



Student Week of Prayer

by *Kate Ruud*

At UCA once a year, we have one week of prayer where students speak to the entire student body. They have about five weeks to prepare what Jesus impresses on each of their hearts. During the week, the SWOPers share two talks each night with the final talks on Sabbath.

This year on Thursday, we had a HOPE day, a day for going out into our community to help others. We take the entire day off from school and just enjoy assisting our neighbors.

Student Week of Prayer is a lot of people's favorite week. Learning from our peers, helping our community, and drawing closer to Christ makes it an amazing experience.



Hall competitions

by *Melissa Conradt*

Girls' Club has started weekly competitive games. They are short activities, and nobody has to participate, but participants earn points for their halls. One point is given for participating, and two points are given to the winners of the game.

A good number of girls stayed to participate in the first competition, and the winner (Serina Thomson) got a bonus reward of five dollars worth of quarters. At the end of the year, Girls' Club will tally all the points, and the hall with the highest score will be rewarded with a special surprise!

WWU Friendship Tournament

by *Thomas Ewert*

Friendship Tournament is an amazing weekend that many people look forward to every year. It is a great opportunity to play basketball and to build relationships with other schools. This year, our teams played only three games each, which is a little different from past years.

The first game of the tournament for UCA was the girls against Columbia. The game came down to the last few seconds, and UCA got the win. Immediately after the girl's game, the guys warmed up to play Auburn. This was also a great game that came down to the wire. We also got the win. Tired and sweaty, we returned to the dorms for a good shower and a good night of sleep.

On Friday, the girls played Auburn at 9:00 and the guys played San Gabriel at 11:00. They were both fun games but, unfortunately, we both lost. We were able to nap and hang out around the university for the rest of the day.

Sabbath is always great at Walla Walla University because there are lots of worship options and the sermons are very interesting. After the service, we rested until our evening games, and that night both teams played Puget Sound Academy. Both of our teams won and got third place.

We spent our last night in the dorms and departed for UCA Sunday morning.

Honor Band

by Daniel Stratte

In early February, seventeen students from Upper Columbia Academy were invited to travel down to the Walla Walla University campus to be a part of their biennial Honor Band Festival. Close to fifty students from around the nation came and participated in this select Honor Band, which was directed by the University's professor of music, Brandon Beck.

Months before the festival, students from academies in states including Washington, Idaho, Oregon, California, Maryland, Virginia, and Ohio auditioned for Mr. Beck to show their competence with their instruments. Starting from the auditions, the festival challenged its participants to achieve a higher skill level in music.

Over the course of the festival, the participants played more than fifteen hours together. This fellowship allowed students from all the schools to come together for the common goal of making lovely music. Overall, this festival gave many high school students a valuable experience that will affect their future music endeavors.

Choir Clinic

by Jordan Judge

On January 19, Upper Columbia Academy hosted their Choir Clinic, an event in which middle school students from Adventist schools in the region come to learn how to sing in a huge choir.

The 90 students began arriving and settling into their rooms in the dorms which UCA students had generously allowed them to stay in. Then, at one o'clock, the clinic began.

This year's choir clinic director was Brenda Mohr, long time choral director at Glendale Adventist Academy who is finishing her doctorate at the University of Washington. She led the choir in their practices. From Thursday afternoon to Friday night, the students practiced the songs they would sing during church on Sabbath. There was generally an hour and forty-five minutes of rehearsal time and then a fifteen minute break. For many people, it was an exhausting schedule, but the rehearsals went really well.

Sabbath came and it was time to sing again. The choir began by singing "In This Very Room," "Lay Up Your Treasures in Heaven," and "The Ground." The rest of the program was filled with other songs by the Choraliers, Band, and Orchestra. And at the end of the service, the Choir sang "Do Lord," "My Life Is In Your Hands," and finished off with "He Never Failed Me Yet."

We hope all the students that came were blessed and, of course, that they will return to UCA.



True meaning of the game

Maddy Clark

It was Thursday morning and everyone was so excited. No one cared that they had to get up sooner than usual because today the UCA Varsity Basketball teams were headed to the Walla Walla University Friendship Tournament. The excitement burst in all of the players. No one knew what would happen at the games or along the way, but everyone was sitting on the bus anticipating the action that would soon take place.

The bus rides are always slow, the time filled with listening to music and playing games with your friends. Laughter and smiles filled the bus along with tired faces. But the excitement grew. The bus stopped in Tri-Cities for lunch. (Although it was only eleven o'clock, everyone was still very hungry.) Students grabbed Subway sandwiches and Wendy's ice cream, and once the entire team was satisfied, they loaded the bus and prepared to head on to Walla Walla.

As the bus was about to pull on to the freeway, it made a detour. A man was sitting on the sidewalk with a cardboard sign that read "need money for gas." The bus pulled over and almost all of the students on the bus pulled out their wallets to find loose change and bills. By the end, there was a stack of bills and a giant pile of change at the front of the bus. A few of the students climbed off the bus and walked over to the man, handing him the money they had collected. He was overjoyed. The students proceeded to pray with the man right there on the sidewalk.

This taught me the true meaning of the game. It isn't basketball or winning or intimidating the other teams. We were sent on this trip called life to help others—to bring others closer to God.

International Day

by Madison Bartell

The theme for Tuesday during January's Spirit Week was *International Day*. Students were supposed to dress in the typical attire of someone from another country, or they could sport the colors of a country's flag. However, a majority of the student body did not own an article of clothing from another country, and even fewer students owned a complete outfit. This resulted in the majority of students wearing red, white, and blue, the colors of our nation's flag. Perhaps this was the only flag that a majority of them was familiar with. Dozens upon dozens of students could be seen wearing blue jeans paired with a white or red shirt. Patriotism could be witnessed by the choice of attire of the students, but wasn't it *International Day*? Shouldn't they have represented countries other than America?

There were also other students who decided to go all out. They could be seen in outfits that stretched from their heads to their toes. Many colorful full body garments were draped over ostentatious students. The students who only wore flag colors were blown away by the garments of the over-achieving students.

For whatever reason, UCA students decided to participate in this *International Day* for Spirit Week. Some participated for Mr. Spano's extra credit, others participated for the fun of dressing up, and others participated to show school spirit. Whether it was the competition or the promise of a fun experience, many students helped to make this an amazing *International Day*.



Spirit Week



Long-term reward

by Eva Wiggins

When most people hear "Friendship Tournament," the first thing that comes to mind is basketball. Even though the word *friendship* is in the title, most do not associate it with a basketball tournament. I have come to have a much different understanding of this tournament. Of course, I still have a desire to win, but it has become much more to me than just basketball.

Friendship Tournament has helped show me a true meaning of the word friendship. For many people in high school, it is automatic to think of friendship as relating to people who you hang out with all the time, who you know everything about, and who you are super close with. Sometimes it is hard for us to view people that we do not know well as friends, but Friendship has helped me see that differently. When on the basketball court, there is always going to be the spirit of competition and a longing to win, but teams that have never met before walk off friends. A new-found friendship emerges that does not just last for the day, but continues throughout the rest of the weekend and carries into the years to come. Instead of rooting for peers, we are rooting for friends.

Friendship Tournament has become so much more than just about the basketball. It has shown me what being a true friend is. It is so much fun to see God working through each of the teams. Friendship has taught athletes the true meaning of playing athletics: to bring glory to God.



Proper time management

by Elizabeth Neacsu

One question most students often ask themselves is why they wait to do homework until ten minutes before it's due. Why is it that when students get back from a break they become even more lazy that they were in the first place?

The first reason that comes into a students' heads is to blame it on the teachers, or sleep, or a pet, or anything but themselves. But let's be honest: a lot of times, we're just sitting on our phones watching Netflix and eating ramen till 1 a.m., thinking about nothing school related. We skip the first class the next day and finally show up with black and blue bags under our eyes. Someone asks if we're sick, and we say, "No, I was up all night doing homework . . . yeah, I was studying and stuff." But let's be real; that's code for, "I'm a procrastinator and I was on Instagram for three hours watching videos of Donald Trump and other pointless things."

There are some rare students in this world who do make an effort to manage their time well. They set up schedules and take their homework everywhere with them so that they can do it in their free time. They don't leave on weekends with their friends, so they can focus on their homework. They do a great job on their tests and they get everything done. Yes, their homework is always done and their rooms are always clean . . . but they have no fun and no social life, so a week later they become unmotivated and it's all over.

It takes two months to get back into routine. Until then, there's no time to shower, study, or sleep. So how can we manage our time well enough? How can we stop procrastinating and still have energy and a social life? Someone please give me a solution now because this paper is due in ten minutes. . . .



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Brielle Bartels, Belicia Jiao, Eva Wiggins, Thomas Ewert,
 Jonathan Terry, Melissa Conrath, Katrina Santiago,
 Shine Alvarado, Daniel Stratte, Hailee Huenergardt,
 Madison Bartell, Prema Pongrakthai, Elizabeth Neacsu,
 Kate Ruud, Thomas Warren, Ashley Samuel, Graciela Smith,
 Caleb Nelson, Jordan Judge, Josiah Carter, Maddy Clark,
 and Stephen Lacey, sponsor

Jesus on campus Jesus in you

by Prema Pongrakthai

The spiritual revival on our campus is all because of you. From circle church, to prayer on the plaza, to 60-second boost, to the touring speakers group to the student vespers planning committee, God is working through you. This year the students and staff have taken spiritual leadership to the next level and we are still making improvements in the way we celebrate our Savior.

Kaitlyn Kramer and Maddy Clark are two of the amazing leaders in our spiritual revival. Kaitlyn founded the Student Vespers Planning Committee and has been a pivotal leader in the group of students. They have a passion to customize vespers to be more relevant and real to every student here. The Committee is always looking for new members to join, students that have zeal to bring our worship to a raw, new, real and fun frontier. If you have ideas that you would like to see happen for vespers, come and join the team. They meet once a week, usually during lunch. It's not work to be a part of the team if you have a passion and want to see positive change on campus.

Another inspiring student is Maddy Clark, the Girl's Dorm Spiritual RA. She has big plans for making the Girls' Dorm worship an exciting and meaningful experience. Some students feel that dorm worship aren't meaningful, that they are merely an attendance ritual. However, the incredible thing about UCA is that if you want to see a change, have a good idea, or simply have a passion for Christ, it can be utilized. In fact, it can be more than utilized. Your idea can flourish and grow into a beautiful movement. Jeremiah 29:13 says, "You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart."

Thank you to all the staff and students for putting their effort, time, and heart into spreading Jesus on our campus. Thanks for sharing the Jesus in you!

Rec Ski fun

by Ashley Samuel

Winter can seem a bit annoying when trudging through snow up to your knees, but a foot of snow is a heavenly blessing to the skiers and snowboarders of UCA. These students enjoy the opportunity to spend a weekend in Sandpoint for the Rec Ski retreat. All of the students are invited to enjoy a peaceful weekend on Schweitzer Mountain to relax and recover from a busy week.

Friday afternoon eager students packed into the bus and headed for Idaho. This year the number of students that journeyed to the retreat skyrocketed, compared to last year. The students spent the night at the local Seventh-day Adventist school in Sandpoint, enjoying fellowship with each other Friday evening. Sabbath morning, the students listened to a message from Pastor Sid and ventured up Schweitzer Mountain on a hike. This part of the weekend was enjoyable, but students were keen to shred on the mountain.

Saturday night the students had the opportunity to go night skiing and watch the fireworks on the mountain. They thoroughly enjoyed skiing at night, for it is a completely different experience from day skiing. However, the real fun would be on Sunday when the students could enjoy a full day of fun on the mountain.



Ashley Samuel and Jessica Ing
 on the mountain at Schweitzer

Luckily, the day was full of blue skies for the skiers and snowboarders. Many reported that the snow was a bit icy, but the students still made the best of their experience. Students ventured all over the mountain—from the bunny hill to double black diamond runs.

After an action-packed day on the slopes, sleepy and sore students headed back on the bus to enjoy a Taco Bell meal and then finally return to school.

Experiences on the bus

by Shine Alvarado

The view is white: white hills, white trees, white cars, and white roads. Though pretty, it's dangerous for the UCA home-leave bus as it drives across the state, picking up students and trying to bring them back to school safely.

Numerous stops go smoothly. Then, about halfway through the journey at around six in the evening, a car ahead of the bus loses control and spins across the lane. It slides off the road and then pulls back on and parks . . . as the bus quickly comes up on it. The bus narrowly misses the small car and continues down the road.

Shortly after that incident, the bus stops behind a long line of trucks and pretty soon a long line of cars and trucks grows behind the bus. Mr. Hartman and the students are stuck waiting for the road to be cleared of a semi-truck crash. They wait for three hours, students alternating between constant chatter and solemn silence as they think about how serious the situation is.

When the bus starts moving again, it inches forward slowly and passes by a few trucks on their sides. Gradually, the bus gains speed as it drives through easier roads. It drives on for hours on top of ice and under twinkling stars. When it reaches the school, there are pinpoints of light from the stars and the moon shines along with the streetlights by the school and the headlights from the bus. Finally, the students return to the warmth and light of their dorm rooms.

Optional worships

by Belicia Jiao

In the dorm, we have chapel worship almost every school day. But there is one special day when we don't have the regular worships: Wednesday. On Wednesdays, there are different worship options, which include going to a faculty member's house, singing, or watching a video. But my favorite is just to stay in my room and have my own personal worship. Some people might think this is just a lazy option, but for me it is a positive experience.

I think everyone has a special way to connect with God—through songs, sermons, or media. But when I sit alone in my room and think about all the things He does for me or just take out a piece of paper and write down my prayers, it is a worship.

In this school, especially if you're in the dorm, you basically see people 24/7. Maybe you want to stay socialized, but for me at the end of the day I just want to be alone. Don't get me wrong, I am not an introvert or something. But you find time for yourself and for others and need to find time for God as well.



Riley Dieter and Kayleigh Bradford find delight in snow shovels

Thankfulness

by Caleb Nelson

Have you ever walked into the cafeteria line with a friend and jokingly asked, “Where’s the food?” Surely, you have never joined in when others are complaining, much less started the complaint. How many times have you actually stopped and thanked someone for something this past week? Have you ever thought about all the work and dedication the café workers put in to try to please more than two hundred students? Have you ever stopped and thought that many in the world are starving and are overjoyed to get even a single bowl of beans or rice?

Have you ever thought about the countless tiring hours maintenance puts in to maintain our campus? Instead of complaining so much, maybe we should stop to consider the work others put in and thank them for their efforts. Not only will this brighten their day, but it will also help us be more patient and understanding. You may have heard that an attitude of gratitude is altitude, but have you ever wondered what that altitude is? Besides making us happier, practicing gratitude improves health, raises self-esteem, improves sleep quality, and increases longevity. It also makes us more emotionally stable and helps us recover better from stress and traumatic experiences. Being thankful helps people relax and make better decisions. It also increases productivity and establishes an overall feeling of peace and joy.

This next week, try to be thankful for the many blessings you have. Do not take so much for granted. One day we may not have all that we do now. Let others know how much you appreciate them and their hard work. Whether you are at work, on a HOPE project, or just chatting with friends, do not forget an attitude of servitude and gratitude increases fortitude and gives you altitude!

More money for you?

by Thomas Warren

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was the 32nd president and served during the Great Depression. During the depression, he signed a bill into law that stated there would be a minimum pay that all employers must pay to employees. It was called minimum wage. Back during the Depression the minimum wage was \$0.25 per hour, which is between \$4 and \$5 in today’s money. This new law was created so anyone who was working could make enough money to survive. This law is still in effect today.

Minimum wages are both federally and state regulated. The current federal minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour. The state of Washington just recently (November 2016) voted to raise its minimum wage incrementally to \$13.50 per hour by 2020. Because of this, the Washington State minimum wage rose to \$11.00 per hour as of January 1, 2017. To learn more about what this means for UCA I interviewed Mrs. Backman, UCA’s VP for Finance, who said, “The state minimum wage has little or no effect on work during the school year, but students who work during the summer will receive state minimum wage.” Because of this increase in pay, the school’s operating costs will rise, and so will tuition, albeit minimally.

Minimum wage has long been under dispute. Many activists demand a \$15 per hour minimum wage, citing that it is the lowest livable wage and that it would stimulate economic growth. Many opponents argue that raising the minimum wage will force companies to lay off workers and increase costs. Backman believes the increase in Washington’s minimum wage to \$13.50 per hour by 2020 is a happy medium between the old minimum wage of \$9.47 per hour and the often-demanded \$15 per hour. The increase will allow wages to keep pace with the increasing price of goods.

So, the increase of Washington State’s minimum wage will have little effect on students except for summer work. Is this increase in wage for the better and will it help grow our State’s economy, or will it cause layoffs and economic decline? Only time will tell.

1st semester ends

by Josiah Carter

The end of a semester is a time when people either give it all they’ve got to raise their grades just a little more or give up because the stress is too much or they simply don’t care enough.

Here at UCA, we have a variety of ways to celebrate (as I believe the teachers must think of it) the end of a semester. Some teachers have big tests over all the information, others have projects, and a few have no final at all.

Students try to balance homework, studying, sleep, friends, and eating. Most do not get as much sleep as usual, which makes them a bit on edge. There are even many people who skip meals because they need to catch up on sleep, do homework due that day, or study for final tests.

During the last week of a semester, some students don’t do anything at all. Because of the stress and lack of sleep, they give up.

But we’re well into the second semester. Let’s persevere and make it over all the obstacles so we can have a successful end to the year here at UCA.

Holiday birthdays

by Katrina Santiago

A lot of us were born at the worst time of year—the holidays. This is the worst time of the year to have a birthday. Now, holidays are joyful, and it is quite fun to have so many holidays at once, including a birthday, but there is a problem.

If someone’s birthday lands even remotely close to Christmas, most of their presents are sure to be combined. People have this idea that they can just buy one present and say it is for the birthday and for Christmas. This is horrible. I understand that people don’t want to spend more money at the same time to buy more than one present, but people born during the holidays hate this. It’s totally unfair. They get fewer gifts overall, and if they think of something they would like after Christmas, they have to wait a whole year for any chance to get it.

People with birthdays at any other time of year are very lucky. They basically get two Christmases. They get presents, and then months later they get more presents. They should realize what a privilege they have and be thankful.



After a snowfall, of course, is the perfect time for a . . . photo shoot

Getting up

by Jonathan Terry

Getting up in the morning is hard. Whether your first class is at 7:15 or 10:35, it seems like it is getting harder and harder to wake up. Although it may not make us excited about waking up, here are some ways to help make it easier to wake up in the morning.

1. Go to sleep earlier. It seems like such an easy thing to do, but getting enough sleep at night is very undervalued by high-schoolers and should be more of a focus in our daily lives.

2. Put your alarm away from your bed. Studies show that 80% of our struggles in the morning go away once we get out of bed (and 100% of that study is completely made up). But I do think we find it easier to get up in the morning if there is something that is inspiring us to move.

3. Eat and drink as little as possible. A real study reported that filling yourself with food and drink can actually disrupt your sleep and leave you feeling unrested.

4. Prepare before you go to bed. If you take the time at night to put stuff in your backpack, fill up your water bottle, and do other things like that, not only will you not forget things but you will also have less stress in the morning.

5. Create a positive attitude. Instead of thinking about the anguish of your 7:15 class, focus on what you need to get done and those things you’re excited about.





Backstage at the Fox

by *Brielle Bartels*

If you've ever been a UCA student involved in a music group or had the opportunity to be involved with organizing, you'll know what it's like backstage at the Fox. Excitement and nerves are not uncommon among even the most seasoned of musicians. The rooms are crowded with performers finishing the final touches on hair and ties. A teacher scurries here and there with Facebook live capturing the action and hearing from students while Mr. Anderson and Mr. Kravig marshal their troops, battling the nerves to win the attention and hearts of the audience.

Backstage is finally hushed as the first number is sung. Group by group filters on to the stage and give their best before receding and making way for the next piece. For the first half of the program, softer and sacred songs are chosen followed by more lively and secular songs in the second half. The second half also calls for Santa hats and other festive attire to be donned, so bins are opened and students clamor for just the perfect hats to grace their crowns. Once they've procured the hats, all energy is loosed and poured into lively renditions of everyone's favorite classics.

After the program, bags are packed, hugs are given, pictures are taken, goodbyes are said, and Christmas break begins at last. The snow floats down giving a snow globe quality to the whole scene. It's Christmas time.

Snow drill

by *Graciela Smith*

It was 7:15, November 30. Like usual, students had dragged themselves once again through the welcoming doors of the ad building and to their respective classes. Settling down into their desks, their minds began to wander. Daydreams of Christmas, sleep, and home leave filled their thoughts. Along with those wondrous ideas came one of the present moment, the slowly falling snowflakes outside.

As the pupils sat soaking in enormous amounts of knowledge, a startling noise shook their sleep-deprived brains. Bright lights flashed and an unearthly noise resounded through the entire building. Groans arose from the students as they realized what was about to take place—a fire drill. With hands over their ears to block out the piercing sound, they filed out of the building and gathered together in clusters, trying to keep warm. The snowflakes continued to fall. Shivering staff hurried around checking that all were present and after a seemingly everlasting period of time, the frozen students were all allowed back into the building, now being more grateful than ever for the blessing of heating.

A phrase all too familiar was circulating in the minds of several young scholars as they reflected over the events that had just taken place, "Now that sounds like an extra credit story!"

Words

by *Hailee Huenergardt*

Over Christmas break I was reading an article about choosing a specific word for the year instead of making a new year's list of "imperfections" we have high hopes of resolving. What word would I choose? What word would you choose? What about commitment, change, sparkle, devout, educated, forgiving, strong or fearless? The lists of words that could make a difference in my life are long. What about in yours? Applying a word to the year sounds fun; picking a word feels like a daunting task but is one I believe could be powerful.

Words have power. They create how we feel and who we are. They have beauty and give grace. They craft nations. They expand our thoughts. They communicate our prayers. They heal. They break us apart. They seal marriage. They bring hope. They discourage. Just as the snow was falling on New Years Eve, words fall out of our mouths and give beauty or bring disgrace.

Your life can change with just one word. Choose one word to be your motto for the rest of the year. Bring change to your life and in doing so you also might be the change someone else needs.

Make snowballs with all the negative words that come into your life this year and toss them into a snowbank. Allow only positive words to remain in your life and come from your mouth. Speak only powerful, life-giving words of encouragement this year. Work on allowing your chosen word to make you a better person.

