

LoveFeast



WAKE FOREST
UNIVERSITY

Office of the Chaplain // Wake Forest University

The 50th Annual LoveFeast

In 2014, the Office of the Chaplain hosted the 50th annual Moravian LoveFeast for a overflowing Wait Chapel. In partnership with Communications and External Relations, the 50th LoveFeast was approached in a new way; advertising for the event began early and spread wide; the event was livestreamed so that alumni could tune in regardless of location; several gatherings in cities across the country were hosted by and for alumni; LoveFeast in a Box Kits were sent out across the world. 190 Dozen LoveFeast Buns and 4000 Candles were ordered for the 50th Annual LoveFeast – all of which completely ran out before the LoveFeast began. Davis Chapel was reserved as an overflow space, and about 80 people participated in the LoveFeast from Davis Chapel.

LoveFeast 2015

Continuing with our partnership with CER, The Office of the Chaplain considered the possibility of hosting two separate LoveFeasts in 2015, but because we were unsure of whether or not the overflow was due to the special occasion of the 50th Annual LoveFeast, and the crowds would be more manageable in 2015. University Advancement arranged for a team of alumni in the Winston-Salem area to serve as ushers, and the balcony was reserved for students until 7PM. We continued to offer LoveFeast in a Box Kits, and livestreamed the event again. 190 dozen LoveFeast buns and 4000 candles were ordered again – while we did not run out of buns, we did run out of candles before the event started. Davis Chapel was again reserved as overflow space, but only about 15 people participated in the LoveFeast from Davis Chapel.

Two LoveFeasts...?

With the Chapel overflowing with people, and not enough candles for all who showed up to participate in the LoveFeast, the Chaplain's Staff quickly began to revisit the idea of hosting two separate LoveFeasts, as many Moravian churches do. Since this would be an incredibly heavy logistical undertaking, we decided to ask our LoveFeast Dieners what their thoughts were about putting on a earlier LoveFeast that would be geared towards families and children, followed by our traditional LoveFeast celebration. We sent out a survey to our LoveFeast Dieners, a group of staff, faculty, students, alumni, and community member volunteers who serve the LoveFeast Buns and coffee.



The LoveFeast Diener Survey

- Have you served as a LoveFeast Diener before?
- Why did you want to serve as a Diener at LoveFeast this year?
- What do you believe would be the advantages and disadvantages to adding an earlier LoveFeast, geared towards families?
- Would you like to receive additional information about your roles as diener prior to the training on the day of LoveFeast?
- What did you find most helpful about the 6PM Diener Training Session?
- What was missing from the 6PM Diener Training session?
- Was it helpful to have separate Ushers seating LoveFeast guests?
- Is there any feedback the Office of the Chaplain needs to hear in order to improve the LoveFeast for our community?



The response:

Of the 55 LoveFeast Dieners who served at the 2015 LoveFeast, we collected 15 responses to our survey. 9 Respondants had served as LoveFeast Dieners previously. Many cited the LoveFeast as a beloved Wake Forest Tradition that they were thrilled to participate in as their reason for serving as dieners. All stated that it was helpful to have separate ushers to seat LoveFeast Guests as they arrived, so that the dieners could begin preparing the coffee trays and bread baskets. 14 out of 15 respondants said that an earlier LoveFeast, geared towards families and children, though it would be a lot more work, would be worth exploring, to expand our outreach to the community, and especially to address capacity and supply issues. Many raised the question about having a second set of LoveFeast Dieners, but also cited that an earlier LoveFeast would be particularly appealing to parents with young children, and senior citizens who may not want to be out very late.

Two LoveFeasts!

After extensive conversations with our campus partners, affirming feedback from our dieners, and guidance from local Moravian churches, the Office of the Chaplain is planning on hosting two LoveFeasts in 2016, to be held on December 4th. The LoveFeast for Families will be celebrated at 4PM in Wait Chapel, followed by the Traditional Wake Forest Moravian LoveFeast at 8PM.

Other LoveFeast lessons learned:

- Partnership with CER continues to have a positive impact on the LoveFeast
- LoveFeast in a Box kits seem to require a lot of resources; will probably not offer these this year
- University Advancement will coordinate for the LoveFeast Ushers again – this new addition was incredibly valuable and allowed for the Dieners to prepare their work stations with plenty of time.
- While some LoveFeast Dieners have already volunteered to serve both LoveFeasts, we will need to recruit many more Dieners in order to celebrate two LoveFeasts, and prepare the Chapel in between.
- Direction and wisdom from local Moravian churches who celebrate multiple LoveFeasts, as well as creativity in imagining how we will distinguish both services, will be absolutely essential as we move forwards in the planning process.