



VOLUME 13
ISSUE 2

DOVE LOVE

• WINTER EDITION •


Sigma Alpha Omega®
ONE IN CHRIST THROUGH UNITY IN SISTERHOOD

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MEET THE TEAM



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***Dove Love is the national publication of the
Sigma Alpha Omega® Christian Sorority, Inc.***

***We believe that words have the power
to combat isolation and create a
loving, inclusive community. By
sharing our stories, we hope to ensure
that sisters of all ages never feel far
from the sisterhood and the love God.***



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

BY CHRISTIANNA PEDLEY BUCK

Merry Christmas, sisters!

As well as Happy Thanksgiving and every holiday in November and December—there are so many! It can be easy to get overwhelmed by all that there is coming up and all that there is to do to prepare. As I get older, I find my focus shifting more on wanting to make sure others are enjoying their time together, but even more importantly that I am actively reminding myself of the reason for the season.

I remember my dad walking around the house, basically beat-boxing “Jesus is the reason for the season.” He likened himself to P-Diddy, calling himself P-Daddy. He was always so focused on Jesus. He truly lived for Christ and made sure that our family knew that the season wasn’t about presents or food, but the hope that Jesus brought with Him into this world.

Speaking of Jesus coming into this world, we will be looking at Mary for some of this issue! Mother Mary, Mary the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary, or however you refer to her, is clearly viewed differently by our denominations, but we can all agree that she was obedient to God’s plan for her. She, like my dad, knew the hope of the world was in baby Jesus.

This holiday season, I pray that we keep focused on Jesus and the hope He brought to us. Let us stay obedient to Him since it is in Him we are made new!

Dove Love,

Chrissi



ABOUT THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Chrissi graduated from the University of Michigan in 2017. She was part of the Alpha Chi Chapter, Alpha class, and is active in the Alumnae Association post-grad. She is currently the Systems and Training Manager for a property management company based in Grand Rapids, MI.

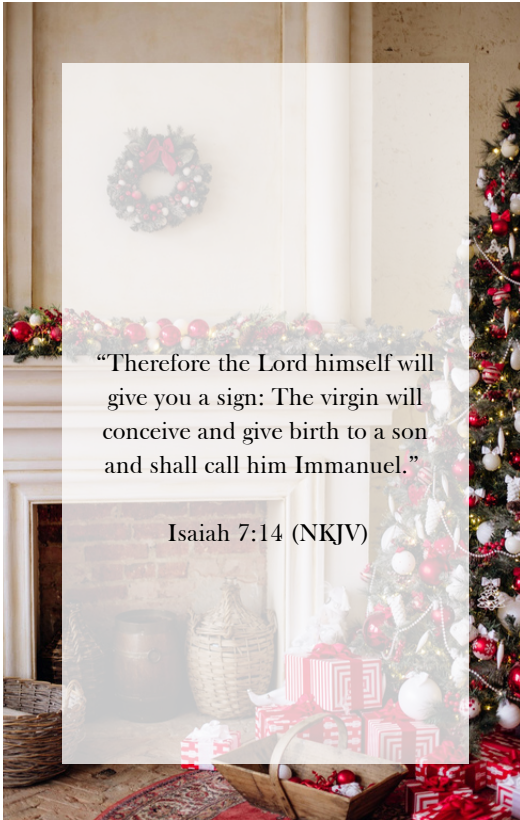


DEVOTIONAL

BY KIMBERLY VONDERLEHR

T

he holiday season is filled with delicious food, sparkly lights, and joyous times with loved ones. The holiday cheer that fills the air with all the exciting festivities ought to remind us of the birth of Jesus. In the book of Isaiah, the prophet proclaims, “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14). Through the faithfulness of Mary and Joseph, this prophecy came true and was fulfilled by the birth of Jesus, God’s only son. The fulfillment of this prophecy after approximately 700 years through the birth of Jesus is not only part of the foundation of our faith, but also teaches us about God’s promise and love for His people.



“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and shall call him Immanuel.”

Isaiah 7:14 (NKJV)

The prophet Isaiah continues his prophecy, stating, “If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all” (Isaiah 7:9). God’s prophecy through Isaiah was fulfilled when His people were exiled, and then redeemed through Mary and her steadfast faith to be a vehicle for God’s physical entry into the world (i.e. Incarnation). He is a God of truth and immense love as shown by giving us Himself, Immanuel, meaning “God with us.” Throughout His Word, God shows us that He has a plan and will fulfill His promises to us if we remain steadfast in Him according to His will.

Isaiah’s prophecy of the Messiah fulfilled by the birth of Jesus marks the beginning of the many lessons Jesus taught during his life and through his death and resurrection. Through the teachings of God’s only son, we are taught lessons of love and life. Our relationship with God and the ways He shows Himself in our lives are unique to each and every one of us, but we are all universally called to spread this love and knowledge to those around us. How marvelous is it that God knew this plan all along? How amazing that God foretold and gives us this time every year to renew and remind ourselves of the gift of Jesus’ birth, thus fulfilling Isaiah’s prophecy? What work can God do in our lives and what lessons can He reveal to us, if we remain faithful and steadfast in His Word?

Amidst the chaos of the holiday season, buying gifts, and spending precious moments with those we love most, be joyous in how God’s plan that started with this prophecy to give us His only son. God has kept His many promises to mankind and, as we remain steadfast in Him, He will keep all the promises He has to fulfill our lives and renew our souls in blessing (James 1:12). During this time of celebrating the birth of Jesus, share this joy and story of faithfulness with those around you. Let this prophecy not only renew your life in Christ, but also renew your relationships with your family, friends, and sisters.



Kimberly Vonderlehr is a senior at Radford University double majoring in Dance and Communications (Public Relations). When Kimberly isn’t in class or dancing at Radford basketball games as a member of the university’s dance team, she can be found enjoying fellowship with her SAO sisters. Originally from Richmond, Virginia, Kimberly loves to travel home and spend time with her family, friends, and her dog, Daisy.

NATIONAL CALENDAR

Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

recap

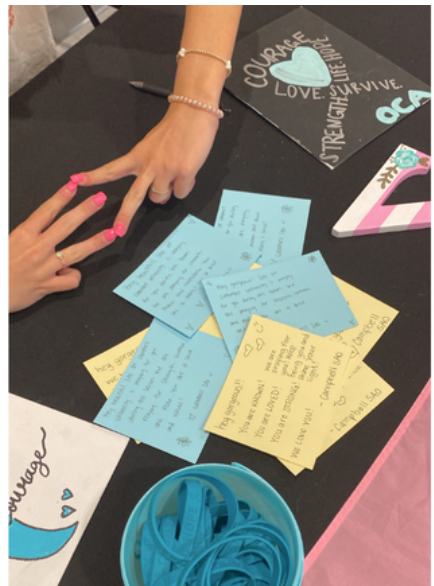
Grow in

COURAGE

Psalm 27:14

Thank you so much for participating in OCA month! We raised \$2,689 and completed 6,983 crunches! Whether you painted your nails teal, you had someone come and speak, you crunched your heart out; you showed everyone how we are *growing in courage* in the Lord for our sisters fighting this disease.

Dove Love,
Jashania Gatling-Garrette,
Vice President of Sisterhood





November 28th is National Charitable Foundation Day

Grow in
FAITHFULNESS

On November 28th, we will be *growing in faithfulness* through supporting the Sigma Alpha Omega® FoundationSM on National Charitable Foundation Day (NCFD).

The "SAOF" functions as an alumnae-run, non-profit organization in direct support of the sisters of Sigma Alpha Omega®. It strives to provide funds and opportunities for sister development in academics, leadership, spiritual growth, and mission work. All of these activities are designed to grow not only the relationships with our sisters, family, and friends, but also, and most importantly, our relationships with Christ.

NCFD is a **required event for chapters** to help SAOF fulfill their mission, but we encourage alumnae to take this opportunity to support SAOF and your home chapters by donating to fundraising efforts on NCFD! ALL chapter-reported funds raised through these events will be invoiced by our DFO Magen Nelson via MySAO to be collectively donated to the SAO Foundation in one form of payment from the National Sisterhood so we can see how much we collectively raised!

Questions? Contact Jashania Gatling-Garrette, Vice President of Sisterhood, sisterhood@sigmaalphaomega.org.

Our national virtual offices will be closed for Thanksgiving on November 23 and 24, as well as for Christmas and New Years from December 22 to January 1, 2024. Happy Holidays!

NATIONAL PERFORMANCE SURVEY

Our National Performance Survey will be available from December 15, 2023 to March 1, 2024. We greatly appreciate both alumnae and current active/associate sister contributions to this survey as results are used as informing national leadership each year. The survey will be made available through MySAO.

JANUARY



FOUNDERS MONTH CELEBRATION IDEAS

- Track down your chapter founders and send thank you notes.
- Recreate a founding class chapter photo.
- Plan a chapter celebration luncheon and invite your alumnae.
- Make a donation to SAO Foundation in the name of your Big Sister or Little Sister.



90's VIRTUAL PARTY

We hope you celebrate Founders Month all January, but we especially hope you will join your sisters for a 90's Themed Virtual Party on Friday, January 5th from 8:30 pm to 10:30 pm EST! You won't want to miss Music Bingo, 90's Trivia, Etch-a-Sketch Pictionary, and more. So, pack yourself a lunchable and plan to show off your best 90's themed outfit in our fashion show! Last one to register has to share their AIM username. We're dreaming of Dunkaroos, Slime, and Lisa Frank stickers...

Dove Love,

Emma Clyde, Vice President of Alumnae Relations, alumnae@sigmaalphomega.org

February 12 - 16 is National Service Week

Grow in
KINDESS

Philippians 2:3&4

From February 12-16, we will be *growing in kindness* through our Service Week. The flower in our graphic is the pink peony which represents compassion. During this week sisters will spread the word of Christ through action on behalf of our communities. Our theme verse this week is, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others" (Philippians 2:3-4). Each chapter will be given a guide and event ideas, along with social media posts.

Questions? Contact Jashania Gatling-Garrette, Vice President of Sisterhood, sisterhood@sigmaalphomega.org

MENTORS FOR 2024-2026 TERM

The Application Period for National Mentorship will run from February 1, 2024 until March 1, 2024 for terms beginning Fall 2024 and concluding Springs 2026. Eligible alumnae are invited to find applications on the National Website Sister Portal "Opportunities" and keep eyes peeled for an emailed version closer to the date of release.

Questions? Contact Claire McAuliffe, Executive Director, xd@sigmaalphomega.org and/or Brett Pasquinelli, Vice President of Mentors, vpmentors@sigmaalphomega.org

choose love™
movement



We are excited to be partnering with the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement as they celebrate February as "Choose Love Month." The Choose Love Movement focuses on helping children, teens, and people of all ages utilize scientifically-affirmed tools to make socially-emotionally intelligent responses to evil and hatred in our world. Founder Scarlett Lewis lost her son, Jesse, on the morning of December 14, 2012, where a gunman killed twenty six people at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. More information to come if you want to be a part of this movement: for chapters, check out the December SAO Monthly email, and for all members, be sure to follow @SAO4Christ for NSW-specific videos from Scarlett herself! You can find our more about Choose Love Movement or even register for their free training courses anytime on their website: <https://chooselovemovement.org/>

MARCH

"that they should seek the Lord...
and find Him, though He is not
far from each one of us." Acts 17:27

Grow in

LOVE

#WearTheWordWednesday2024

On March 20th, we will be *growing in love* based on the Bible verse, "His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him—though he is not far from any one of us" (Acts 17:27). The flower in our graphic is the amaranthus, also known as "love lies bleeding," which represents the love of Christ given for each one of us. On this day we will reflect on what it means to help others seek and find the Lord as we wear this verse on our t-shirts, hats, buttons, or stickers as well as promote the Gospel through social media. We can't wait to see how you reach others with the love of Jesus!

Questions? Contact Jashania Gatling-Garrette, Vice President of Sisterhood, sisterhood@sigmaalphaomega.org



APRIL/MAY

Reminder: Chapters, don't forget to honor graduates with the official National Alumnae Ceremony! Alumnae, we'd love your help at this event at our chapters you are local to.

For more information, please contact Emma Clyde, Vice President of Alumnae Relations, alumnae@sigmaalphaomega.org

CONVENTION 2024



See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you
not perceive it? I am making
a way in the wilderness
and streams in the
wasteland.

ISAIAH 43:19

LET'S GROW WILD!

It's SAO's 20th Convention, and we are excited to be spending it in the heart of Georgia, Covington's FFA-FCCLA Center. "Lock-in" the Early Bird Rate with a Payment Plan when you pay a \$25 non-refundable, non-transferable deposit until December 31st.

Here are the steps and timeline to lock in your Early Bird Convention "Lock-in" Rate and Payment Plan:

1. November 1 - December 31: The "Lock-in" Form goes live in MySAO, and payment plans are set up.
2. January 5: All payment plans finalized and set in MySAO.
3. April 25: All final payments for "Lock-in" rate are due with discount codes sent to participating registrants. (Note: Lock-in purchasers will be given a specific discount code to register with once their final payment is received.)

Questions regarding convention registration and payment? Contact Elizabeth Kroner, dm@sigmaalphaomega.org. Questions regarding convention in general? Contact Claire McAuliffe, xd@sigmaalphaomega.org. Can't wait to see you there!



Keep an eye out for our naming contest for our zebra gal on our social media [@SAO4Christ!](#) Can't wait to see your contributions.

Bible & Theology with Sisterhood Committee

DISCIPLESHIP AND BIBLE ENGAGEMENT TIPS FROM THE NATIONAL SISTERHOOD COMMITTEE

PROVIDED BY THE NATIONAL SISTERHOOD COMMITTEE, CO-CHAIRS
CLAIRE MCAULIFFE AND JASHANIA GATLING-GARRETTE

How many times have you used your Bible like a Magic 8-ball, hoping it will reveal a "yes/no/it depends" response to what next steps you are to take in life? "Should I pursue grad school?" "Should I ask this guy out?" "Should I buy a house?" Or, maybe you're the type who scans the pages and hopes that a passage will specifically speak to you or heal you in an emotional crisis. Perhaps you only want to read encouraging, nice verses, avoiding difficult or less encouraging passages.

Author and Bible literacy champion Jen Wilkin says we've all been guilty of these sloppy approaches to God's Word at some point in our faith journey. In her podcast, YouTube series, and book *Women of the Word: How to Study the Word with Jen Wilkin*, she helps the average Christian approach the Bible in a trustworthy and intentional manner.

The Bible was written as God's revelation to mankind. And, as much as we like (and know to a certain extent) to say that the Bible is God's love letter to us, there are harsh and confusing passages within, and sometimes, maybe reading it through a lens of "this is for me" may not be the most accurate lens.

To help us glean a rich harvest from God's Word, here are Bible comprehension tips to use as inspired by Jen Wilkin's *Women of the Word*:

1. SLOW DOWN! Read the passage multiple times. Remember this is God's Word (how precious!) not a homework assignment. We don't want to risk a faulty foundational comprehension before we ever venture into interpretation or application steps.

2. ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR OWN SUBJECTIVITY. We all have an existing lens or bias we bring to the text before exploring it, so pray that God grants you His wisdom and clarity.

3. OBSERVE. Look for how the passage was put together. Use all those English class skills! Note names, syntax, locations, repetitions, order, chronology...

4. WONDER. Allow yourself some curiosity in what you are reading to help you notice more within the text. For example, "Hmm, I wonder where this location is on a map in the modern day?" "Why is this commandment listed after this commandment instead of before it?" "I wonder what the Hebrew/Greek word is here in my concordance..."



"I will praise you with an upright heart as I learn your righteous laws."
- Psalm 119:7

5. AVOID CONCLUSIONS. But...avoid drawing conclusions. Simply observe what is there before guessing at intentions.

6. NOTE CONTEXT. Follow the natural flow of the text without isolating specific verses. Acknowledge the genre of the text you are reading and the typical rules that accompany that style.

7. SUMMARIZE. As a test for if you absorbed what you read, could you summarize it? While this borders on the next step of interpretation, the exercise is meant to ensure you understood a plain reading of the text.

8. STICK WITH IT. Let your ability grow with time. We are not experts at our first rodeo or second or third and so on.

9. TRUST GOD'S PROCESS. Remember it is OKAY to not understand a passage and to meditate on it for days, weeks, months, and even years! The Word is living, and He will use it to His glory however He chooses in us.

Next issue, we'll explore tips for Biblical Interpretation, but you can always venture into Jen Wilkin's *Women of the Word* for free [here](#).

exegesis - /ˌɛksəˈʒiːs/ n. critical explanation or interpretation of a text, especially of scripture. "the task of biblical exegesis"

Sister SPOTLIGHT

BY ELIZABETH COUTURE

*Former military wife, and stay-at-home mom
A woman open to God's Will in her vocation*



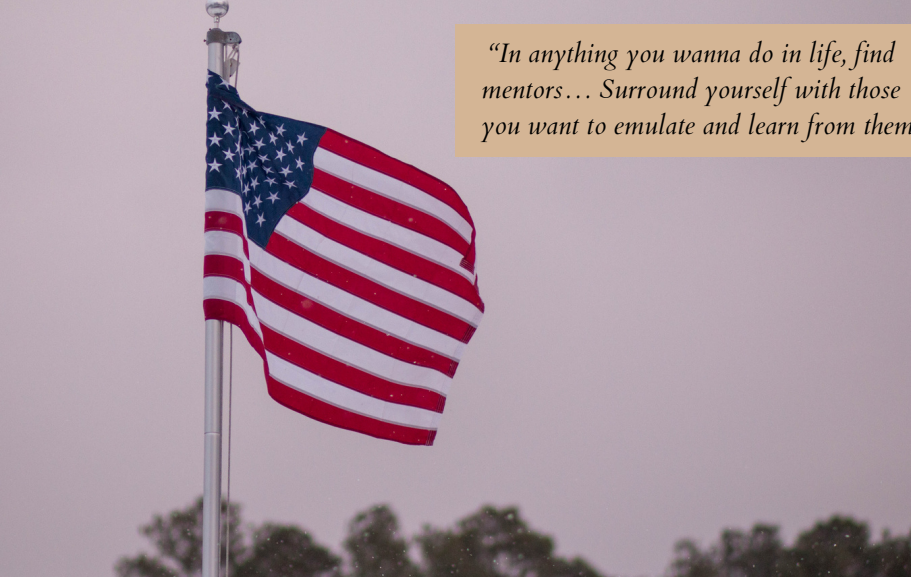
From the mountains to the ocean (quite literally), a former military spouse and stay-at-home mother of two, Sara Pahlas proclaims, "My husband and my kids are my path to sanctification, to holiness, and hopefully heaven as I freely give of myself to them. Motherhood is a sacred calling."

Sara Pahlas, maiden name DeBlois, graduated from the University of Georgia with a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Engineering. An active alumna, Sara participated as a sister for all four years of her undergraduate experience, as part of the Iota Class at the Mu Chapter. She enjoyed all the events and socials, as well as served as the Philanthropy chair her junior year. "SAO gave me life-long friendships. My Little Megan was my maid of honor." Sara took her high-school sweetheart and now husband of seven years (married November 25, 2017), Jacob, to all the date nights, semi-formals, and formals her chapter offered. Despite a long relationship, Jacob and Sara decided to wait on an engagement until a year after graduation, so as not to graduate with a "MRS" degree. They chose to

wait to grow into their own careers, especially as Jacob experienced his first station in El Paso but frequently deployed to Kuwait and Korea. Sara used her Environmental Science degree for a year in a job in Lawrenceville, commuting from Athens, Georgia.

During their year apart (geographically), Jacob converted to the Catholic faith, thus allowing him to lead his family with Sara as in full Catholic communion. Sara, during the long-distance relationship, realized her true vocation, not her work career, for "I never felt fulfilled in my work," but as a wife and eventual mother, "Not as my side thing, but as my main vocation" by being "open to life" and "open to the Lord."

Sara began her true "life vocation" as a wife by moving to El Paso, and taking a job there. Soon after Jacob, a Field Artillery Officer in the army, was deployed. During deployment, Sara at first feared being pregnant thinking she didn't want kids until the age of thirty and never really considered working in the home instead of out of the home. "But you are given so many graces through the sacrament of marriage. The Lord changed my heart and made it clear that our vows called us to be open to life and whatever fruits may come from our love," Sara explained. So Sara left the toxic-work environment in El Paso, six months prior to moving to Oklahoma, and then gave birth to their firstborn daughter Josephine, dubbed "Jo," in June 2020. The Pahlas family then moved with their six-week-old daughter to Fairbanks, Alaska, and had a second daughter, Veronica, born in June 2022. "Each child is a gift my husband and I have been entrusted with," Sara sincerely shared. A year later, Jacob left the military, though still serving in the reserves, to work for a friend's construction company in Buford, South Carolina to be more present with his little girls and closer to family who reside in Woodstock, Georgia.



"In anything you wanna do in life, find mentors... Surround yourself with those you want to emulate and learn from them."

"Being a milspo (military spouse) is honestly a vocation in and of itself. I mean it really isn't for the faint of heart. It constantly taught me how to let go of control. You can make plans, [but] they can change at the top of a hat," Mrs. Pahlas admitted. The challenges of moving all the time, distance from extended family, and a parent missing their children's developmental milestones as well as important dates (Jacob missed his first wedding anniversary) led to the Pahlas decision of, "Nope, we're done!" with military life. However, Sara emphasized how amazing the military community is with welcoming and supporting one another with frequent moves and hanging out with each other's children. The strong bonds between military spouses continue today as Sara gravitated towards friendships with Marine wives in Buford, a U.S. Marine base town.

While not everyone's faith journey will be like Sara Pahlas's, Sara advises all women to find community, especially mentors: "In anything you wanna do in life, find mentors... Surround yourself with those you want to emulate and learn from them." Particularly for sisters who desire motherhood, Sara advises, "Discover your own motherhood. We all mother differently, and that's okay. We must all learn what works for you and your family." For Sara's own vocation as a wife and mother, she draws inspiration from Mother Mary, particularly her fiat*, "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her" (Luke 1:38). Sara lives out surrender and gives up control, thus opening up to God's divine plan by surrendering to His Will daily (even if it means wiping a lot of sticky faces and surfaces), by following her favorite quote by Saint Mother Teresa, "If you want to change the world, go home and love your family."



ABOUT THE INTERVIEWER

Elizabeth Couture, a 2016 UGA and SAO Mu chapter Alumni, resides in Atlanta GA where she raises her two young sons and applies her Early Childhood Education degree on a daily basis. She loves encouraging friends, writing her blog and playing with her two sons, especially outside.

*The "Our Lady's Fiat" is a traditional Roman-Catholic term shortened from the Latin phrase, 'Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum,' translated as 'Let it be done unto me according to thy word,' which serves as a summation of Mary's faithful response of acceptance and faithfulness to God's plan for her."

SIGMA ALPHA OMEGA[®] FOUNDATIONSM UPDATES

It's an exciting time for the Sigma Alpha Omega[®] Foundation, and we have some thrilling updates to share with you.

NEW PRESIDENT TAKES OFFICE

We are excited to introduce our new President, Kelli Anne Gecawich who is transitioning from treasurer after serving for over 5 years. Kelli Anne has a deep commitment to our mission and has been part of Sigma Alpha Omega[®] Foundation throughout its changes.

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The Sigma Alpha Omega[®] Foundation is built on the dedication and commitment of our alumna. We are excited to introduce the newest additions to our board, who will be instrumental in shaping the future of the Foundation.

Shelby Howard - Treasurer: Alpha Xi Alumna

Ashleigh Crouch - Director of Programs: Beta Delta Alumna

With their passion and commitment, we look forward to the fresh perspectives and ideas they will bring to our Foundation's governance.

NATIONAL CHARITABLE FOUNDATION DAY NOVEMBER 28TH, 2023

Mark your calendars! National Charitable Foundation Day is just around the corner, it's a day when we come together to make a positive difference and raise funds to continue our key programs such as Sisters Helping Sisters, Emergency Relief Fund, and many of our other Grants. Your continued support drives the programs available within the Sigma Alpha Omega[®] Foundation.

Stay tuned for exciting events and announcements leading up to National Charitable Foundation Day.

Let's Connect

We would like to connect with you, please take a moment to complete our connection card on our social media pages or website. Your support is the driving force behind our ability to create a meaningful impact within our sisterhood. Stay up to date with upcoming applications, events, and support opportunities by following us on social media:

Instagram : [@sao_foundation](https://www.instagram.com/sao_foundation)

Facebook: [@sigmaalphamegafoundation](https://www.facebook.com/sigmaalphamegafoundation)

Website: www.sigmaalphamegafoundation.org

*Dove Love,
Scarleth Andino*



KELLI ANNE GECAWICH



SHELBY HOWARD



ASHLEIGH CROUCH



the creation that is you

BY MARY ASHLEY ALLEN

When someone brings up creation, the first thought that comes to my mind is the story of God's work over seven days. My love note here that follows is not about that kind of creation, but rather the subtle ongoing creation that happens within you.

I got a newsletter from an Abbey in Ireland, and recently it presented food for thought: we cannot separate ourselves from creation, and we can knowingly and unknowingly participate in a creation of redemption or of harm. As I explored Isaiah, which speaks of God's intention and plan, the concept of creation abounds, resulting in showing me the ongoing creation of love through scripture, and now to you.

I wanted to share with you something I think God might want us to notice in the season of Advent: the divine story of restoration is still unfolding, coming in and out of bloom

within us and around us. And, if creation is still happening, then we can consent to being actively or consciously a part of it, taking part in an awareness of a life blooming within more lusciously, fragrantly, breath-takingly beautiful than any of God's creation.

With the aim of connecting more personally with God's invitation as it concerns Advent and creation, I completed an exercise, which took the form of how I imagined a letter from God to me. In a dream world, I would ask you to do the same. I cannot speak for God, of course, and I hope you'll look past the limitations of language. As you read you may look for, sense, or hear a word or phrase and take that directly to God who may be hiding behind it or through it. I hope this letter prompts you at the very least to think about your direct relationship with God. Happy reading, friend.



Hey my girl,

I love to see every movement of your heart towards me. You feel it even now, don't you? That emotion welling up, putting pressure behind your eyes, salty tears brimming, but not falling. The pressure and tightness in a heart that is fighting to remain open, still aching. That's the seed you sense, planted within you long ago. In fact, it was planted many yeses ago. It's opening and with it, so are you. When Jesus came into the world, I felt much the same. My story is everywhere, and I'm so glad I can share it with you.

I'm not just in the masterful design of your mind and body, the synapses sending electric currents that do not shock you, the oxygenation of your blood fueling life, the letting go of waste to make room for the new. I am also woven into the tapestry of your Soul. Your consciousness is one with my Spirit, and what a joy it is to be here! I speak a lot in My Word about gifting you jewels and fancy robes to represent the gift of my freedom and love. This is what I mean. This feeling and sense, this indescribable knowing, that you're wearing me, seeing me pour myself into the corners of your being. Have I lost you in trying to express this in mere words?

I am everywhere, and we cannot be parted. It is so hard to get this through to you. I feel your fear even now. I feel the trust fall that comes in really receiving this: all I give to you, I give freely. There is no bitterness in me for how long or short or far or close you are. Creation is continually inviting what is dead to fall away, so please let what brings desolation fall away. Let what brings life vibrate or resonate through your being with every moment you remember to return to the Holy Spirit, where I am.

I realize the holidays bring up a lot of emotions and memories. They have disappointed you. Their process of creation does not concern you, though I know it may hurt you. I am there, too. In that part of your being yearning for a place where pain can be transformed. I am here. Invite me into the processes of creation within you. Even if you do not know that something beautiful can come of it, lay it down at my feet. That is my job, and I love to do it for you.

I'll leave you with this: May you receive the invitation and delight in knowing I am continually and intimately involved in creation still. And as you my most beloved creation, I am within you and I can bloom in indescribable, unimaginable ways.

NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR:

I feel a responsibility to remove barriers to finding ourselves in God's story, so I may use non-gendered language or spiritual language to challenge assumptions we may have about the Sacred. The content is not intended to be a substitute for professional advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your mental health professional or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding your condition. Never disregard professional advice or delay in seeking it.

THE VERSE THAT INSPIRED IT ALL:

ISAIAH 61:10

"I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels."



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mary Ashley is a clinical mental health therapist living in Greenville, SC. Most of her time is spent serving college aged clients as a therapist at Southern Solace Counseling in Clemson, SC. When she isn't watching Elyse Myers on TikTok, she loves watching movies, crossfitting, hiking, volunteering in her community garden, riding horses, reading about the tradition of spiritual mysticism, or baking sweet treats for her friends and husband.

PSALM 119:11

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard."

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17-21

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

Chapter Updates

BETA MU

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

Mascot: Longhorns | Date Founded: 2020 | Active Sisters: 17

Associate Sisters: 4 | Inactive Sisters: 12 | Alumnae Sisters: 24

During recruitment, the Lord blessed us with 10 new candidates. We've been having a lot of fun with our new candidates with activities such as attending football games, going roller skating, and more. Our Bible study has been learning about the character of God with conversation regarding the Lord's Word. We participated in Crunch-A-Thon and have been passing out teal ribbons on campus to spread awareness about Ovarian Cancer!

IOTA

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

Mascot: Pirates | Date Founded: 2004 | Active Sisters: 8

Associate Sisters: 1 | Inactive Sisters: 12 | Alumnae Sisters: 330

The start of this semester has been great! We finished recruitment and are so excited to get to know and grow with our new sisters! This past month we have done a lot of philanthropy events and have raised over \$400 for ovarian cancer! We also had our disco fever themed semi formal! We are looking forward to retreat and all of our other social, service, fundraising, and philanthropy events we have planned for this semester!

ALPHA

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

Mascot: Wolfpack

Date Founded: January 5, 1998

Active Sisters: 15

Associate Sisters: 1

Inactive Sisters: 10

Alumnae Sisters: 280

We have had a pretty eventful semester, kicking off the year with a space-themed recruitment that brought in nine lovely new candidates. On top of recruitment, we have hosted a wide variety of social events, such as an ice cream together, making candy apples, and watching Dance Moms. To celebrate OCA month, we engaged in some social media campaigning, hosted a Crunch-A-Thon, and exchanged cookies for BEAT awareness cards in our student union. Finally, we have hosted weekly large group Bible studies preceded by our first Praise and Worship Night of the semester. We are feeling so very blessed!



ALPHA LAMBDA *RADFORD UNIVERSITY*

Mascot: Highlanders | Date Founded: (Refounded) Spring 2020 | Active Sisters: 11
Associate Sisters: 2 | Inactive Sisters: 0 | Alumnae Sisters: 81

We had an AMAZING recruitment while having our biggest candidate class since 2019 of 8 girls! Our theme was "I Love SAO", which included New York City decor and vibes. Some fundraisers and service projects that we did this semester include a spa basket raffle, gift bags to the moms at the women's resource center, and reading and crafting with those residing in the assisted living home! One campus involvement activity that we did recently was hand out teal ribbons to students and staff/faculty on our campus, for OCA month. We can't wait to see what else this semester holds for our chapter!

OMICRON *UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA-WILMINGTON*

Mascot: Seahawks | Date Founded: 2005 | Active Sisters: 9
Associate Sisters: 3 | Inactive Sisters: 7 | Alumnae Sisters: 273

The Lord has been MOVING in the Omicron chapter this fall. We wrapped up recruitment and have officially handed out 10 bids to 10 amazing ladies who love God and love others so well. We are so encouraged by them and we cannot wait to see how the Lord uses them in SAO! We have also been focusing on Dove Love Partners this semester, where sisters pair up each month and spend time praying with one another and learning from each other. We are so grateful to God for His abundant grace! We pray to continue abiding in Him and obeying His will.

ALPHA DELTA

CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT UNIVERSITY

Mascot: Captains | Date Founded: 2010 | Active Sisters: 10

Associate Sisters: 0 | Inactive Sisters: 2 | Alumnae Sisters: 80

We are very excited for this upcoming semester and growing our sisterhood! We have been focusing on growing our relationships with each other, all while having fun with our sisters through different socials and a very fun retreat.

BETA NU

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH GEORGIA

Mascot: Nighthawks | Date Founded: Spring 2022 | Active Sisters: 10

Associate Sisters: 1 | Inactive Sisters: 4 | Alumnae Sisters: 9

Our theme this semester has been "Honey, You're Home" that has represented how close we've gotten as sisters. This semester, we're partnering with all of our local campus ministries to host our first school-wide Night of Worship, and we are so excited to watch the Lord move on our campus; as well as for the opportunity to grow together as sisters as a part of God's plan for our chapter and school. Dove love from Beta Nu!

BETA ZETA

VANGUARD UNIVERSITY

Mascot: Lions | Date Founded: Fall 2017 | Active Sisters: 14

Associate Sisters: 3 | Inactive Sisters: 4 | Alumnae Sisters: 54

We just had our recruitment week and welcomed 9 new candidates. Our theme was "Welcome to Paradise Beach" which turned out amazing. In October we had a Halloween movie/pumpkin decorating social and a beach picnic social. Also, we completed a thrift shop fundraiser where we donated our clothes and hosted a thrift shop on campus for students to come and purchase items. Our fall retreat theme was "Coastal Christmas at a Beach House."



GIVEN

The Gift of Women

BY ELIZABETH COUTURE

My dear sisters in Christ, as women, we likely have wombs. Defined by *Oxford language as, “the organ in the lower body of a woman or female mammal where offspring are conceived and in which they gestate before birth; the uterus,” the womb serves as a secret place that literally grows life, like soil or a cocoon protects the metamorphic process of turning smallness into mightiness.

As a mother of three “littles” all under the age of five, I personally marvel at the scary and mysterious way God used my body as a vessel to weave my two sons and daughter into this world:

“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.”

- Psalm 139: 13-14

For, like every mother who bore life or every woman with menstruation experiences, we as women uniquely understand offering our bodies up as available to bear life:

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.”

- Romans 12:1

The excellent example of a woman who opened her womb, Mary, literally gave birth to God incarnate, Jesus, Emmanuel, God with Us. Thus, Mary as the Ark of the New Covenant, i.e. Emmanuel, fulfilled the prophecy:

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

-Isaiah 9:6

So through Mary’s “living sacrifice” by offering up her womb, to us “a son is given” as Isaiah 9:6 states. A child, not an earned guarantee nor garbage, but a gift freely given, a grace. So for all us women with wombs or where wombs once were, may we marvel with great fear (in the awe way, not the anxious way), at the gift of our hidden places that have sustained or may one day sustain God’s gift of a child born through us. This is womanhood, the living sacrifice, the inmost being given.



ELIZABETH COUTURE



ELIZABETH KRONER



MAGEN NELSON



BARBARA DABBS

Whitley Dyer Photography

Photos of SAO sisters called to motherhood with their babies.

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Elizabeth Couture, a 2016 UGA and SAO Mu chapter Alumni, resides in Atlanta GA where she raises her two young sons and applies her Early Childhood Education degree on a daily basis. She loves encouraging friends, writing her blog (<https://lilliebeth016.wixsite.com/thenotsocouturemomma>), and playing with her two sons, especially outside.



Gingerbread Cookies

FROM THE KITCHEN OF CHRISTIANNA PEDLEY BUCK

I do believe that the recipe for last winter was gingerbread cookies as well, but I love them SO MUCH! Happy gingerbreading! - Chrissi

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup butter, softened
- ¾ cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- ½ cup molasses
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix flour, ginger, cinnamon, baking soda, nutmeg, and salt in a large bowl.
2. Beat butter and brown sugar into the large bowl until light and fluffy. Add molasses, egg, vanilla, mix well. Beat altogether until well mixed.
3. Placing the dough into the middle of plastic wrap, press into a thick, flat disk. Refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight.
4. When ready to bake, preheat oven to 350 degrees.
5. Roll dough on lightly floured surface to ¼ inch thickness. Cut into whatever fun shapes you would like! Place on baking sheet 1 inch apart.
6. Bake in oven until edges of cookies are set and just begin to brown, around 8-10 minutes. Cool completely on wire racks.
7. Decorate with vanilla icing however you please! Store in airtight container for up to 5 days.

JOIN OUR TEAM!

Dove Love is looking for sisters who are interested in helping produce this national publication.

WE ARE CURRENTLY SEEKING SISTERS TO FILL THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS:

- Marketing Coordinator
- Graphics Designer
- Recipe Contributor, Writer

If you have a background in any of these fields or just want to get involved, please email your interest and resume to dovelove@sigmaalphamega.org.

Please title your email: *Dove Love* Join Our Team [YOUR NAME]. We look forward to hearing from you!

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We look forward to working with you!





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