backgrounds, and personalities these students represented. It was puzzling: how did this varied group of individuals become *friends*? The answer was plain—they are united in their love for and salvation in Christ. Only the bond of Christianity could hold such a disparate group together. And only in Christ can we truly be the friends we are created to be.

My own understanding of friendship has grown as I have matured in age and in faith. I believe friendship requires mutual trust and vulnerability, forgiveness, commitment, and abiding affection. I have also learned through experience, much like Wilbur did with Charlotte, that friendship is rarely "deserved" or earned: it is a gift. As you continue in your friendship journey, one which changes with seasons of life (classmates to colleagues), may you continue to discover that true faith inspires friendship—the true friendship that we were created for. And, like Christ, our truest example of friendship, may you be known by your love for one another. We hope you know that you always have friends here at Wilberforce—no matter what your experience in Upper School was—because we love you and we are now privileged to call you "friends."

Jennia Axelson
Director of Advancement



TWS Collegiate Athletes Highlight:

Our alumni continue to make us proud as they compete in colleges across our country and sometimes against each other!



Caleb Brox and Andrew Madigan connect at a meet.



Andrew Madigan ('22)
Franciscan University
Cross Country



Joshua Lai ('24)
Emory University
Tennis



Jeremy Sallade ('23)
Dickinson College Soccer
Track and Field



Jenna Fischer ('23)
Houghton University
Track and Field



Caleb Brox ('24)
Washington University
Cross Country



Sophia Park ('23)
Liberty University
Track & Field



Sophia Fitzgerald ('21)
Connecticut College
Swimming



Amelia DePaul ('23)
Lancaster Bible College
Soccer



Laura Prothero ('22)
Wheaton College
Cross Country - Team Captain



Colin Mejias ('23)
United States Coast Guard Academy
Swimming

Wilberforce Weddings & Engagements...

Congratulations to alum who are tying the knot or preparing to!

Class 2018



Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Dorini
Married on Saturday, September 14th.



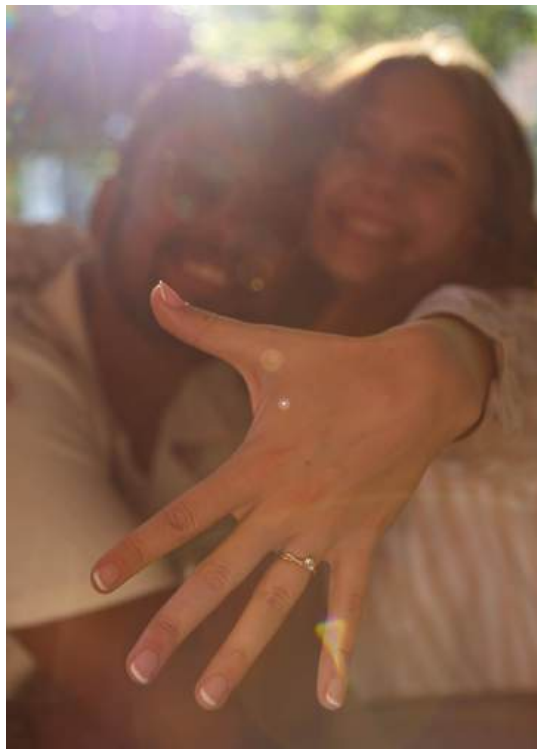
Mr. and Mrs. Howe Whitman III
Married on Saturday, October 26th.

First Wilberforce Alumni Wedding!

Tess Willett ('21) & Emmanuel David ('20)

Engaged on May 25th, 2024 at the Grounds for Sculpture in Hamilton, NJ.

Tess and Emmanuel will be married on July 26, 2025 in Vernon, NJ.



Next Steps... we are so proud of you and we love finding out what you are up to.



Emily Willett ('18) is cast as a Rockette in Radio City Music Hall! Congratulations Emily!!



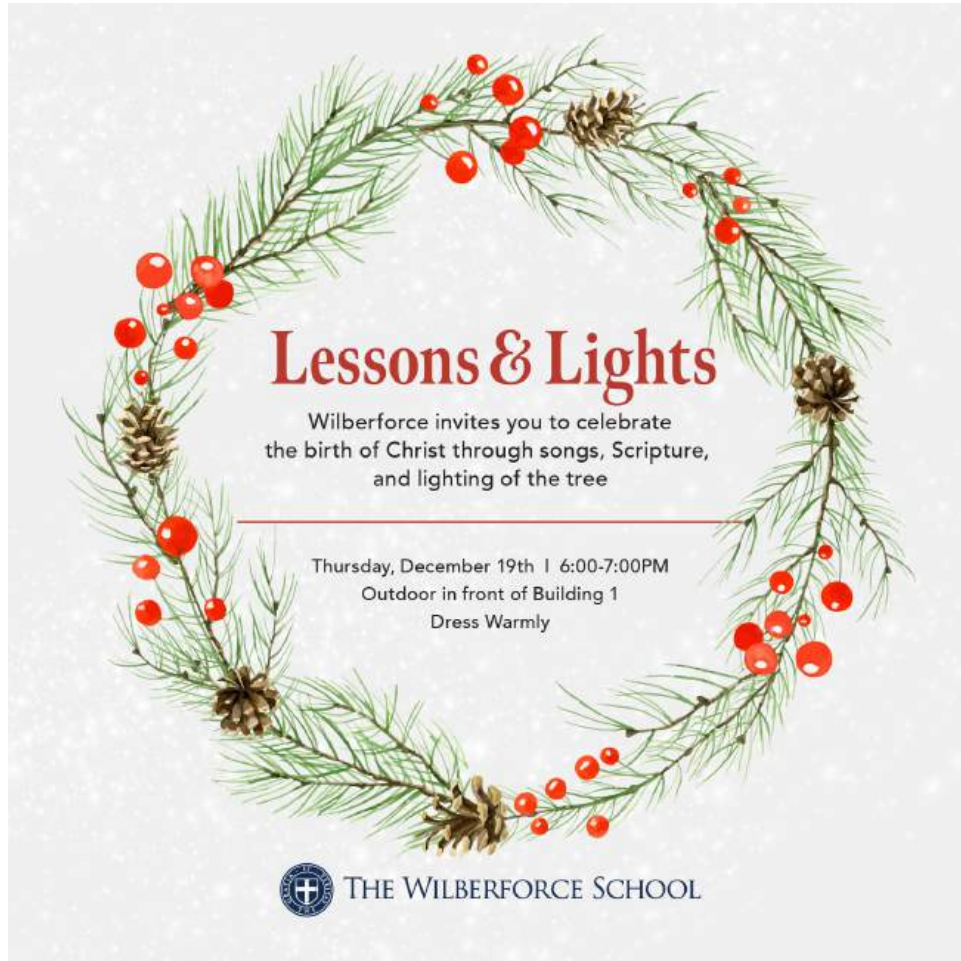
Dr. Katie Dang DO ('17)-Katie is currently working in general pediatrics at Hackensack Meridian Health K Hovnanian Children's Hospital at JSUMC in NJ.



Luke Owen ('20) - true entrepreneur has started his own video production company Pollen Productions.

You are Invited!

We hope you can join us, we would LOVE to see you at Lessons & Lights



Alumni Parents in Prayer:

Please join in a time of prayer and fellowship as we stand in the gap for our college student(s) and for the faculty, administration, and communities of the colleges they attend.

We will meet Wednesday, November 13 at [48 Princeton Avenue Rocky Hill, NJ](https://www.wilberforce.edu/48-Princeton-Avenue-Rocky-Hill-NJ). The schedule and format (ACTS) is the same as our prior meetings.

7:00pm - 7:15pm - gather and fellowship (you're welcome to arrive at 6:45pm if you want a bit more fellowship time).

7:15pm - 8:15pm - prayer - praising God, thanking Him for what He has been doing, and praying for our children and their colleges.

8:15pm - 8:30pm - fellowship and departure

Whether you're able to come for one meeting or all meetings, please come. Come for the whole time of fellowship and prayer, or come as your schedule allows. It's an easy and important way to connect with other moms and lift up our children and their colleges to an almighty God.

Contact Carolyn Fischer (sc.fischer@verizon.net) with any questions.

We want to send you a gift! Please update your address.

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