

This, I believe: During my time at BU, Marsh Chapel nourished me.

Marsh Chapel nourished me physically.

From welcome barbeques on the BU Beach to international feasts lovingly made in the basement kitchen to Lenten dinner church, the so-called “Marsh Meal Plan” ensured that a hot supper was never out of reach. The watchful eyes and generous souls of the campus chaplains carefully nudging take-out containers at hungry students meant that I could worry less about how to stretch my meager graduate student budget with instant noodles and microwave popcorn. On cold nights, there was hot tea to soothe a sore throat and brace me for a walk home in the wind. On balmy late Spring days, there was cool lemonade set out after Sunday service to quench my thirst.

Marsh Chapel nourished me emotionally.

In the throes of “first year, law school scares you to death” and “second year, law school works you to death,” Marsh was my respite. It was my place to laugh at silly jokes as we waited for dinner to cook, talk about music and television and literature and the nothing-drama of everyday life while we ate, and to take a couple hours to luxuriate in the sheer delight of being among friends. Conversations frequently continued for hours, and very often three or four of us would find ourselves in the Thurman room long past the time we had all agreed that we absolutely had to leave to return to other demands. When the world lurched to a halt in March of 2020, the transition to virtual meeting meant that his sense of community continued. Isolation and loneliness never had the chance to fully set in and those terrifying early days of the pandemic were lightened by my friends’ pixelated faces.

Marsh has been the conduit through which I met lifelong friends, all of whom inspire me to adventure out on New England day trips and across town to used bookstores, lead me to new opportunities for activism and community building, and inspire me to find the love and joy in all things.

Marsh Chapel nourished me spiritually.

It was over these meals and among these friends that I grew in my faith and grew into my spiritual voice. I remember my first Wednesday night service, staring down at the bulletin, obsessing over the asterisks on the page that would tell me where to start in when reciting the Psalm for the night and keep me from doing something to betray my “ambiguously nondenominational Protestant on holidays” childhood to valuing my own lived experience. After three years, I have grown in my confidence in my spiritual formation, my relationship with God, and my ability to contribute meaningfully in student-led Bible studies.

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