

Wesleyan Center Annual Report 2016-17

Overview

The past year was a challenging one for me considering my continued recovery, my moderately increased teaching load, my shift from a 12-month to 11-month contract, and the uncertainty of my future as center director. However, I believe that it has been a good year. Despite significant changes to her job description, Shanae Brown continues to provide support for the Center, and, despite my pending shift out of center leadership, I have great confidence that the Center will continue to thrive with her help and the new leadership.

Campus-Wide Education about our Wesleyan Heritage

Wesleyan Pedagogy Reading Group: During the summer of 2016, I led a group of seven PLNU faculty members in reading and discussing the Wesleyan White Papers and the work of David and Jamie Smith on incorporating Christian practices into our teaching (*Teaching and Christian Practices*). As a culmination of our work together, the professors were all required to make changes to their pedagogy, and report on them to me at the end of the fall semester. When we met, it was amazing to see both the value and impact of the changes for each professor's teaching that resulted. We have another group of faculty committed to participating in a similar group this summer.

Wesleyan Center Lectures: During the last school year the Center sponsored two series of talks aimed at highlighting various aspects of our Wesleyan heritage and core values. All sessions were well attended by PLNU faculty, staff and students, and were accompanied each semester by reading groups connected with the themes of the major talks.

Fall Series: During the fall semester Center brought to campus biblical scholar Joel Green to speak on the topic of 'How Wesleyans Read the Bible as Scripture' (accompanied by two groups reading a book by Joel Green on this topic) and artist John Swanson spoke on his understanding of the integration of faith and artwork, especially as it relates to paintings that have been purchased by the Wesleyan Center and now are displayed in the School for Theology and Christian Ministry. The Center also led a campus-wide collaboration hosting artist Stephen Smith, who participated in various campus events, including speaking in chapel and various classes, and giving a talk about how his faith informs his artwork. The highlight of his visit was his public creation of a new piece of art which was commissioned and paid for by the Wesleyan Center. This piece, 'Weeds and Seeds' will be prominently displayed in the dining hall lobby of the Nicholson Commons upon completion of the new dining hall entrance. It will be joined there by some previously purchased serigraphs by John Swanson.

Spring Series: This spring the focus of the Wesleyan Center series was the interface of psychology and theology. Our featured speaker was Dr. Brad Strawn, who spoke in chapel, visited various classes, and gave a lecture on his work (with Warren Brown) on the physical and neuropsychological aspects of Christian formation and experience. Our spring

series also included a similar lecture on psychology and Christian formation given by Ross Oakes Mueller. Completing this series was a talk by Thomas Oord on the topic 'Wesley, Assurance, and Attachment Theory'.

Visiting Scholar Talks: During the summer of 2016, each of the Wesleyan Center Visiting Scholars made a presentation to the PLNU community about the work they were undertaking during their stay at PLNU. A similar series will be conducted this summer (2017) as well. (See below for a list of scholars).

Point Loma Press

Although Point Loma Press no longer has an operating budget and therefore technically does not exist, we have been able to continue to keep some of the work of the press alive through some key collaborations that predate the press's demise and through some creative financing including:

Fides et Historia: This year was the last we have served as official publishers of this journal, the penultimate edition going out late in the fall of 2015, and the very last issue having gone out in early May of 2016. Heretofore, Pepperdine University will take over publishing duties, though we will continue to assist them through the rest of the year as they get their operation up and running. Although there are ways in which I think that our taking on the task of publishing the journal has not been as beneficial as we had hoped, I think that it has nevertheless been of benefit to PLNU, especially in continuing to establish our credibility as a significant voice in Christian higher education, given that it aligns us as peers with both Calvin and Pepperdine, publishers respectively before and after our service.

Faculty Development

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

- Carol Blessing, LJML
- David Cummings. Biology
- Brad Kelle, STCM
- Paula Kronovich LJML
- Rebecca Laird, STCM
- Bettina Pedersen, LJML

External Collaborations

Word Made Fresh: As in previous years, we collaborated with APU in hosting this event at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion. This event serves as the chief event at AAR (the largest meeting in the world in bringing together theologians and religious scholars each year) representing a progressively oriented (that is, non-fundamentalist, non-Reformed, and therefore generally Wesleyan-Arminian) discussion of

current theological issues. For the Fall 2016 event, Peter Enns was the keynote, and he spoke on academic freedom in Christian institutional contexts.

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 (Bill Wood and Rebecca Laird) to participate in their annual scholar program.

Charles Wesley Society: I serve as a Board Member for the CWS, and have participated in the planning and support for the Society, which met here at PLNU in March 2016 for its annual meeting.

Visiting Scholars (see Wesleyan Center webpage for bios)

Summer of 2016

- Luisa Gallagher, George Fox University
- Sarita Gallagher, George Fox University

Summer of 2017

- Marty Michaelson, Southern Nazarene University
- Jennifer Matheny, George Fox University
- Rachel Cope, Brigham Young University
- Bob Millet, Brigham Young University