

WE ARE SEU

STUDENT STORIES 16



Foreword

When I reflect on the year since the pandemic disrupted our lives, I am reminded of Luke 12:22-23 (NIV), where Jesus tells His disciples to not worry. The verses say, “Then Jesus said to his disciples: ‘Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothes.’”

Reading further into Luke 12, Jesus talks about how the ravens do not store up a supply of food because God provides for them. Jesus says, “And how much more valuable you are than birds” (Luke 12:24). What if we had that same level of trust in God?

This passage of scripture couldn’t be more relevant today. Living in the midst of a pandemic has taught us a lot. We’ve had to grapple with a new way of doing life. We’ve become familiar with uncertainty. For some, it’s brought on a new level of anxiety.

Early into the pandemic, we were asked to stay home. During this time, many of us spent more time with our families. We picked up new hobbies and learned to be creative in how we utilized our time. It was in the stillness of those weeks that we had to learn to trust God.

While we put aside the busyness and spent more time with those close to us, we learned to appreciate the simplicity of life. We began to pause and evaluate what is important to us.

As we look to summer and hope that our world will return to some normalcy, I would encourage you to continue to find moments of stillness with God. As Jesus called his disciples to “seek His kingdom” (Luke 12:31), I encourage you to do the same.

It can be easy to fill our days with worry to the point we forget the faithfulness of God. Take moments to reflect on this past year and spend time alone in prayer. Be grateful for the simple things in life and don’t take any of them for granted. While our world is uncertain, our God remains unchanging.

- Dr. Kent Ingle, SEU President

CREATIVE TEAM



Pictured left to right Grace Baldwin, Creative Director, Hannah Larson, Managing Editor, Emma East, Lead Writer, Matthew Holman, Assistant Editor, Rebecca Horsley, Lead Photographer

AHNA MCCROAN

TO LOVE AND TO SERVE

For Ahna McCroan, simplicity is not just a temporary state of being but a consistent life-style. Throughout her life, McCroan has defined simplicity as a way to focus our minds on the aspects of life that are of the utmost significance: not what matters to us in our earthly condition, but what truly matters to God. In every season of her life, the Lord has revealed the beauty of simplicity to McCroan.

"To me, simplicity is about coming back to what is most important in life, and for me that's my faith and my family, and the people I've gotten to know at Southeastern," says McCroan. "I'm grateful for the life that I have and the places that God has led me."

Looking back on her childhood, McCroan can see how God has continuously embedded His plan for her life from the very beginning.

"I was born in China and my parents adopted me when I was very young," says McCroan. "I was saved when I was fourteen years old at the Christian school I went to, and faith has been a major part of my life ever since. Through the building of my faith, I learned that we are to spread love, live life like Christ would and touch other people's lives; we are called to be doers for the kingdom of God."

As she entered into college, however, McCroan began to see the vast expanse of God's plan for her life to impact the lives of others.

"The beginning of my life is pretty simple, I would say, but once I got to college, I had a greater opportunity to learn more about what I want from life and figure out what type of career I wanted to pursue," says McCroan. "I started at a Christian college in Pensacola with a focus in humanities which later changed to criminal justice. I soon realized that it wasn't exactly what I wanted to do with my life, but I knew I wanted to help people. I then discovered the social work major."

Story by Hannah Larson
Layout and Photography by Grace Baldwin



AHNA MCCROAN



“We Are Called to be Doers in the Kingdom of God”

The social work major just so happens to be how God brought McCroan to Southeastern. Though she toured the campus right after high school, at the time she decided it was not the place for her. Once her heart was opened to social work and she learned of the outstanding social work department here at Southeastern, she knew this is where she belonged for this season of her life. Her passion for all of the various paths that the realm of social work offers keeps growing with every passing semester, and the goodness of God’s plan continues to lead her with perfect direction.

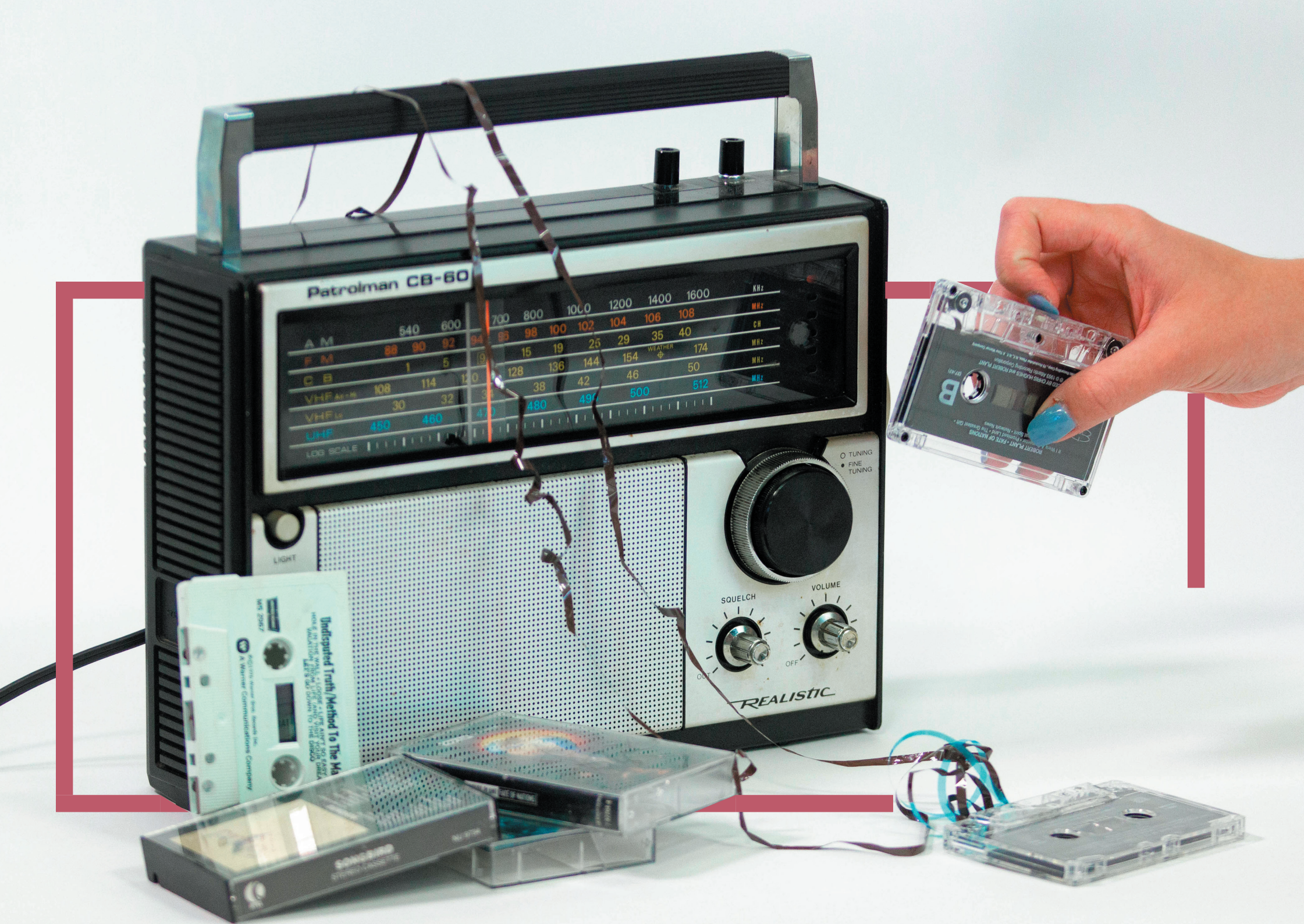
“I’ve always thought I wouldn’t want to stay in one specific job for years and years, and social work would allow me to be involved in advocating for people in several different ways,” says McCroan. “I’m very passionate about mental health care and foster care reform alongside adoption, and the degree in social work that I’m earning here at Southeastern is really opening my mind to all of the different avenues in the field.”

As her education continues, McCroan is excited for the opportunity to take her learning overseas.

“I’m really thinking about doing a study abroad program my senior year to enter into international social work,” says McCroan.” “I am interested in visiting Asia to help the adoption process for the people that are there. I would love to help others have the same opportunities that I have had in my life through adoption.”

Most importantly, however, McCroan simply wants to help others. “I know that I am grateful for the people who have supported me and loved me in my life, and I want to be that person for others,” says McCroan. “I think that’s an important part of being a Christian and person: to help other people live their life to the fullest. When you help others, there are testimonies that are discovered and healing that takes place.”

In all things, McCroan purely strives to live by the words found in Philippians 2:3-4 (NLT): “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.”



MIXTAPE

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FOUNTAINS
MOSIAC MSC

03

QUIET
ELEVATION
RYTHYM

02

SHELTER
FINNEAS

01

EUROS
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HELLOS

05

APART
FOXHILL

06

FIRST LOVE
KARI JOB

07

IYKYK
ELEVATION
RYTHYM

08

ALL THE TIME
SWOOPE

PHOTO CREATIVE VISION:
BEKAH HORSLEY AND ELLA GUILD

MIXTAPE

SIMPLICITY

As a thick layer of dust settles in the crevices of our minds,
ghost towns begin to creak with life. The return of community is
an antidote against the erosion of values inflicted by time.
The ringing in our ears fades as we focus on basic truths.

ghost towns begin to creak with life. The return of community is
leading us back to the straightforward path of love.
The ringing in our ears fades as we focus on basic truths.
Our souls sigh and we turn from the overcomplicated additions to life.

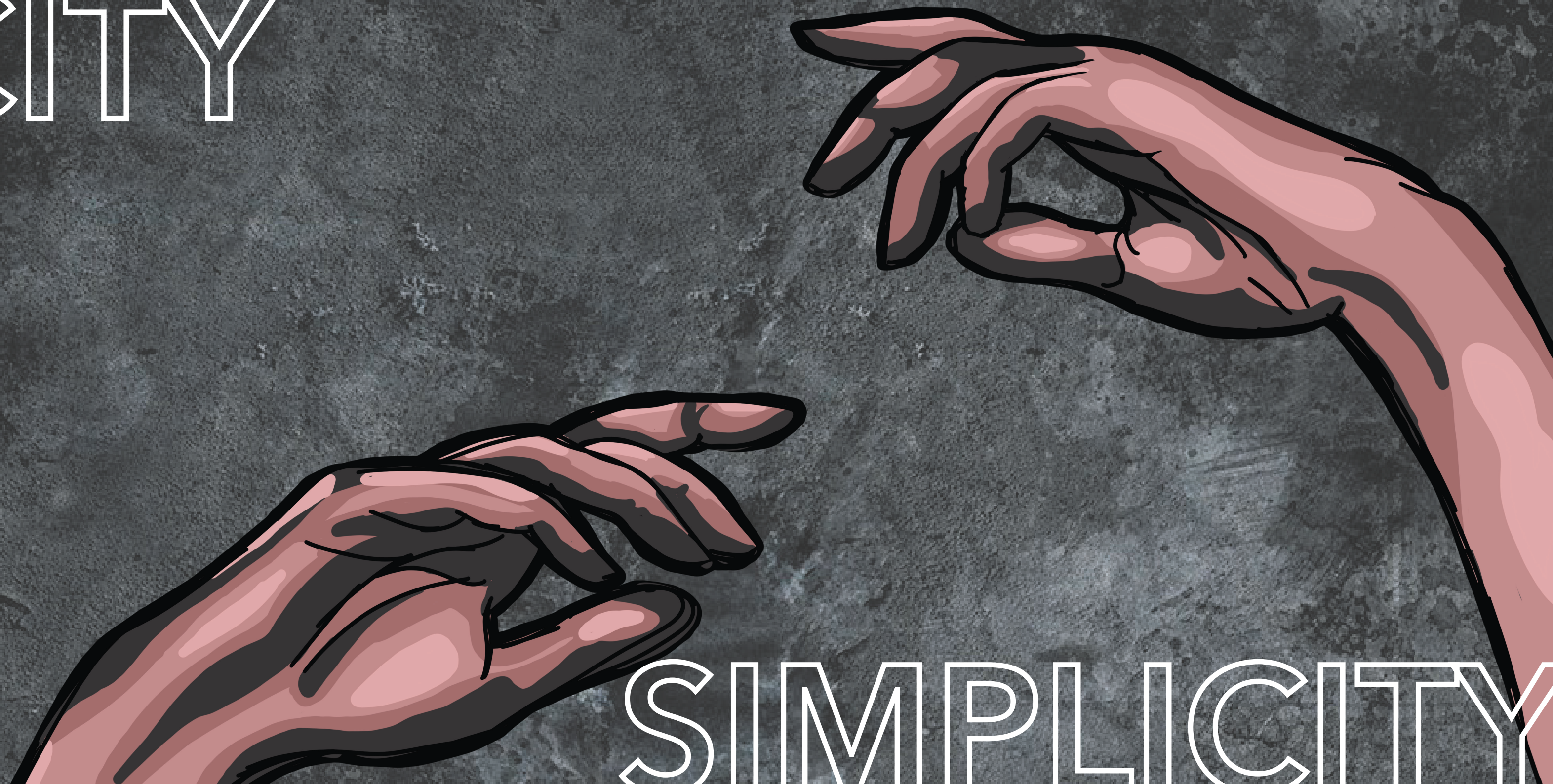
leading us back to the straightforward path of love.
We join hands for relief, in unity, by grace, as
Our souls sigh and we turn from the overcomplicated additions to life.
We sync our hope to the rhythm of the promises of the prophets.

We join hands for relief, in unity, by grace, as
We remember the purity in the purpose of our creation: to worship.
We sync our hope to the rhythm of the promises of the prophets,
and take the next simple step towards wholeness in this devoid life.

We remember the purity in the purpose of our creation: to worship,
to seek an antidote against the erosion of values inflicted by time.
We take the next simple step towards wholeness in this devoid life
As a thick layer of dust settles in the crevices of our minds.

Story by Hannah Larson and Emma East
Layout and Illustration by Grace Baldwin

SIMPLICITY





Story by Madi Schaaf
Photography by Cami Butler



For the past year, we've heard many sermons about the spiritual masks that we wear. Though it may seem repetitive at this point, in every analogy, there lies a grain of truth. The reality is, while you stroll down El Prado or stand in line for the Buena Vida elevator, countless other students are wearing a proverbial mask, craving to express their authentic selves yet worried about what others might think of them.

Josiah Krause knows what it feels like to crave authenticity. His journey began in an SEU small group he led last year, where every member was asked to scribble down their current struggles on a small index card. While he assumed that he would read some heavy responses, the answers he read later that night were heavier than he could've imagined.

"I asked my group, 'How many of you are talking to at least one person about this?' and hardly any of them raised their hands. That's when I realized this [was] a bigger issue on campus, and my heart was so burdened for the student body," explains Krause. Grabbing hold of this hunger for authenticity and drive for unity, Krause and his vice president, Sydnie Roberts, are setting out to shift the campus culture here at Southeastern and promote genuine community.

"I want this school to become connected in a way that builds and cherishes relationships built on Christ first, so that people [come together as one]. Isolation won't be a thing on campus. People will have people. Commuters won't just be commuters, they're a part of the body, and athletes are a part, they are SEU," says Krause.

AUTHENTICALLY — — UNIFIED

Some may question how a student body president and vice president can initiate a concrete shift in campus culture. Roberts explains that while they can't necessarily have a direct influence on every student's relational experiences and encounters with God, they are firmly determined to create opportunities for students to find community that will influence their college experience and walk with God.

Among these community events are town hall meetings, where students' ideas and perspectives will be heard, as well as individual one-on-ones, where Krause and Roberts will meet with students and get to know them personally. Through community outreaches and monthly hangouts, the campus community will grow with one another and impact the larger Lakeland community.

"What makes us unique as a team is that what we want to do practically, we can [essentially] do without the administration's approval. It's something we can do from day one.

For example, with holding our one-on-ones with people, we already have our Calendly set up where people can schedule appointments with us," explains Krause.

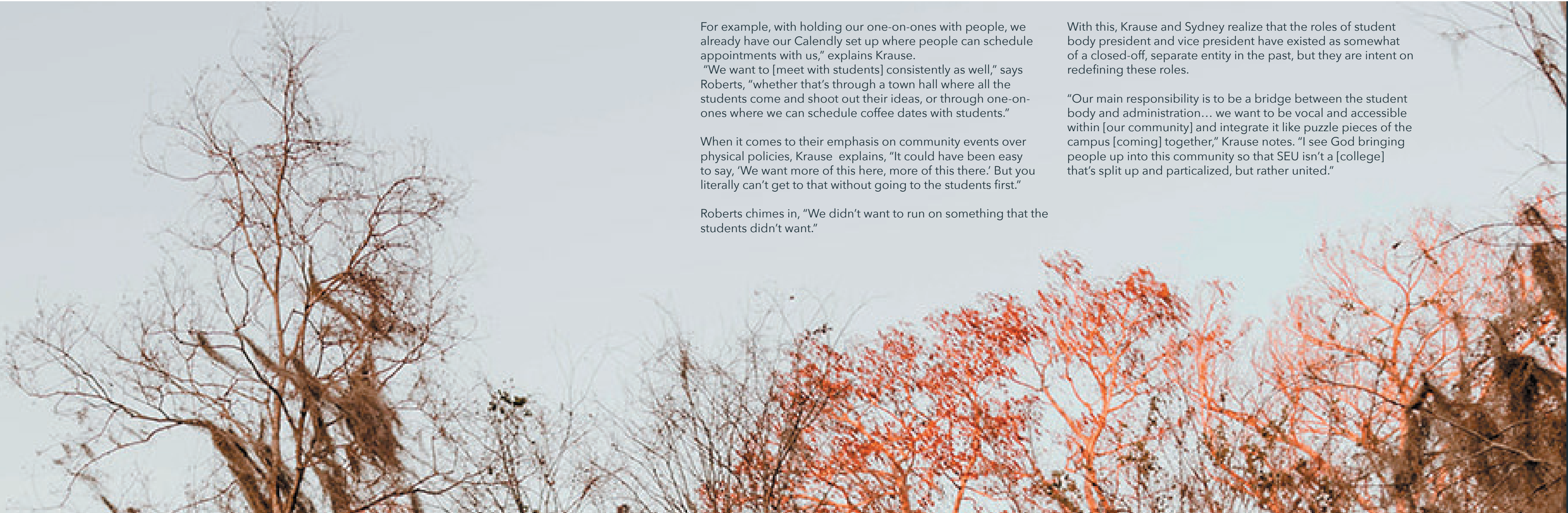
"We want to [meet with students] consistently as well," says Roberts, "whether that's through a town hall where all the students come and shoot out their ideas, or through one-on-ones where we can schedule coffee dates with students."

When it comes to their emphasis on community events over physical policies, Krause explains, "It could have been easy to say, 'We want more of this here, more of this there.' But you literally can't get to that without going to the students first."

Roberts chimes in, "We didn't want to run on something that the students didn't want."

With this, Krause and Sydney realize that the roles of student body president and vice president have existed as somewhat of a closed-off, separate entity in the past, but they are intent on redefining these roles.

"Our main responsibility is to be a bridge between the student body and administration... we want to be vocal and accessible within [our community] and integrate it like puzzle pieces of the campus [coming] together," Krause notes. "I see God bringing people up into this community so that SEU isn't a [college] that's split up and particalized, but rather united."





PHOTOS: WE ARE SEU

SEU CONF 2021

**"WE CAN'T MAKE THE MISTAKE OF
GIVING A GREAT DEAL OF ENERGY
GETTING PEOPLE EXCITED ABOUT OUR
MINISTRY INSTEAD OF EQUIPPING
THEM FOR THEIRS,"** -Ryan Leak



MATTHEW 7:21-23

"Not everyone who says to me,
'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom
of heaven, but the one who does the
will of my Father who is in heaven.
On that day many will say to me,
'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in
your name, and cast out demons
in your name, and do many mighty
works in you name?' And then will
I declare to them 'I never knew you;
depart from me, you workers of
lawlessness'". (NIV)



SUSTAINABILITY IN FASHION

A PHOTO ESSAY

Photography by Bekah Horsley



For something to be sustainable means that it is in relation to a lifestyle involving the use of



sustainable methods. Through sustainability, resources can be used continuously over a long



period of time rather than a single use. Fashion is no exception-- pictured in this photo essay is Matthew Peaks wearing thrifted looks he has accumulated.

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