



Metamorphosis

KAIROS

The Voice of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary Students

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AUSTIN PRESBYTERIAN
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Inside: poetry, event
cancellations, reflections,
and more!

Editor

Sheth LaRue, Senior MDiv.

Sheth was born at a young age and has been introverted and underconfident for most of his life (except for a brief period from August 18 to August 23, 1997). Avid fan of pie and Led Zeppelin. The most famous person he ever met is a tie between Barry Lopez and Rich Karlis, neither of which are very famous. He wants humanity to be nicer, kinder, and more loving. And to laugh more. Fears spiders.



Designer

Reba Balint, Middler MDiv.

Reba is an AYAVA Alum and still trying to figure out this whole vocational thing. She loves denim jackets and music she wasn't yet alive to originally listen to. She believes in sharing cheerfulness whenever possible. Has deep respect/fears for bees.

KAIROS SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Kairos is the voice of the students at Austin Seminary and will publish content that contributes to the faith conversation on the APTS campus. Students, partners of students, on-campus family members, faculty and staff are welcomed to contribute submissions. Remember that we are a Beloved Community - this does not mean that you can't express a negative opinion, but it does mean that you should express it in a loving and just way. Content which attacks individuals or groups will not be run in Kairos - this is to be distinguished from content which might criticize the actions of individuals or groups.

While we are tolerant of many things, we will not tolerate:

- Openly hostile language, especially when directed at God, the Bible, the Church, other faiths, APTS, or any member of the Seminary
- Slurs against any person or group;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, anti-religious, or bigoted language of any kind;
- Language that contains slander or defamation;
- Excessive foul language (if you have a good reason for using said language, please speak with us first and we may need to also speak with the Dean of Students);
- Lewd or inappropriate pictures

If you submit something that violates these guidelines or community guidelines we will talk with you about it first, yet we reserve the right to censor your piece or to reject it altogether. When submitting, please identify yourself by including your name and date of graduation and/or your position in the Seminary. No anonymous work will be published.

While Kairos generally carries no advertisements for sale of goods or services by individuals, exceptions may be made for the sale of a student or professor's library or other study aids. It is not possible to make all program announcements which are submitted, but Kairos will do its best to include them if provided in a reasonable time frame.

Please send submissions to:
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Twenty Seconds - Jonathan Freeman, Middler MDiv.


What do you sing when you wash?
Have you gotten older yet?
Some things we sing seem just to scream
For something splendid in between.

Whatever weekend we're in
Hardly feels like birthdays.
Though if it's what the doctor ordered
We'll hang our banners where we're quartered.

We'll swoop and zoom and lie in place
With everything around us -
With everything around us.
'Til everything confounds us.

And what we do will be enough
For now, and then, for later.
There still are we, bestowers of
Embraces, yet to savor.

From foreverless nopes,
To togetherless hopes.
Until nevermore subsides.
Whether we ever survive,
Life itself will still provide
Twenty seconds at a time.



A Blessing in Disguise -
Usama Malik, Senior MDiv.

Though it may seem odd, I truly view this time in isolation as a blessing. Apart from the glaring absence of being able to enjoy in-person fellowship, I have actually enjoyed this largely solitary time. I look at this time as an opportunity for growth, especially through Malcolm X's incarceration. Having spent 6 years in prison, using his time reading and educating himself to a level arguably comparable to higher education, he left a transformed/transformational individual.

Similarly, I've tried to make the most of this time, rather than giving into the temptation of binge-watching TV, and instead focusing on reading, learning new things, and doing my best to improve my own faith practice/spirituality as a seminarian. I may not ever have this much time to myself again and try to remind myself to make this time as beneficial as possible. It has not been easy, especially by not being able to be with those whom I love most, like my wife, Sara. However, I can't say that I haven't been trained for this in part. Having been in a long-distance marriage before this all started and generally being a reserved individual, the adjustment in lifestyle was not as drastic as it may have been for others. Additionally, having heard various concerns/anxieties from students before everything closed, I knew that I needed to be proactive as a student leader and employee to ensure that our community was still being cared for and that we would do our best to organize virtual programs/initiatives to build community.

However, as much as I love Currie Hall, I haven't been very productive in my room, often sleeping more than working, thus not being able to fulfill my duties as much as I needed. I consider myself very privileged to be able to still work from my office, albeit in solitude, both as a student and employee. Thus, for the time being, I've generally relocated during the day to the SAV office, where I primarily work on anything from school to work to other miscellaneous productive activities, such as the photo wall next to my desk or helping make sandwiches for the homeless with other students. For my own sanity and health, I've also tried to busy myself in taking walks and finding other ways to stay active. As such, I've introduced a stand-up desk and a treadmill to the office, in hopes of being able to do so while isolated. Ultimately, I hope to at least try to develop some lasting lifestyle changes resulting from this strange time.

Lastly, I've been able to find and keep hope in the fact that despite all that is going on and all the sudden adjustments our community - a community rooted in our in-person encounters - has had to make and overcome, and still continues to be a community for each other, regardless of our medium. It gives me hope that we'll get to the other side of this as we started it - together.

Wide-Eyed and Broken-Hearted - Matt Ratliff, Middler MDiv.

-Preamble (a cosmic vision)-

Setting moon chasing
a setting sun becoming
new before our eyes.
The huntsman pursues
seven sisters into dark
and eternity.

- - -

Absorbed into eternity,
I've spent my life chasing
sanctification into the dark.
It's easy to miss what I'm becoming
as death is the one that pursues—
at least in my eyes.

Help me to rub the blur from my eyes.
As I gaze into the brightness of eternity
help me to know that, though death pursues,
it is I that am doing the chasing
after Christ, and in him becoming
a light in a world that is going increasingly dark.

Though the night is dark,
may I keep these opened eyes
in the knowledge that I am becoming
sanctified for eternity.
May my heart always be chasing
after the One whom to death it still pursues.

If it is Him that my heart pursues
all the way through the dark,
I'll find it was morning joy that I've been chasing
with bright stars, not tears, in my eyes.
Though the storm — though the sorrow may seem to last for eternity,
I know that I am becoming...

as one who is becoming—
to and through death my broken heart pursues
our Lord beyond mourning... into eternity.
Making light out of dark
and revealing to opened eyes
the Son who's love is chasing—

the Son whose love pursues the dark—
the Son that is becoming light in my eyes.
Lord, let me spend eternity being chased and chasing.



victorian windows
are narrow, dark
with screens tight-woven

100 years in, it's hard
to remember their gift of sky
until I stand, nose-pressed,
and look up.

too, spring's green
leaves are just at eyes' edge
beyond the pane —
 flowering happens out there

in here?
dim and beige and still
 and waiting that is work
effort pressing on my skin
without knowing
when the experts will say:

come forth



At Gethsemane - Julia Burkley, Junior MDiv.

At Gethsemane, Jesus begins to viscerally and deeply encounter his own impending torture and death. Jesus, realizing and anticipating what is about to happen to him, asks his disciple Peter and the two sons of Zebedee to be there for him and to support him. He bids them “remain here, and stay awake with me” (Matthew 26:38). He shortly thereafter, after falling to the ground in prayer to God, finds his disciples sleeping. This happens again, and once again the disciples have let him down.

I can only imagine the pain that Jesus is feeling at this point. It's like us as we were waiting for CoVid-19 to spread through our nation. I remember the week this virus hit New York, sitting on my couch immersed in the news cycle as more and more cases popped up. The virus had not come to Austin yet, but we knew it would and soon. We knew (and we continue to know) that more and more people will become sick and die. We begin to stay at home, and ask our friends to stay at home. And we wait. We ask our leaders to do more and more, and yet we keep finding them sleeping. And we wait. And more and more people get sick and die. And we wait. I see how Jesus feels at Gethsemane, because I feel like right now we too are in a Gethsemane of our own. To help explain this prayer, I turn to Schleiermacher, who helps me understand this prayer with the core tenants of his theology: absolute dependence and community of spirit.

At Gethsemane, Schleiermacher finds this remarkable moment: Jesus still calls to God. At this moment, in the most torturous anticipation a human being could possibly have, Jesus shows us that God does not abandon us. Jesus here is abandoned by those around him, his best friends who he called out to for support and help during this time, but he is not abandoned by God nor does he abandon God. This moment becomes what Schleiermacher names the Feeling of Absolute Dependence. He believes that piety is neither knowledge nor action, but instead a feeling of absolute dependence on God. It is that feeling that even when you are in the throes of anticipating torture or a pandemic to come and feel like you cannot do anything to stop it you are supported and loved by God. God is real and constant with us as we are, where we are. That is the gift of God. In the moments of our deepest anxieties, grief, and despair, God is with us.



Things to Sort: An Emotional Resource Guide -
Pam Jarvis, APTS Alum

Files
Toys
Tools
Legos
Cords
Books
Screws
Desktop
Clothing
Blankets
The shed
Toiletries
Wall paint
Yard tools
The pantry
The freezer
Art supplies
Baking pans
The credenza
Kitchen utensils
Medicine cabinet
Refrigerator door
Plastic containers
Cleaning supplies
Teaching supplies
Puzzles and games
Under the kitchen sink
Everything in the garage
Under the bathroom sink
All manner of kitchen cabinets



Look Whose Home - Pam Jarvis, APTS Alum

The dogs are elated forever:
finally! we are all ever together!
The cats on day three:
Okay. That's Enough.
Out of My House.

A Message - Sopphey Oviedo, Junior MDiv.

When I left the world behind
I did not know where I was going
With no direction
With no purpose

I tapped into the rhythm of the universe
I let it sway
I let it persuade me
Until I encountered God.

And then I truly knew my suffering was based
On unforgiveness--on a pedagogy
Of fear,
Unfair expectations,
And shattered dreams
That paved the streets of
Where I crawled and learned to walk

I find out that
I'm just a nice guy.
But I'm a lonely guy.
I'm a 'I have dreams' guy.
-Some broken
-and some heavy on my eyelids
filtering all I see.
But God told me it was my faith
that made me well.



I didn't stop at thank you
I continued and asked
"But what is my faith?
What is it that I believe in?"

Because what we believe in dictates
What we do
And how we live our life.
If it weren't that way then
It wouldn't matter
What we believed.

It matters.

In order to create change you have
To change the message
I am changed
I will change the message



Gettin' Through It - Rev. Sarah Gaventa, Dean of Students

I sat down to write this and immediately received an Outlook alert that I had a meeting in fifteen minutes. I had completely forgotten about this meeting, so I sent an alert email to the participants (I was the only one who had forgotten), and threw on a sweater to look presentable. Okay, okay, I actually threw on the sweater five minutes into the meeting because I was cold and my sweatshirt was downstairs.

Two hours earlier, I had been losing my cool with Google Classroom, because I could see no "venn diagram" assignment for my third grader even though it was in his list of assignments. He had just finished doing a thirty minute long alternative assignment when I logged back into the AISD portal and the venn diagram assignment magically appeared. Argh! So, I don't have a list of ways to magically balance your life right now. We are in an emergency situation. Everything is cockeyed and upside down. But, here are the things that are saving my life:

Prayer and Exercise. I get up every weekday morning at 6:00, leave the house, put on my Daily Prayer podcast, and walk/jog for thirty minutes. I pray for patience and kindness, I pray for you, I pray for my family, I pray for those on the front lines. The daily lectionary just finished going through the ten plagues and it felt a little on the nose. I have much more sympathy for the Egyptians than I used to. (They had to dig wells to drink water when the rivers ran with blood! What a pain!)

Structure. My husband set up a really open, but structured schedule for my son. I take responsibility for my son on MWF mornings and TTh afternoons. My husband takes the opposites. If I have a previously scheduled meeting during that time, my son will read or have some screen time. The schedule is just as helpful for Matt and I as it is for Charlie.

Letting things be good enough. I know I am not doing my best work or parenting right now, but every day I get through not totally losing my cool is a win. And if I lose my cool, but work my way through it, that's a win, too!

Screentime. Normally, we have fairly strict screen time rules for my son. We still set boundaries, but we gave him the capacity to chat and message his friends and we let him chill out and play an extra hour or two. It's not going to kill him and it gives everyone a little space.

Friday night date nights. On Fridays, we put on something nicer than sweatpants. I even throw on eyeliner! We put Charlie to bed, order some delivery or pick up take out, take out the good china, and pretend we are at a restaurant. It's cheesy, but it works! It gets us out of the endless cycle of days that feel the same.

Church. I have loved seeing friends across the country preach, but I have especially enjoyed worshipping with my husband's church and seeing the families we would normally see every Sunday in the big Zoom service. I find it very touching to be with that community even when we can't be together physically.

I am so impressed with your ability to get schoolwork done in the midst of all of this. Give yourselves a pat on the back! Human beings are extremely resilient and we will get through this crisis. Hang in there!

the back page - sheth larue, Senior MDiv.

Over spring break I was going to spend some time accruing hours at my CPE site, but my plans were changed as COVID-19 descended on Austin. When I was informed that I could no longer set foot in the hospital as a budding chaplain, I wasn't particularly heartbroken about it because I disliked the work. But as time has worn on and I'm isolated and secluded, I'm beginning to recognize that something in me isn't quite right.

I'm doing my part by staying home and away from others (thanks to the Pitcocks for letting me crash at your place)...and I'm being educated via Zoom and Hangouts...and I'm attending churches virtually...I am hella Facetiming and Facebooking and Tweeting and Instagramming my way through this quarantine.

But it hit me the other day that I'm suffering. I'm suffering because I am not able to live out my vocation, my calling, my share that I have within God's Kingdom. I'm suffering because I know that the work which will make me most complete, most happy, most content, is out of my reach.

Yes, I know that I'm doing my job by staying home, blah blah blah...but it's not the same. The screen can only do so much to convey my heart and I'm not able to be my truest self right now. If I were a betting man, I'd say that most of you are in this same boat: you're trying your best to do what you can where you are, but you're only a shadow of who you are and what you do. And this hurts your soul. It pains all of us because we cannot be ourselves right now.

There's no easy way around this. To be the most helpful is to be still...to be alone...to be in this desert. I am finding comfort in the beginnings of Jesus' ministry: when he was baptized and the Spirit descended upon him he was "about thirty years old when he began his work" (Luke 3:23). While tweenager Jesus spent time in the temple teaching, it took nearly two decades for him to move into full-time ministry. And then - when he did start his ministry - he immediately went into the desert, where he spent forty days alone with the scheming devil tempting him.

We'll get out of these deserts soon enough. Be patient with yourselves. Spend this time honing your spirits for the days to come - and find rest - because when this is over, the world is going to need us more than we ever imagined. Be well, be good, be safe.

much love. sheth.

"Each one of us is called to a special place in the Kingdom. If we find that place we will be happy. If we do not find it, we can never be completely happy. For each one of us, there is only one thing necessary: to fulfill our own destiny, according to God's will, to be what God wants us to be."

Thomas Merton, *No Man Is An Island*, (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 2003), 131.

2020 Calendar

FOR UP TO DATE INFORMATION ABOUT EVENTS PLEASE REFER TO
COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS OR YOUR SEMINARY EMAIL.

NEW INFORMATION IS DISTRIBUTED EVERY DAY BY SEMINARY STAFF.
PLEASE DEFER TO THEIR COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT SEMINARY ACTIVITIES.

20+2 Songs to Hug Your Ears - Sheath Larvae, Senior MDiv.

Song	Artist	Album	Year
Lovely Day	Bill Withers	<i>Menagerie</i>	1977
What a Wonderful World	Louis Armstrong	<i>What A Wonderful World</i>	1967
Rise Up	Andra Day	<i>Cheers to the Fall</i>	2015
Carry On	Fun.	<i>Some Nights</i>	2012
Don't Stop	Fleetwood Mac	<i>Rumours</i>	1977
Just Breathe	Pearl Jam	<i>Backspacer</i>	2009
O-o-h Child	The Five Stairsteps	<i>Step By Step By Step</i>	1970
Hold On	Alabama Shakes	<i>Boys & Girls</i>	2012
Sunrise	Norah Jones	<i>Feels Like Home</i>	2004
Our House	Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young	<i>Deja Vu</i>	1970
Good To Me	Audrey Assad	<i>Fortunate Fall</i>	2013
Mr. Blue Sky	Electric Light Orchestra	<i>Out of the Blue</i>	1978
Move Your Feet	Junior Senior	<i>D-d-don't Don't Stop the Beat</i>	2002
Uptight (Everything's Alright)	Stevie Wonder	<i>Up-Tight</i>	1966
Green Light	Lorde	<i>Melodrama</i>	2017
5 Years Time	Noah & The Whale	<i>Peaceful, the World Lays Me Down</i>	2007
Ripple	The Grateful Dead	<i>American Beauty</i>	1970
Worried Shoes	Daniel Johnston	<i>Yip/Jump Music</i>	1983
Two Hands	Townes Van Zandt	<i>High, Low and In Between</i>	1971
Best Day Until Tomorrow	The Real McKenzies	<i>10,000 Shots</i>	2005
Anthem	Leonard Cohen	<i>The Future</i>	1992
We Get By	Mavis Staples feat. Ben Harper	<i>We Get By</i>	2019