



DISCIPLEMAKERS

Reaching the campus...Reaching the world



News from the Robergs' ministry with DiscipleMakers

April 2021

Community during Covid at Wilkes University

At the onset of the pandemic, the outlook for DiscipleMakers' ministry at Wilkes University did not look hopeful. Even before Covid, there were not a large number of students involved. For the most part, the fellowship consisted of busy upperclassmen, many of whom were about to graduate. In fact, our co-workers Brian and Mark saw only two students who seemed likely to return in the fall: Jake* and Matt.

But despite the loss of the second half of the spring semester and almost no returning students, Brian and Mark saw an opportunity.

“You two are the students God has placed here... What if we worked together to build something that will last even after you graduate?”

Shortly before the Fall 2020 semester began, they met with Jake and Matt and described the opportunity they saw. “We have the chance to reboot the fellowship,” they told them. “You two are the students God has placed here. What do you want the fellowship to be? What if we worked together to build something that will last even after you graduate?”

Jake and Matt were excited about this idea, so Brian and Mark presented a vision of transforming the fellowship from a lackluster social group into the beginning of a movement to win fellow students to Christ. Specifically, the four of them agreed to pray for two things:

1. That each of them would have the opportunity to lead another Wilkes student to faith in Christ, and then disciple him.
2. That God would provide six like-minded students to join them in their efforts.

As the fall semester began—Wilkes University did bring students back to campus—Brian, Mark, Jake, and Matt began reaching out. They started with people they already knew, but they also reached out broadly by conducting a spiritual interest survey (with free coffee as an incentive). They also held “gospel appointments” with students who expressed interest, meaning they scheduled a time to meet together for the express purpose of sharing the gospel and inviting the student to put faith in Christ.



At Wilkes University, a growing number of students are rallying around the call to share the gospel with their classmates.

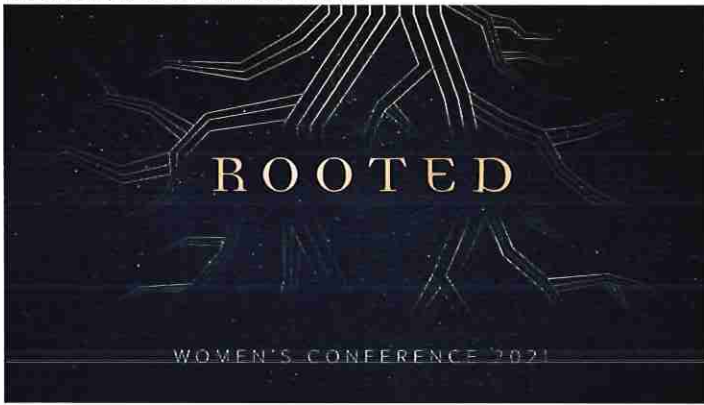
One student with whom they had a gospel appointment was Connor. Despite growing up in the church, Connor appeared indifferent about Christianity. But he was shocked when Jake read to him from Ephesians 2, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” Connor said, “If this is in the Bible, it’s true. I need to look into this myself.” He did, and before long he put his faith in Christ. Since then, Connor has shared the gospel with his family and also with sports teammates at school.

And by the end of the fall semester, nine other students had joined Jake and Matt in reaching out at Wilkes. God went beyond what they had prayed for!

Praise God with us for the progress in our ministry at Wilkes! He has built together a Christian community there during a season when community-building has been exceptionally difficult.

* We've used pseudonyms for the students in this story to respect their privacy.

Women's Conference



As the group in charge of video production and online communication (among other things) for DiscipleMakers, my (Brian's) department has played an outsized role in DiscipleMakers' ministry during the pandemic. Right now, we're in the final stages of preparation for our annual Women's Conference, which will take place online April 9-10.

While the teaching will be live-streamed, some of the roughly 200 students attending will take part via smaller local events where campus safety guidelines allow it. Carin will be leading an online small group with students from two campuses that don't allow students to meet together in person.

The conference will focus on teaching from Colossians. You can read more about the conference and see the promotional trailer our department made at www.dm.org/wc.

Family Update

My stepdad Joel got sick with Covid in December. After being admitted to the hospital on Christmas Eve, he was placed on a ventilator on January 6. I spent most of January in Massachusetts with my mom. After weeks fighting the virus and the complications it caused, Joel went home to be with the Lord on January 27.

Our family saw the body of Christ made manifest in a number of ways during this time. Many people followed the updates I posted to social media and let us know they were praying. Our church and our co-workers in DiscipleMakers provided much verbal and tangible support. The Lord sustained Carin and our daughters while I was away, and has comforted my mom through His Word and through fellow believers during this difficult time.



On February 21, following a year of taking part in elders' meetings and getting to know the rest of the session, I was installed as an elder at our church. It was a challenging year for the church as we sought to care for our people amidst the pandemic, I'm very thankful for the opportunity to serve the church in this way.



On February 28, all three of our daughters made professions of faith and were baptized at our church. We praise God for His faithfulness in their lives!

Praise and Prayer

- Praise God for His work in and among the students at Wilkes University. Please pray for the students who are sharing their faith as well as for the students they are reaching out to.
- Please pray for this weekend's Women's Conference, that God would work through His Word.
- Praise God for His faithfulness to our family, both in joys and trials.

Thank you so much for your investment in our ministry with DiscipleMakers! Your support for DM and your prayers for us are a wonderful blessing.

Grace and peace,

Brian & Carin