

PLNU 2011-12 Wesleyan Center Annual Report

Overview

The past year has been a busy one for the PLNU Wesleyan Center, as well as a year of change, the year beginning with the hiring of Lydia Heberling to fill the vacancy left by Jennifer Rogers in the summer of 2010 and covered part time by Mark Bilby and (student) Kaitlin Barr during the 2010-11 school year. Lydia has been a welcome addition to the Wesleyan Center.

Campus-Wide Education about our Wesleyan Heritage

Arminius Conference: The single largest event of the past year for the Wesleyan Center was our bi-annual conference, *Arminius Reconsidered*. In many ways this conference was a great success. It brought to campus all but a couple of the most important Arminius scholars in the world, including those from both Wesleyan and Reformed backgrounds. For a scholarly conference, we also had great attendance, and it seemed that we built some wonderful good will with some important members of the Reformed theological world. But in other ways the conference did not go as hoped. In particular, most of the plenary presentations were over the head of many of the students and pastors who attended, and whom we had hoped to reach through the conference. We hope to correct this future conferences (Our 2014 conference we plan to focus on issues related to the Bible and Evolution, and we have recently applied for a major grant to fund this conference through BioLogos.).

Wesleyan White Paper & Reader: Three years ago I was asked by (then) provost John Hawthorne to 'complete' a White Paper written by a task force he had co-lead with Brad Kelle in 2007-08. This document, "A Wesleyan Approach to Faithful Academic Life," had been an attempt to define for the university what it means when we state in our mission statement that we are of "Wesleyan heritage." While wonderfully written and useful in many respects, it was my feeling that the document was too narrow in its focus and needed to be broadened. Moreover, I was uncomfortable with the notion that 'I' should complete this document alone, feeling instead that the document would be both stronger and carry greater weight for its intended audiences (students, trustees, donors, faculty, etc.) if it bore the contribution and *imprimatur* of both the Wesleyan Center and the School of Theology and Christian Ministry. However, over the past couple of years, frequent turnover in the leadership of STCM made it virtually impossible to make significant progress on the project.

Finally, with Ron Benefiel coming as the new dean in 2011, the pieces fell into place to make significant revisions a possibility. Ron and I began to meet in the Fall of 2011 and, in conversation with provost Kerry Fulcher, who asked that we expand the project to include a reader of key introductory Wesleyan texts, Ron and I began to put together a committee to work on the project and a plan for completing it. The current committee consists of John Wright (STCM), Bob Smith (STCM), Rebecca Laird (STCM), Carol Blessing (LJML), Jamie Gates (SSW) and Mary Paul (SpDO). In October of 2011 we began working on the project, finally developing a new document outline, which we completed in April 2012. I wrote the

first draft of the document in May, and then Ron and I spent much of June reworking it for presentation to the entire committee. Now, in July, we are working to integrate the input of committee members into a final draft, that we believe we will have completed by our target date of August 15, 2012.

In a little over 6000 words, this document provides a concise outline of the chief theological convictions and practices of the Wesleyan tradition with an eye toward their implications for the life of a Christian university. We have also developed an outline for a follow-up document that will more explicitly identify the practical implications of this document for PLNU. Our hope is that a group would be put together in collaboration with the Center for Pastoral Leadership to develop a similar 'implications' document for churches and especially the Church of the Nazarene. We have also put together a preliminary 'Reader' list, and anticipate having the White Paper and Reader in readable format for use in the 2012 FYE Convocation and New Faculty Seminar.

Wesley Reading Group(s): During the 2011 Fall semester, Ron Benefiel, Michael Lodahl, and I read through a selection of Wesley sermons together with provost Kerry Fulcher at his request that would help him come to a more thorough understanding of our Wesleyan heritage. It was from these conversations that Kerry came up with the idea of adding a reader to the White Paper. He also has asked me to consider putting together additional reading groups for faculty and staff during the 2012-13 school year, which I will gladly do.

MidWeek Communion: Regular and frequent attendance at the table of Eucharist was a priority for the Wesleys and early Methodists, and therefore in my first year (2008) as Center director I started a regular midweek communion service that was co-hosted by the Spiritual Development Office and San Diego First Church and conducted in the Ellipse. This service continued to meet weekly until last fall when, due to low attendance, we decided to disband it. My hope is that we will start it again in the future.

Freshman Convocation: As I have in previous years, I spoke several times in Freshman convocation on topics related to Wesleyan theology and the special heritage of PLNU. I will continue to do so in the revamped FYE Convocation, in which such topics will play a more central role than in previous years.

New Faculty Seminar: Again, I led conversations with the new faculty regarding the heritage and core theological values of PLNU. This year, though, I hardly needed to considering that new faculty members included Ron Benefiel, Rebecca Laird, and Kara Lyons-Pardue, all members of STCM.

Point Loma Press

Wipf & Stock Publishers: Last November I met in San Francisco (at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion) with the directors of this press to discuss a possible collaboration through which they would publish all future (and some past) Point Loma Press titles (see below). Through several months of negotiations we finally came to an agreement that was finalized in June. This will allow us to expand greatly the marketing of

PLP books and therefore increase our sales considerably. PLP will still maintain editorial control over the content of our books.

Fides et Historia: This year was the first in which we became the official publishers of this journal, the first issue having gone out last fall, and the second about a month ago. We had anticipated there being some wrinkles to iron out the first year, but not nearly as many as there have been. Our first issue cost almost double what we had anticipated, and there has been a mountain of work to do in migrating the mailing list to the service we use, most of which had to be done again for the second issue. We were able to cut costs significantly for the second volume, and are not within the target range, and Sharon Bowles has worked very hard to ensure that the mailing issues are taken care of for good. So, while a significant amount of energy has gone into producing this, we anticipate this being far simpler going forward. The upside is that the quality of the journal has increased significantly, and with Reprographics now doing the printing, this will likely bring enough income to PLNU overall to offset the costs to the Wesleyan Center.

Theology of Love: Two years ago Nazarene Publications International [NPI] decided to 'open up the vault' on a number of English theological titles formerly published with Nazarene Publishing House [NPH] and allow us to begin translating select titles into Spanish. We decided to start with Mildred Bangs Wynkoop's classic *Theology of Love* (in print in English since 1972 and still one of the best sellers for NPH), and for the last 18 months have been working on a translation into Spanish to be published with Libros Pelicanos. Editing work on the translation was completed in June. Unfortunately after further conversations with NPH we discovered that we actually cannot publish the book because we are an American entity, that NPI only has the right to give titles to non-American publishers. So, we have turned over the completed text to NPI that they might publish it themselves. This is, of course, disappointing, as we had anticipated this becoming a best seller for Libros Pelicanos/PLP, but the most important thing is that the book will at long last be available in Spanish, and it will be because of our efforts!

Results May Vary: This project actually began before my coming to PLNU in 2008, and has undergone many different starts and stops, ups and downs, including co-editor Sylvia Cortez's untimely departure from PLNU last summer. However, we have finally reached completion of the text, and are in the process of finalizing the document for publication under our new arrangement with Wipf & Stock. It should come out by this fall, and it is a book that we are extremely proud to be publishing.

Nurturing the Prophetic Imagination: This book is a follow-up to the 2010 Wesleyan Center Conference of the same name, and is being edited by me and Jamie Gates. The book is in the final stages of editing, and should be published through our new arrangement with W&S later in the fall.

Relational Theology: The manuscript for this book came to us over the winter. This had originally been an NPH project, but the NPH book committee had some concerns about a couple of the essays in it (including one written by me making the same argument I did in a 2003 book, also published by NPH...how times have changed!). Rather than making the

required changes, the editors (Tom Oord of NNU, Brint Montgomery of SNU, and Karen Winslow of APU) approached us about publishing it. The text includes essays by a wide range of Nazarene theologians, pastors, and church leaders, and so we jumped at the chance to publish it. It needed a fair bit of cleaning up, but it is finally completed and ready to become the first book that we will publish under our new arrangement with W&S.

Faculty Development

Wesleyan Center Grants: PLNU Faculty receiving Wesleyan Center Grants are as follows:

- Dr. Linda Beail, Scholar--Summer 2011
Proposed Book: *Framing Sarah Palin: Pitbulls, Puritans, and Politics*
- Dr. Diana Reynolds Cordileone, Fellow--Summer 2011
Proposed Publication: Learning from the Anti-Christian: Friedrich Nietzsche's Message to Followers of Jesus
- Dr. David Cummings, Scholar--Summer 2011
Proposed Publication: Effects of Tropical Deforestation on Norops Lizard Behavior
- Dr. Rick Kennedy, Fellow—2011-12
Proposed Book: *John and Acts, Vol. 8 in Cotton Mather's Biblia Americana*
- Dr. Michael Leffel, Scholar--Summer 2011
Proposed Publication: Beyond Meaning: Integrating Morality and Spirituality
- Dr. Jim Skalman, Scholar--Summer 2011
Art Display: Image/Space/Image

Faculty Scholarship Day: This was the third year that the Wesleyan Center served as organizing 'host' for Faculty Scholarship Day, and it was by far the best one of its kind yet produced, with over 20 presentations given and nearly a hundred PLNU faculty in attendance to hear their colleagues present. The success of this event, compared to previous years, was in large part a result of the Provost's willingness to schedule the event as part of faculty development prior to the beginning of the school year. In the past we have attempted to have the event during the school year, and there have been many conflicts to work around.

CTL Collaboration: Jo Clemmons and I have worked closely together over the past year trying to identify ways that we might effectively support faculty in their attempts to strengthen their research and writing, especially through establishing writing communities. Our collaboration culminated in the faculty development event "Publish and Flourish" with special guest Tara Gray and the formation of several faculty writing communities that have continued through the summer. We have had further conversations about how we might continue to support and expand these, and will continue our support of faculty development in the area of research and writing.

Research and Writing Fridays: As part of my desire to support faculty scholarship, I have set aside Fridays as a day of quiet study and writing in the Wesleyan Center library and made this space available to the entire faculty. Over the past year, several different faculty members took advantage of this opportunity, and I plan to continue it this fall, especially now that we have faculty learning communities fully established. In fact, one community has been meeting in the Wesleyan Center all summer.

Honors Program

This past year was a good one for the honors program. We completed the publication of our first three volumes of the new *Arete: The PLNU Honors Journal*, and had one of the largest groups of honors students in the history of the program (33 completed the program). Especially exciting to me was the expanded involvement of the school of nursing in honors, with our largest crop ever, and another large crop committed for next year as well! Unfortunately, it was also the year in which we saw what was probably the largest number of drop outs in the history of the program. In most cases this was because students found that they had simply had too many commitments in their senior year and could not manage the requirements of the program. In response to this, I made significant adjustments to my recruitment for the 2012-13 program, tightening the entry requirements, and spending a lot more time talking with students about the level of commitment required for participation. Currently I have 38 students enrolled in the program, about ten less than I had at this time last year, but I anticipate they have a far greater understanding of the required commitment than the group did last year so that we will lose less.

Honors Expansion Conversation: During the 2011-12 school year, I led a series of conversations about the possibility of expanding the honors program into a four-year cohort program somewhat like the Torrey Honors Program at BIOLA. These conversations have included the provost and leadership in Study Abroad, ISF, Admissions, Spiritual Development, Student Development, and a cross-section of other faculty. I have also met with most department chairs, and while input has been varied department to department, overall there has been widespread support for the development of such a program. However, due to concerns about the future financial situation of the university, I have put this conversation on hold until we have greater clarity about the financial picture moving forward and a greater sense of how honors fits into the priorities of the university.

Outside Collaborations

Manchester Wesleyan Research Centre: Over the past year we have maintained our relationship with the MWRC, including our annual financial support for the activities of the Centre and the sending of PLNU Wesleyan Summer Scholars to Manchester for intensive research (John Wright in 2011, Rebecca Laird in 2012). I also finally fulfilled my duty as a member of the MWRC board by participating in their annual MWRC board meeting. Thus, last summer I travelled to Manchester for the meeting, which allowed me also to attend the annual MWRC lectures and to attend the annual Wesley Lecture at Lincoln College, Oxford. My visit to Oxford also allowed me to visit the Wesley archives at Oxford, Brookes, and meet with their fellows. There are definite possibilities for future collaborations in Oxford,

as well as Manchester. William Gibson is currently a Visiting Summer Scholar as a result of the relationship that he and I built while I was visiting Oxford, and we are discussing future collaborations as well.

Center for Ethics in Science and Technology: At the request of the provost, the Wesleyan Center spearheaded a collaboration with several other area colleges and universities (UCSD, USD, SDSU, CSSMU, and Grossmont College) around the CEST, including planning and implementing a lecture series at the Fleet Science Center and campus-specific events related to the book *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot. PLNU contributed two lectures to the series, one in October 2011 by Jamie Gates, and one in April 2012 by me, which included Michael Lodahl and professors from SDSU and USD. Events conducted on the PLNU campus included two faculty groups reading the book, several different courses using the book (Nursing, Biology, Writing, ISF), a regional debate tournament, two faculty-led resident hall reading groups, and webcast lectures on campus. It was exciting for me to see such wide-spread support on the PLNU campus, as well as to participate in an effective collaboration with the other universities in town. We are currently in the planning stage for a similar series for 2012-13 focused on the book *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson.

Wesleyan Methodist Studies: I continue to serve as board member for this journal, and contributed my input as required. The third and fourth volumes were released over the last two years, and this journal is making strides to becoming the most important journal in Wesley Studies, if it has not already achieved that status. The journal is produced in Britain, and until this year, the PLNU Wesleyan Center has served as the US distributor, though that arrangement has just come to an end.

Charles Wesley Society: I serve as a Board Member for the CWS, and have participated in the planning and support for the Society. I did not make the annual meeting last year (it was in Europe) but plan to this fall, if my budget will allow. The PLNU Wesleyan Center has this year taken over hosting and managing the CWS website, which has been a significant benefit to the Society.

Visiting Scholars

Keith Stanglin, Harding University: Keith is a highly respected Arminius scholar, and while in residence at PLNU during the summer and fall of 2011 completed his forthcoming introduction to the life and theology of Jacob Arminius, soon to be released by Oxford University Press. In service to PLNU, Keith played a significant role in the planning and organization of the 2012 Arminius Reconsidered conference (see below). Keith also helped us to build up the special library Arminius collection, which will be of special service to future Arminius scholars.

Joseph Bankard, Northwest Nazarene University: Joseph, who is a PLNU alum and former PLNU professor, was in residence during the summer of 2011 and completed an article on theology and the neurosciences. Joseph regularly met with PLNU faculty during his time

here, and made significant contributions to the Science and Theology Reading Group, which was reading a book in his area of expertise.

Doug Daugherty, Illinois Wesleyan University. Doug was in residence during the Spring semester. He is a psychologist specializing in addiction and recovery and spiritual formation. Doug met with several PLNU faculty and staff during his stay to do consulting, as well as a special meeting with much of the Student Development Office staff to consult with them about their work with students struggling with various types of addictions.

William Gibson, Oxford Brookes University: Bill is currently in residence, and is working on John Wesley's four-volume *History of England*, a largely ignored work of Wesley's. Bill has met and consulted with several PLNU faculty, and has expressed willingness to do some consulting with me on the White Paper.

First Year Experience

The faculty approved the development of a First Year Experience focused on a revamping of the First-Year Convocation distinct from PSYCH 101. This means that Convocation no longer has a departmental home. The provost has asked the Wesleyan Center to serve as a kind of institutional home for FYE, and I have been working with Karl Martin, faculty member in charge of FYE, in the development of the curriculum.

Development of Interdisciplinary Studies Office

In collaboration with the provost, I have helped organize a series of discussions between Center directors and related interdisciplinary offices on campus around the possible formation of some kind of institutional division that would unite all of these institutional entities around their common interdisciplinary foci. This conversation remains ongoing, although we have proposed the possible development of an "Interdisciplinary Council" that will seek to organize and support all interdisciplinary programs, centers and offices.

Center Assistant Lydia Heberling has already begun to help us move into a deeper collaboration by, over the last year, providing significant administrative support to the efforts of both the Center for Women's Studies and the Center for Justice and Reconciliation. She will continue this in the upcoming school year.

Additional Activities

The following are various activities that I was involved in over the last year that do not fall explicitly under my job description, per se, but I chose to involve myself in because I believed that such involvement would support the fundamental mission of the Wesleyan Center.

Scholarship:

- "Wesley and Homelessness," *PLNU Viewpoint* (Fall 2011).

- “Called Unto Holiness: the Implications of Perfect Love for Christian Higher Education,” *Telos: The Destination for Nazarene Higher Education* (NPH, 2011).
- “Taking Back Science from the Secular World,” a six-part blog series published on BioLogos (Fall 2011-Winter 2012). I have been asked to write additional series, but thus far have not had the time.
- “Human Sexuality,” and “Church and State,” *Global Wesleyan Dictionary of Theology* (NPH, 2012).
- “The God of Relational Love and Multiplicity of Religious Traditions,” *Relational Theology* (PLP, 2012).
- “Open our Eyes, Open our Ears,” and “A Eucharistic People,” *Nurturing the Prophetic Imagination* (PLP, 2012)

Talks Given:

- “The Wesleyan Tradition and Creation Care,” for Harry Watkins sustainability class (Fall 2011/Spring 2012).
- “The Wesleys and the Wesleyan Tradition,” for Jeanne Maiden’s Graduate Nursing Seminar (Fall 2011).
- “The Wesleys and the Wesleyan Tradition,” two lectures for Rebecca Laird’s Life of Holiness course (Fall 2011).
- “Clothe Yourself in Christ,” Chapel talk (Fall 2011).
- “The Mission of God and the Mission of the Church,” for Ron Benefiel’s Mission of the Church course (Spring 2012).
- “Perfecting Grace: Christian Holiness and the Human Sciences,” for Michael Lodahl’s Christian theology course (Spring 2012).
- “Christian Theology and the Future of Robotics” (or “Why Someday We Will Baptize Robots”), panelist (Spring 2012).
- “Death and Immortality in the Great World Religions,” moderator (Spring 2012)

Support for the School of Theology and Christian Ministry: In the fall of 2011, I functioned as a regular member of the STCM in attending all departmental meetings and contributing to departmental projects, such as developing program learning outcomes. During the spring semester I gradually withdrew from participation feeling that this commitment was too great and that my time needed to be given to other endeavors. However, I do think that this participation helped to forge a stronger bond between the Center and STCM and that I was able to make a positive contribution to the department over the last year. For instance, I

initiated the conversation between Mary Paul and (then) Dean Bob Smith about having meetings between STCM faculty and Spiritual Development staff, which now occur each semester to forge greater ties. I am grateful to be associated with this wonderful group of colleagues and scholars.

PLNU Diversity Council: Over the past two years I served as a member of the Diversity Council. However, this spring I decided to withdraw my membership. Again, I feel as though my contribution was significant in helping get the Council off the ground, but over time I have felt less and less needed by the group (my contributions overlapping with several other members) and my time better spent on other endeavors.