

THE WORD

NOVEMBER 2024
ISSUE 15

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE MESSIAH UNIVERSITY ENGLISH PROGRAM

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Oxford Study Abroad Opportunity!

Did you know that as a student in the Messiah English program you have the opportunity to study abroad at one of the world's top universities? For many years Messiah has sent students to Oxford University in England. At Oxford students have the opportunity to study under world-renowned professors on the beautiful and historic campus and to learn in the personalized tutorial system. In the tutorial system students substitute daily lectures for biweekly small group or even one-on-one meetings with professors. In this environment you will be challenged to take ownership of your own learning, but also empowered to explore topics that interest you.

Ethan Reisler ('26) is studying in Oxford for the Fall 2024 semester.



DELIGHTING IN WEAKNESS

By Rissi Harrington ('26)

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

-2 Corinthians 12:9-10

At fifteen, I was taught the “starving baker” parable. The story followed a man who poured into others, baking and feeding them all while he starved until he could no longer serve his customers. The visual has stuck with me through seasons of burnout and tiredness, prompting me to wonder what it looks like to feed ourselves. I would read about Jesus’ love and servant-heartedness and think about how we are to model ourselves after him, but as I served and loved and poured into others, I found my own cup dry much like the baker.

Our human nature desires autonomy that is separate from God. “I can do it alone,” “I don’t need help.” Time and time again, I am humbled and reminded of my weakness and shortcomings. Despite this, we still try to do it alone. We live in an era that glorifies hyper-independence and individualism. Scripture on the other hand describes the importance of community and leaning on our neighbors. Jesus himself had his twelve disciples. We were never meant to do it alone.

In 2 Corinthians 12:10, Paul doesn’t say he “tolerates” his weakness or that he is ashamed of needing help. He says he delights in his weakness because he gets to pull from the overflowing fount that never runs dry. The Lord meets us where we are, he fills in the gaps, makes us whole, and strong where we are weak. We can be empowered and find freedom in letting God take over where we cannot. There is joy and sweetness in letting God be God, letting him love us and use us to serve others like Jesus did.

Writer Talks

Check out the latest podcast episode hosted by Adam Carter and featuring Evelyn Kelly.



WRITER TALKS

An audio series from the Messiah University English Program featuring student writers and special guests reading and discussing their original writing in poetry and prose.



INTRODUCING DR. MOROZ!

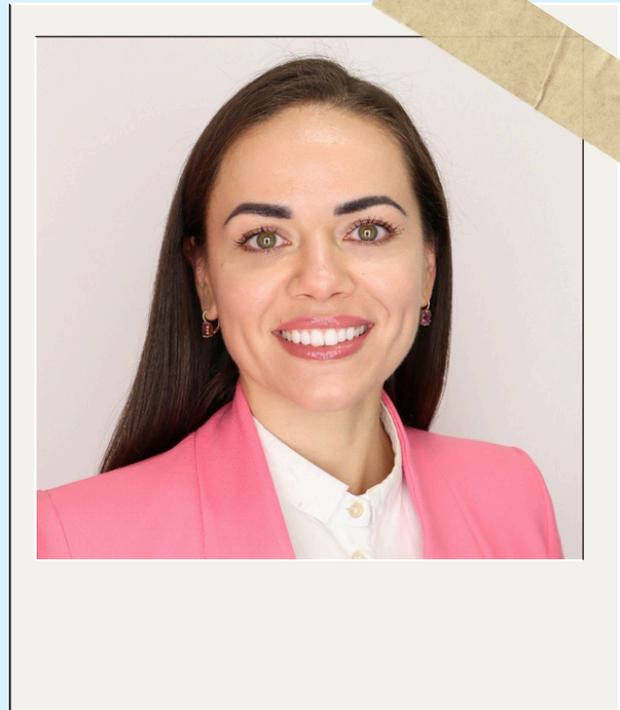
It is with great excitement that the Messiah English program welcomes its newest educator, Dr. Oksana Moroz! Dr. Moroz joins Messiah from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and brings along her husband Taras and her two kids Emma and Mark.

Dr. Moroz's journey to academia is a story of resilience and transformation. Born and raised in Ukraine, she first came to the United States as a high school exchange student in California, near Manhattan Beach. This experience, which she describes as "super transformational," helped her step out of her shell and embrace new opportunities in a smaller school environment. A pivotal moment for Dr. Moroz came when she took on the challenge of AP English, an experience that ignited her passion for the language and its possibilities. "I vividly remember using real English for the first time," she reflects. Passing the exam with the help of a wonderful teacher, she realized the passion she had for language and the ability teachers have to inspire students.

After her study abroad Dr. Moroz returned to Ukraine and pursued Bachelor's degrees in English, French, and World Literature.

While she initially worked in marketing in Kyiv, Ukraine's capital, her ambitions led her to seek further opportunities in the U.S. Dr. Moroz then applied to be a Fulbright scholar as a means to pursue a masters degree. After an unsuccessful first attempt, Dr. Moroz persevered and was eventually accepted into the prestigious Fulbright program. As a Fulbright scholar, she earned a Master's in TESOL from Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) and began to pursue teaching.

However, as political challenges escalated in Ukraine, she decided she did not want to return to Ukraine, but could contribute more by staying

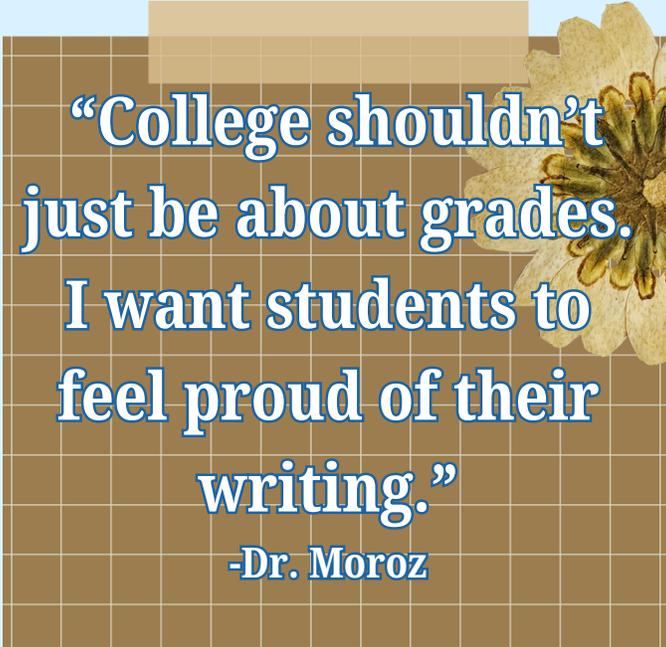


in the U.S. and advancing her academic career. This realization prompted her to pursue a PhD, also at IUP, where she had the opportunity to teach and solidify her love for academia.

When searching for the next step in her career, Dr. Moroz knew she wanted a position that allowed her to combine her administrative and teaching interests. A colleague sent her a job listing from Women in Academia, which led her to Messiah. From the start, she felt a sense of belonging. "I got an email from Kerry while on vacation, and her willingness to reschedule really made me feel welcome," Dr. Moroz recalls. The interview process, too, stood out. "It wasn't just about checking boxes. People genuinely wanted to get to know me." Dr. Moroz was drawn to Messiah's smaller, close-knit community, which reminded her of her exchange year. "It's more than a job here—it's about relationship-building. It feels like one big family." She also appreciated the higher level of student engagement. "There's a different vibe here. Students want to converse and critically assess."

In addition to her academic work, Dr. Moroz has a passion for giraffes. Her love sparked when her cousin gave her a giraffe mug before she left for her exchange year. Though the mug broke, her love for the animal has remained. She even adopted a giraffe from the Philadelphia Zoo named Abigail. "Giraffes are the best animals," she shares. It also offers her a reminder that even though she is small, she can become like a giraffe and "stroll above the chaos."

In the classroom, Dr. Moroz is excited to inspire students to enjoy writing rather than see it as a chore. "Writing isn't just an academic endeavor, texting and social media are writing too. It's not about the act but the thought process behind it," she explains. Her goal is to empower students to embrace writing with a growth mindset and become comfortable with critical and analytical thinking.



**“College shouldn’t
just be about grades.
I want students to
feel proud of their
writing.”
-Dr. Moroz**

Dr. Moroz is also eager to continue her research while at Messiah. She has a book contract for her work on qualitative research methods, focusing on the journeys of academic mothers that she is in the process of finishing.

When she's not teaching or writing, Dr. Moroz is a spin class enthusiast, having attended almost every one that the fitness center has to offer. Also alongside her academic goals, she holds one more dream: to visit Giraffe Manor in Kenya.

We are extremely grateful Dr. Moroz has chosen to call Messiah home. Make sure to tell her hello if you see her around campus!

INTERNSHIP SPOTLIGHTS

Imagine this: You just arrived home for summer break, winter break, fall break, a long weekend, whatever, and it's Sunday morning at church. You're excited to be there, catching up with old friends and enjoying familiar smells of burnt coffee and squeaky pews. Suddenly that sweet old lady you've always known comes up to talk with you. You exchange pleasantries and ask her how she's doing and finally she hits you with that age-old question in her sweet high-pitched old lady voice, "What's your major?" You reply with an excited, "I'm studying English!" Then almost as if it's a prerecorded message she replies, "An English major... so you want to be a teacher?" While some who study English are called excitedly to teach, questions like these can be frustrating for those of us with a different vocational calling. Conversations like these have so deeply invaded the public consciousness that many people do believe the only career option for an English major is to teach, but this is far from the truth.

The study of English opens you up to a whole range of diverse career opportunities that are exciting, creative, and sustainable! This summer many of the department's upperclass students completed internships. Some were in the areas of teaching, but most worked in industries that might surprise you in the ways they overlap with English.



JT Crocenzi ('25)
Capital Blue Cross

"I interned in one of Capital's 'Connect' stores, where members and nonmembers learn about their coverage options, benefits, and nutrition. I had the opportunity to develop a plan aimed at maintaining better relationships with small businesses that insure with Capital while also promoting the products and services available to them."



Olivia Reardon ('26)
Covenant Christian Academy

"I had the opportunity to prepare and teach lessons within these classes. I have loved the opportunity to see the inner workings of a Classical Christian school."



Jolie Lloyd ('25)
The Burg

"*The Burg* is a prominent Harrisburg area community magazine. I enjoyed producing a high volume of content for their online news site and print magazine at a quick turnaround, which challenged me to work efficiently while maintaining quality."



Ana Sakore ('24)
Future Point of View

"I served as Future Point of View's writing intern and wrote monthly blogs, edited business proposals and web pages, and drafted their annual 2024 Humalogy Trends Report. What I enjoyed the most was the opportunity to learn new language—the professional language that can be found in business and technology."



Melody Pha ('25)
Hope International

"I interned with Hope International as a marketing project management intern. In this role, I gained valuable insights into marketing, specifically within the nonprofit sector. I had the opportunity to oversee several projects and manage the distribution of marketing materials for representatives across the country."



Adam Carter ('25)
Charlotte Eagles

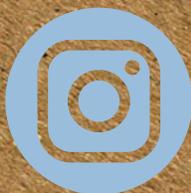
"The Charlotte Eagles is an evangelical soccer ministry that seeks to use the game of soccer to share the gospel and create cross cultural relationships"



Evelyn Janssen ('24)
Hope International

"I worked on the marketing team, writing up copy for a variety of projects, including social media posts, monthly prayer updates, blog posts, emails. My capstone project was the 2024 Gift Catalog, which will be sent out at the end of the year."

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“THE MOST MYSTERIOUS ISLAND IN THE WORLD”:

What North Sentinel Island Tells us about Empathy and Evangelism

A few weeks ago I found myself, as many college students do, doom scrolling through YouTube. Titles such as “In the Garden Gaither Vocal Group,” “Top 10 Battles in History,” and “Greatest Football Respect Moments” unimpressively slipped past my wide eyes. The flow of time evaporated as my index finger slid across the screen of my cracked iPhone 13 mini. Pictures and descriptions turned to blobs of color until suddenly an enticing piece of clickbait ripped me from my fluorescent light induced trance. The video was titled “Why He Didn’t Survive North Sentinel Island: A Survival Guide” and it featured a picture of a man taking a selfie surrounded by a tribe of people who seemed to live a life far different than my western experience.

The video opened by telling the story of John Allen Chau, an American adventurer who illegally made his way onto the “most mysterious Island in the World” more commonly known as North Sentinel Island. Chau had hopes of putting his name in history for being one of the few people from the outside world to explore the island, but instead Chau was discovered dead by fisherman shortly after his arrival at the island.

North Sentinel Island is a small island within the Andaman Islands, a collection of Islands controlled by India in the Bay of Bengal. What makes North Sentinel Island unique and “mysterious” to an American adventurer like Chau is the secluded people group that lives on the Island. The Sentinelese people have lived secluded on the island for as long as recorded history can assume. Very little is known about them by the outside world, and they have been very clear about their desire for visitors to stay away.

Over the past 100 years many outsiders have attempted to connect with the Sentinelese people, and while there has been some moments of connection and gifts exchanged, most attempts have ended with terrible conflict. What struck me about the video was the Sentinelese people and their clear desire to remain uncontacted. It’s easy to over-dramatize their story, which the video certainly sought to do, and attempt to other the Sentinelese people. Yet as Christians and as people dedicated to the work of English, I believe we are challenged to see through the lies and truth-stretching presented in the stories of the people of North Sentinel Island.

“One of the most valuable skills I’ve acquired as an English major at Messiah is the ability to ask difficult questions and to practice loving my neighbor while reading.”

While I don't want to demean the author of the North Sentinel Island YouTube video, I do think that in order to love my neighbor well when hearing this description of the Sentinelese people, I needed to watch between the lines. One of the most striking realizations I had was that being described as an Untouched people group doesn't necessarily mean ignorant of the outside world. The Sentinelese people are very aware of the world around them. They've had many interactions with Indian officials, researchers, fishermen, and many others who have contacted them in their long history. These interactions have sometimes involved gifts of iron tools and cooking equipment intended for the Sentinelese people, yet the Sentinelese people always reject such gifts. This may make you assume they aren't open to gifts, but that's also not true. The Sentinelese people always accept and have been seen excited to receive coconuts.

Amazingly through these gifts of coconuts on January 4, 1991, Indian researcher Madhumala Chattopadhyay was welcomed onto the island and had the privilege of fellowshiping with the people and giving them a coconut gift by hand. This interaction leads me to believe that the Sentinelese are not a hostile people but instead a people terrified of the dangers the outside world poses on their tight knit community. Researchers even argue that part of the reason for the hostility the Sentinelese people show is because of an incident where outside visitors brought disease onto the Island. This shows that the Sentinelese are a deeply caring people. They care so deeply about their values and connections that they're terrified of the outside world's ability to take that away.

The challenge of reaching untouched people is a serious conversation in the evangelical community. As a firm believer in the Great Commission I believe we as Christians should have a desire to spread God's love to every tribe, nation, and tongue. Yet we must proceed with humility.

If the story of the Sentinelese people tells us anything, it shows the reality that connecting with untouched groups is not about wowing them with our advancements and shiny gifts, but instead connecting with them as people created in the image of God. Despite what we may think, untouched people are often well aware of us and want no part in what we do. Instead we must take interest in who they are as they are. This goes for all forms of evangelism. Too often we try and emulate Jesus's kingship rather than submit to it. We are not the saviors of the world, but we do know him. Instead we must emulate Christ's humility and use curiosity and companionship as a way for Truth to be revealed.

By Adam Carter ('25)

