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# Students take charge to lead worship service Jan. 24 in spite of weather



Photo by: Brittney Kertesz

By: Chelsea Sydnor

A winter storm hit NC hard the weekend of Jan. 22-24. As snow covered the ground, along came the dangers of ice-covered roads and walkways. This led to many churches cancelling services on Sunday, Jan. 24. Rather than sleeping in, two groups of GWU students decided to plan their own worship service to be held in the Dover Chapel.

As each group began planning and spreading the word, they learned of the other and decided to team up as one cohesive group. "We had a similar idea, to bring a group of people together for a worship service," said junior, Kyle Medlin. "We decided to meet up and we planned something really big."

The student leaders had less than 24 hours to put the service together and invite others. While the university was technically closed, the students decided to use the chapel for size and convenience.

As the student leaders walked out to the chapel that morning, some doubt arose when they noticed the icy conditions around the area.

"We got some sticks and started breaking up the ice and sweeping it up," said junior, Jesse Anne Rogers. "We even had people helping others to cross the ice safely."

Seeing the students around the chapel, concerns arose from a University Police representative, as well.

"[The officer] said that Gardner-Webb was technically closed, but he wouldn't stop us," said Rogers. "We talked about it, but we felt like we were worshipping the Lord, and it wasn't Gardner-Webb sponsored. We didn't feel like we were in the wrong for holding the service."



**Senior Sam Vining leads the student congregation in prayer.**

**Photo by: Kyle Medlin**

The service ended up becoming a bigger event than the student leaders expected. "For me, being part of the worship band, you could hear so many voices lifted up in song," said junior, Rachael Zimmerman. "It was stripped-down worship, and it sounded like a big choir. I imagine that is what Heaven will sound like."

"We had a time of prayer, and people were taking their friends around to different parts of the chapel and praying for them," said Rogers. "It really reflected on the community here."

"We even had some people say that they wished it would snow every Sunday," said junior, Shelby Robinson.

Though none of the students that planned Sunday's service remember a similar one taking place in their time at Gardner-Webb, it is somewhat of a recurring tradition, according to alumni.

"It's no surprise that people have gotten together in the past," said Zimmerman,

"That's the kind of people that Gardner-Webb attracts, people that are devoted to the Lord."

Despite the few difficulties that came along with planning the service, those involved were ultimately pleased with the service.

"God really worked it out for us," said Rogers.



**Photo by: Kelsey Carithers**