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“For the Good of the World”:
Methodism’s Ministry to the Campus
Russell E. Richey

When I remarked on chaplaincy in my book Extension Ministers: Mr. Wesley’s True Heirs, I did so primarily with respect to the military and had little to say about college chaplains and campus ministry in general. About the several forms of the church's ministry in higher education, I knew some chapters; but the longer story I did not know very well. An invitation to participate in an exploration of “the promise of campus ministry,” hosted by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (hereafter, GBHEM) in October 2009, has allowed me to take a first look at the overall picture. The reflections that follow draw on several sources: Donald Shockley's fine, although now dated, study of campus ministry; an essay by and an e-mail correspondence with Robert Monk; and coverage of United Methodism and higher education by the United Methodist Reporter over the past several years. In addition, my colleague Brooks Holifield's new history of ministry frames campus ministry nicely but refers to existing works for his brief treatment. At any rate, I depend on these and other earlier treatments to propose a fivefold schematization of Methodism's ministry to the campus—embrace, distance, separation, single parenting, and reinvented home.

The schema focuses on the relation of Methodism to the campus. As will become more readily apparent as the essay unfolds, the images or metaphors for these several phases convey only imprecisely the relation of church to campus. No small part of the imprecision derives from the multilayered character of denominational governance and of Methodism's, in this instance. Campus ministries have been, and perhaps ideally should be, related (1) to the congregations near the institution and particularly to what has been termed the near-campus church; (2) to the district and the district superintendent within whose purview the campus and its ministries lie; (3) to the annual conference whose extension ministry structures support and oversee United Methodist religious activities and to whom the ordained campus ministers belong; and (4) to the general agency (now GBHEM) that also provides resources for campus ministry. The metaphors as proposed suggest a dynamic but unraveling marital saga. More abstract spatial, genetic, relational, and
dynamic notions might also work as, for instance, a more spatial rendering of unity, distance, separation, isolation, and self-sufficiency. But the spatial metaphors make it somewhat difficult to treat the relation of campus ministry to the different levels of the church and to explore the implications of the church’s varying assignments over time of the lead or predominant support and oversight role to one level or another.3

Note further that this typology pertains to campus ministry for which Methodism exercises or exercised responsibility, not to the larger story of collegiate religious presence and activity. (I am mindful as well of the hard questions posed by interpreters of higher education and the church-related college, who ask: What remains of church relationship? in denominational identity? in religious ethos? in curricular coherence? in faith community? in leadership sensitive to the church? in the shaping of persons for church professions?)4

Chaplain’s Offices
From the recent efforts by Alice Knotts and colleagues to characterize United Methodist campus ministries, I draw the following descriptors:

• Providing hospitality, support, counseling, and other pastoral services;
• Cultivating international, intercultural, and inter-religious understanding;
• Nurturing individuals in the faith, furthering understanding of the Wesleyan/Methodist tradition;
• Stimulating critical inquiry on matters religious;
• Developing leadership among students and encouraging religious vocations;
• Teaching, especially in biblical, theological, and ethical areas, and helping students connect their faith with knowledge and experience gained in the curricular and extracurricular realms;
• Leading worship and encouraging collegians to lives of discipline and devotion;
• Offering a prophetic word on the society’s structures and practices of injustice and oppression and on the church’s implication in or failure to critique.5

I am sure that others might generate longer and more elaborate or more focused descriptions. The above list suffices for my purpose in asking how the church conceived its ministry to the campus; whose charge it was to keep; and whether, where, and how the church engaged the campus. And, again, I trace a drama in five acts—embrace, distance, separation, single parenting, and home redefined.

Embrace
This first phase was epitomized by the colleges themselves.6 In 1820 and 1824, the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (hereafter MEC) charged annual conferences with the establishment of schools, literary institutions, and colleges. Kentucky Methodists established Augusta College (1822), Virginia Methodists, Randolph-Macon College (1830), New England Methodists, Wesleyan University in Connecticut (1831), and Georgia Methodists, Emory College and, for women Wesleyan College (1836).7 By the Civil War, Methodism had created or acquired some 200 such institutions. Lacking adequate funding, staffing, and clientele, many did not survive. But some 34 founded before 1861 did.8

Those descriptors just outlined might well stand for the aims that Methodists had in founding these colleges. That is, the work to which campus ministers today are called and the duties and responsibilities assigned to them were the common endeavor of the entire college—indeed, of the denomination through its colleges. The several responsibilities that campus ministers now shoulder, once borne by the entire institution and its leadership, the colleges delegated and assigned in a gradual process that extended over the century and three quarters since Methodists began their serious college-founding. In what follows, I trace in tentative and sketchy fashion this incredible delegation or hand-off—or, should we say, abandonment by our colleges of their religious purposes.

Wilbur Fisk (1792–1839) was educated at the universities of Vermont and Brown and studied law before entering the ministry and the New England Conference. He served a circuit, a station, and a term as presiding elder and as head of Wesleyan Academy (Massachusetts). Then the denomination elected him as first president of its flagship new college, Wesleyan University, in 1831.9 Twice his leadership would be recognized by election to the episcopacy. Insofar as Wesleyan had a chaplain, Fisk occupied that office. It would be more accurate to say, however, that to the whole institution went the chaplain’s responsibilities; but they came to focus on him. Fisk and the college, then, embodied—albeit in quaint nineteenth-century form—the several duties we have just detailed for campus ministers today.

Fisk enunciated two purposes in accepting the presidency: “[that] arrangement might be made for the benefit of the sons of his brethren in the ministry, few of whom, on account of the expense, could enjoy the advantages of a liberal education. The other was the necessity of some
more efficient measures for the education of young men who might be called to the work of foreign missions."

In his inaugural address, Fisk affirmed that “[e]ducation should be directed in reference to two objects,—the good of the individual educated, and the good of the world.”

A Methodist college education ought, he insisted, to effect the reformation of world. He said:

*Education is to be second only to Christianity itself, in carrying on this work. By this the youthful mind is disciplined; the arts and sciences are improved; the world is enlightened; and above all, by this an army of faithful, intelligent, enterprising, benevolent men are trained up, and sent forth to be leaders in the great enterprises of the day. I speak not now of one profession merely; ministers and merchants, lawyers and physicians, teachers and statesmen, farmers and mechanics, authors and artists, all are wanted in this work, and wanted in greater abundance than can be supplied.*

Fisk had high aims for students no matter their vocational intentions. “We are hoping they will not be trained to selfishness, to be emulous of earthly honour, and covetous of earthly gain; but will be such as the present circumstances of the world require, men of enlarged philanthropy, of godlike benevolence, who shall go forth in the great work of conquering the world for Christ.” In an 1831 letter, he wrote to a correspondent in Alabama: “I wish we could fill that new country with sound pious teachers. Indeed, I want to send out enough to set the world on fire! I have done educating youths for THEMSELVES; my sole object, I think, will be, hereafter, to educate all I can get FOR THE WORLD.”

Fisk, who held the title of professor of moral science and belles-lettres as well as president, cared for the spiritual disciplines of students and for the integration of knowledge with piety. He preached often, established missionary and temperance societies within the school, led revivals, admonished the wayward, set an example for what he advocated, and in various ways tended the Methodist ethos of Wesleyan University. His biographer affirms, “Dr. Fisk always felt the importance of maintaining an ascendant religious influence in the institution.” Pastor, counselor, mentor, exemplar, guide, educator—Fisk performed what we would now take to be the chaplain's functions, and, in addition, those of evangelist. When a revival broke out in 1834, Fisk suspended “our regular college duties.” The report to the *Christian Advocate* indicated that the deepened spirituality built on solid foundations:

*The University was established by the Church for the good of the world, and especially for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause; and to experience no spiritual refreshings for more than two years seemed peculiarly inauspicious. The young men were moral, regular in their habits, remarkably correct in their general deportment, active in the cause of temperance, of missions, and of other benevolent enterprises, but all this, commendable as it was, did not come up to the important standard, personal holiness of heart and life.*

In a letter to a friend, urging greater support by Methodists for this Wesleyan bond of knowledge and vital piety, Fisk wrote, “Religion and education, bound together in their native affinities, and their operations in unison, must save the Church and must save the nation.”

The Methodist college could save church and nation—could fulfill the denomination’s mission of reforming the continent and spreading scriptural holiness over these lands—Fisk insisted, by equipping the church’s ministry. The college could do a better job than either the existing course of study or the newfangled theological seminaries that other denominations were then founding. The Methodist college was cheaper, more efficient, and more reliable. For ministers-to-be, it mingled “the study of theology with their other pursuits” and avoided the extremes of “dogmatism” and the “spinning out of new theories, as is the case sometimes in theological seminaries.” Indeed, in the college, vocations would be discerned, as the “young men” were converted and cared for. Fisk had seen from his own experience that this training for ministry would work. Fisk’s surmise proved true for the long haul. Wesleyan graduated 919 students over its first forty years. Of these, a third entered the Methodist ministry. Wesleyan alone produced three-quarters of the northern preachers (Methodist Episcopal Church) who earned college degrees. By the 1870s and 1880s, northern Methodists could call Wesleyan “the mother of our denominational institutions,” “the crown and glory of our Church,” and “mother of us all.”

A similar pattern pertained in other of the church’s men’s colleges. At Emory, Dickinson, and Randolph-Macon, the conferences trained their preachers. They constituted the seminaries of their day.

What of the prophetic, intercultural roles now played by chaplains? President Fisk exercised those offices by
support of missions, temperance, care for African Americans, and opposition to slavery (though, on the latter, through moderate means, not the ultra-abolitionist measures advanced by William Lloyd Garrison and, among Methodists, by Orange Scott). As noted, missions, the most important of these, was one of two primary purposes of the college. Fisk drafted denominational statements on missions, supported the Liberian effort and volunteered to go himself, took an interest in translation of the Bible into Mohawk, supported the mission to Oregon and the Flathead Native Americans, personally recruited Jason Lee to lead that initiative, lobbied for other volunteers, toured with Jason and Daniel Lee to raise money in New England, and assisted in fund-raising for the Methodist Missionary Society.

Tutored by years of critique of missions as cultural-religious imperialism, at worst, and insensitivity to the integrity of the societies and cultures missionized, at best, we have a hard time getting our minds around the prophetic intentions with which our ancestors took on this global agenda. Fisk’s successor as president at Wesleyan, Stephen Olin (previously president at Randolph-Macon), enunciated missions’ transformative and redemptive aspirations. In an 1846 sermon, Olin declared “that event upon which future ages are likely to look back as vastly the most important in the history of the last hundred years . . . the revival and new development of missionary enterprise.” He would not, he continued, minimize the importance of other signal events—the American and French Revolutions, the Reform Bill and Catholic emancipation, the abolition of slavery, “the extension of the British East Indian empire over a population of one hundred and twenty millions,” and “the introduction of China into the family of nations.” He continued, “We by no means affect to undervalue the importance of these great events. . . . In making these concessions, however, we mean only to magnify the missionary enterprise, for which we have claimed, at the outset, a decided and manifest superiority over all other agencies and plans of reform.”

At Wesleyan, Olin created a mission museum, Missionary Hall, which a friend described as a room fitted up by the “liberality and enterprise of Christian friends as a depository for such specimens of art from unevangelized tribes, and for such symbols and implements connected with their religious ideas and worship, as shall aid the inquisitive student in acquiring the most ample information and the most vivid impressions in regard to the heathen world. Here was to be the place of congregation, and consultation, and sympathy, and prayer for pious students whose hearts God may touch with a benevolent concern for the spiritual welfare of pagan natives.” There, students would develop interest, concern, and ambition for missions—“to learn to weep over perishing millions.”

In every way that the church knew how, it embraced the college and made its ministry to higher education a connectional endeavor. Wesleyan was launched as a joint endeavor of the New York, New England, and New Hampshire-Vermont annual conferences. Each conference elected visitors who, with Wesleyan trustees, constituted a Joint Board of Trustees and Visitors with responsibilities for inspection, oversight, accountability, and promotion. The incorporating charter empowered the Joint Board with broad powers, including explicitly the election of the president and faculty, prescription of “the course of study,” and approval (with the faculty) of conferring degrees on the graduates. The charter gave trustees a more focused responsibility, namely, to manage the college’s property “in behalf of the Annual Conferences.” Conference visitors took their charge of oversight seriously, reporting back in writing, their review taken up by and made a part of the record of the annual conference. The church embraced the college on the local level as well. On Sundays, students attended the existing Middletown church. By 1836, five years after founding, Wesleyan’s chapel became a regular “station” appointment. Attendance at services of both church and chapel was required.

Were these institutions sectarian? Scholars divide on this question. “Sectarian,” affirmed Charles Sellers of Dickinson. “Public-minded and civic,” James Scanlon and David Potts called Randolph-Macon and Wesleyan. A disinterested observer, a Baptist who writes of Protestant education generally, judges: “These schools were more secular than the present-day observer might suppose from their presidents’ rhetoric.” According to this interpreter, denominational governance operating for communal and local interests and in a “public” spirit pertained across American higher education. Methodist schools, like those of most denominations, were state-chartered. They imposed no religious tests. They welcomed students from various (Protestant) denominations. Like Wesleyan, they generally took seriously the imperative of religious and moral character formation, which they undertook through a variety of instruments—formal instruction, modeling, regular worship, annual revivals, and moral codes. Such formation cohered with and was understood in relation to a classical, liberal-arts curriculum and was
capped by moral philosophy. The Methodist—indeed, the denominational—college was, according to this historian, “a curious hybrid”: a public, incorporated institution controlled by administration and trustees accountable in some fashion to a denomination.29

Though civic, ecumenical, or irenic for their day, the Wesleyans nevertheless stayed close to the church, enjoyed the support of the denomination at both local and regional levels and drew much of their faculty and, typically, the president from the denomination.26 Across higher education and up until the Civil War, 262 of 288 college presidents were ordained.30 The practice of staffing faculty and administration with preachers was so commonplace as to elicit a statement of concern from the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (hereafter, MECS) in its 1846 gathering:

The practice, gradually introduced during the last twenty years, of annually appointing a large number of travelling ministers to the literary institutions of the church, has, for some time past, been regarded as an evil requiring correction. It is believed that too many able and effective men have been, in this way, lost to the church as travelling preachers—in fact, without reason or necessity; as, in most instances, the literary labour they have been called upon to perform, could have been as well performed by laymen or local preachers, without depriving the Church of so many valuable travelling ministers.31

The bishops’ concern nevertheless underscores my point here that the church embraced the campus in its ministry; and campus ministry was part and parcel of the church’s ministry. On this first of five stages in the evolution of Methodist campus ministry, commentators have had relatively little to say. Kenneth Underwood notes:

The campus climate of opinion, the curriculum, the leadership of faculty and president, all were thought to minister to the study. Therefore a professional with specific responsibilities for the religion of the student was seldom designated.32

Donald Shockley jumps over this phase of campus ministry initially, beginning his narrative with Underwood’s second stage, but tellingly titled, “Campus Ministries Begun by Students.”33 Robert Monk concurs, devoting a short and very general paragraph to “Protestant” colleges before turning to the international, interdenominational, intercollegiate YMCA, YWCA, SVM (Student Volunteer Movement), and WSCF (World Student Christian Federation).34

That Methodists participated actively in these student initiatives, I do not doubt. That their evangelistic presence on campus oriented Methodists to global horizons and foreign missions can be assumed. That Methodists rose to leadership—indeed, with John R. Mott, to the very pinnacle of leadership—must be celebrated. But that these youth-led, interdenominational Christian evangelism organizations ought to count as Methodist campus ministry, I very much question.35 The YMCA, YWCA, SVM, WSCF, and the various Dwight L. Moody-led ventures parallel today’s parachurch ministries on college campuses. They did signal an incredibly important shift from local to national, even international, and intercollegiate ordering of ministries on campus. And they became important on Methodist campuses after, not before, the church repositioned its oversight of higher education and ministries in higher education from a local and conference into a national system.

Distance

Such nationalization, ongoing within denominations, generally post-Civil War, gradually but fundamentally altered the church’s relation to the campus and put distance between the colleges and the conferences and local churches that defined the life of day-to-day Methodism. The close embrace of the college by contiguous annual conferences gave way to connectional ordering, accountability to General Conference, and delegated oversight to a connectional board of education. The reorientation, which changed relations glacially in most places and little in others, began in northern Methodism during Reconstruction. Two dates and creations need mention: In 1868, a board of education, providing oversight and support for education generally and an accrediting gesture toward higher education; and, in 1892, the delegation of the accrediting functions to a subsidiary, the University Senate.36 The enabling legislation for such nationalization generally occurred with the 1872 MEC General Conference (1874 in the MECS, still later for the Methodist Protestant, United Brethren, and Evangelical Churches).37 By these actions, and subsequent legal reincorporation, Methodism changed the agency for its outreach and programming
from local trustees of voluntary associations overseen by annual conferences to national denominational agencies legally accountable to General Conference and with boards and general secretaries elected on that level.38

The repositioning of relation and support onto a national or connectional level—a revolution championed by the agencies and by the colleges—was paralleled in every sector of the church’s life. Frances Willard elevated the church’s temperance witness onto a national plane. John Vincent put the whole church, at every age level, on the same biblical text, created nationally distributed Sunday school lessons, established national training schools, and institutionalized such programming at Chautauqua. Women’s foreign and home mission societies, the Ladies’ and Pastors’ Christian Union, the Freedmen’s Aid Society, and the Southern Education Society—all mobilized the church for its work as had similar national endeavor mobilized northern Methodists and Protestants generally for support of the Civil War. Denominational programming and missions, especially, prospered.

Initially, the Methodist colleges benefited immensely and financially from Methodism’s nationalization or connectionalization of its enterprise and programming. Immediately after the Civil War, northern Methodism committed itself to raising $2 million in a centenary campaign, primarily for educational institutions but also for Sunday schools and missions. A national Connectional Fund Committee set the first Sunday of January 1866 as a church-wide occasion for remembrance and commitment. The Advocates promoted the cause and acknowledged gifts and pledges. By the time General Conference convened two years later (in 1868), $8,709, 498 had been raised, with more to come. This nationalization, most dramatically illustrated in northern Methodism, occurred also in other of The United Methodist Church’s predecessor churches. In the MECS, for instance, the founding of Vanderbilt in 1872 as a central university represented a similar connectionalizing of the educational agenda. Two decades later, the northern church mounted a several-decade connectional campaign to establish in the nation’s capitol a central graduate-level university “to be called The University, which should be the crown of our educational system.”39 With the establishment in 1892 of the University Senate and a mandate for a national fund for the support of students, northern Methodism looked forward to a national educational system. Southern Methodism sustained its own resolve in that direction when, on the loss of Vanderbilt in 1914, it resolved to found two new universities and secure them more tightly to the denomination.

These two new universities, Emory University and Southern Methodist University, both featured seminaries. By that point, all of United Methodism’s predecessor denominations boasted theological schools. The seminaries, too, though in quite unintended ways, put distance between the colleges and contiguous conferences and local churches. Although Methodism did not require seminary attendance and a B.D. degree (M.Div.) for ordination, increasingly the bishops, conferences, and ministers focused their aspirations for the leadership around the seminary. The MEC bishops sounded such a note in their address to the 1896 General Conference:

The conditions of admitting preachers to our Conferences are based on a state of things that existed many years ago, when circumstances were very different. Our whole system has been based on gifts, graces, and usefulness developed by a course of study pursued amid the difficulties of regular work by junior preachers under a senior. As a regular drill in practical work it could not be easily surpassed. But it is not now practicable to so relate junior and senior preachers, and the course of study is much better pursued in our colleges and theological seminaries. . . . We believe the time has fully come when the Church should recognize in the conditions to admission on trial to our Conferences the preparation gained in the theological schools. The Church has already advanced one step in this direction by ordaining as deacons those who have been local preachers, have been students for two years in one of our regular theological seminaries, and have completed the first two years of the Conference Course of Study. We now recommend that the Church take one more step in advance and enact that any student shall be credited on the Conference Course of Study with examination in any of the books of the first two years of the Conference Course which any theological school, whose professors are nominated and confirmed by the bishops, shall certify that he has satisfactorily passed.40

In response, the committee on standards echoed the bishops’ plea for higher standards:

We rejoice in the advancement during recent years of the scholastic standards for the ministry of the
Methodist Episcopal Church. The General Conference earnestly recommends to all candidates for the ministry of our Church that they complete a full collegiate course of study and, if possible, a course in one of our theological schools before applying for admission to an Annual Conference.41

The notion that ministry required specialized education and formation, beyond or distinct from the colleges, led the women who inspired the deaconess movement to found separate training institutions. In October 1885, Lucy Rider Meyer opened the Chicago Training School for City, Home, and Foreign Missions and the Chicago Deaconess Home two years later.42 And three years later, in 1888, the MEC General Conference, which had declined to seat five women elected as delegates, recognized deaconess work as an official ministry of the MEC.43 In the MECS, Belle Harris Bennett founded Scarritt Bible and Training School in 1892 in Kansas City, Missouri (relocated to Nashville in 1924).44

By the turn of the twentieth century, Methodism was creating or sustaining institutions left and right, all of which demanded the attention, support, and resources of local churches and congregations. Hospitals at home and abroad, homes for orphans and the aged, institutional churches and city missions, Epworth Leagues, Sunday schools, Freedmen’s Aid societies, missions everywhere—and, of course, colleges. Annual conferences had a lot else on their minds as well—minimum wage, the Course of Study, temperance, unification, race relations, immigration. And on all of these matters, Methodism’s array of Advocates, magazines, educational materials, and yearbooks kept the laity and local church duly informed. The strongest Protestant denomination, albeit divided, nevertheless expected that it should exercise leadership in American society.

The churches’ colleges and educational leadership also saw their role expanding and becoming more prominent. Aspiring to the standards of Harvard, Princeton, and Yale, and functioning in a growing and ever more competitive higher-education environment, northern and southern Methodism’s two flagship institutions, Wesleyan and Vanderbilt, put the maximum distance between themselves and the church. That is, they broke the ties completely. Wesleyan did so gradually; Vanderbilt abruptly. In 1907, Wesleyan University secured a revision of its charter that removed the restriction that its president and a majority of its board and faculty be Methodists. While retaining the conference-elected trustees, the revision dictated that they constitute no more than one-fourth of the board and forbade the use of any denominational requirements in selection of other trustees, in hiring of administration or faculty, and in admissions. In part, Wesleyan took this move, with the endorsement of its alumni, to qualify for recognition by, participation in, and funding from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Then functioning as, in effect, the national accreditation and standards organization, Carnegie limited its provision of pension from a $10 million fund to institutions not “under control of a sect.” By its charter revision, Wesleyan eventually qualified.45 A full break with Methodism, however, came gradually. Until 1925, presidents remained ordained Methodists and thus also pastors of the college church. A non-Methodist, James L. McConaughy, succeeded to the presidency in 1925; but a Methodist, W. G. Changer, served as college pastor from 1928 to 1941. John Gross estimates that up through 1930, 20 percent of the graduates became ministers. However, by 1941 there was no real relationship left between church and university. Presbyterian and Episcopal ministers served successively as college pastors. And in 1968–69, the university dissolved the church into a university ministry. Currently, that ministry features Muslim, Jewish, and Christian chaplains—the latter, the pastor of First Baptist, Middletown.46

The Vanderbilt break came more abruptly, also over constitution of the board of trustees, the church’s agency in determining board membership, and whether all or just some of the bishops would be members. The contest pitted the Board of Bishops against university leadership in an ugly affair (with Carnegie funding and recognition apparently playing a very minor role). In 1914, the Tennessee Supreme Court ruled, “[T]he Board of Trust is a self-perpetuating body and can elect to fill its own vacancies.” The MECS General Conference of that year refused to accept what the ruling sustained, namely, a right to confirm the university’s nominations; and in an 151–140 vote, severed the tie with Vanderbilt.47

The southern church’s decision to establish two new universities—not colleges, but universities—ironically, signaled a commitment to participate actively in the university-building of the twentieth century. Here, Methodism led Protestantism in creating great universities or elevating colleges into universities. In so doing, the church exposed its educational establishment to precisely the competitive environment; funding constraints; federal and state jurisdiction; interreligious and nonreligious
workforce; diverse student bodies and boards; non-
Methodist leadership; and, increasingly, national horizons
that led to the secularization of Wesleyan and Vanderbilt.
Not surprisingly, other departures followed. And it is this
theme of secularization that looms largest in treatments of
religion and higher education. The term covers the several
aforementioned trends and especially, over time, the
laicization of the presidency, an increasingly large role of
the federal government in both funding and policy, the
dominance generally of the research university and its
values, the consequent displacement of the liberal-arts
ideal as an integrative principle, and the effective marginal-
alization of religion (in religious studies, student groups,
chaplaincies, and the Christian college).48

As the twentieth century wore on, Methodism's
universities and its stronger colleges found themselves
with student bodies, faculties, administrations, and
constituencies quite similar to those in the public
sector. Under such conditions, the ministry to the
campus required institutions like that created by James C.
Baker at the University of Illinois, Urbana.49 Appointed
to Trinity MEC (in 1907, the year that Wesleyan altered
its charter), with the charge from congregation, district
superintendent, and bishop to extend the ministry of
Trinity to the campus, and functioning in a new
church facility located adjacent to campus, Baker
recreated an “embrace”—one that included faculty
and staff as well as students. The new embrace, however,
was external rather than integral to the university.50

Over time, Baker developed both the panoply of programs
and ministries and a constituency-relations system
that replicated—albeit in this external, extension, or
outside fashion—what Fisk, Wesleyan, and Methodist
colleges generally had sought to embody. By 1913, the
ministry had been separately incorporated as the Wesley
Foundation, with its own trustees. Baker also established
a commission, with representatives from the several
conferences. If this networking paralleled what the
Methodist colleges once enjoyed, the programming
isolated and replicated the explicitly formational, in-
structional, training, relational, and vocational aspects of
the collegiate enterprise. Wesley Foundations should be:

1. A shrine for worship. 2. A school for religious
education. 3. A home away from home. 4. A labor-
atory for training lay leaders in church activities.
5. A recruiting station for the ministry, for mission-
ary work at home and abroad, and for other
specialized Kingdom tasks.51

As founder Baker and historian Robert Monk note,
Wesley Foundations spread rapidly across both northern
and southern Methodism. By 1960, when Baker took
stock of the movement he had launched, Methodism
claimed 181 Wesley Foundations, another 31 on the
“united plan,” and others in the process of formation.52

In a few places, Methodists borrowed an idea from the
Disciples of Christ and established Bible chairs at state
institutions. Even within Methodist institutions, which
in many places sustained their nineteenth-century ethos
well into the twentieth century, a shift of nomenclature
indicated a subtle change of the place and understanding
of campus religious leadership. Increasingly, the
preacher to the college church claimed the title of
chaplain. Ministry to the campus would come now
from the margins, a distancing even within the church's
own schools.

Gradually, church and college came to recognize
campus ministry, in its several forms, as a specialty.
Increasingly, first informal and then more formalized
organizations gathered such ministries together; and
the denominational boards of education created staff
positions to oversee campus ministry. Student conferences
brought campus leaders and campus ministers together
in national and regional assemblies. In 1936, that first
Wesley Foundation summoned representatives from the
whole Foundation network to a conference. The next
year, a first National Methodist Student Conference
brought together leaders and ministers from the MEC,
the MECS, and the Methodist Protestant Church (here-
after, MPC), who together founded the Methodist
Student Movement (MSM).53 At unification, in 1939, a
Department of College and University Religious Life was
established within the Board of Education. Ten years later,
der under its auspices, the Religious Workers' Association of
The Methodist Church was formed. In 1951, it held the
first of what would be biennial national meetings. Its pur-
poses included those featured in professional gatherings
generally—setting standards, nuancing guild purposes,
providing mutual support and fellowship, offering con-
tinuing education, and pursuing common concerns.54

Recognition of professional status for ministers and
ministries became one of the responsibilities of the
Commission on Standards for Wesley Foundations,
established in 1952.55 By professionalization and expan-
sion, Methodist campus ministries had kept the church
on pace with the dramatic post-war expansion of higher
education and served its members who returned to school
on the G.I. Bill. But professionalization of campus

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OCCASIONAL PAPERS
ministry, notwithstanding the church’s role in its production and certification, also put distance between church (bishops, conferences, local churches, parish ministers) and the campus. Professionalism constitutes guilds, whose very wellbeing depends on defining its own sacred lore; identifying guild practices; developing apprenticeship systems; enhancing self-interest; monitoring standards; advocating for pensions, salaries, and health benefits; maintaining boundaries; and in various other ways championing guild identity and distinctiveness. Fittingly, the Wesley Foundation’s founder, Baker, recognized the “professional” to constitute one of four levels by which the Wesley Foundation Movement sustained itself. The four levels, in order of his presentation, were the connectional or administrative, the student, the professional, and the collegiate or institutional. Perhaps assumed, but certainly not mentioned, were annual conference, district, local church, episcopal, and district superintendent support. That omission or silence concludes act two.

Separation

If Methodism’s campus ministry indeed unfolds in five acts, the third—the radical ministry of the 1960s and early 1970s—enjoyed a quite brief time on stage; but its scenes remain of continuing importance to this day. The radicalization of leading university campuses by the Civil Rights movement, the Vietnam War, the free speech movement, the drug scene, Black power, and riots and various radical ideologies that swept along some campus ministries, disrupted the Methodist Student Movement; killed the avant-garde college-age magazine motive; ended the University Christian Movement; and created a gulf between the local church and its ministry, on one side, and the campus and the campus ministry, on the other. The unfolding of this phase of the drama was narrated from several vantage points by scholars studying campus ministry up close and catching the wrenching apart of church and campus as it occurred. This participant-observer and contemporaneous interpretation came through the multiyear and well-funded Danforth Foundation Study of Campus Ministries. Heading the project was Kenneth Underwood, then a faculty member at Wesleyan University, writing as Wesleyan dissolved the college church into a university ministry. Underwood produced the study’s findings in two massive volumes, under the title The Church, the University and Social Policy. A veritable who’s who of scholars studying American society, generally, and higher education, particularly, joined in this endeavor. Two collaborators who elaborated their perspectives into independent books, Phillip Hammond and Jeffrey Hadden, provide interesting contrasts to the perspective on campus ministry provided by Underwood.

All three presumed that campus ministry operated in the margins, interstitially placed between the university proper and the church—not really a part of the former or firmly anchored in the latter, living and working in an ill-defined boundary area. Underwood, though recognizing campus ministry to be in severe crisis, nevertheless thought that it occupied a potentially creative and important location, one that could help the entire church grasp how best to minister in a society increasingly shaped by the knowledge explosion in which the research university was deeply invested. He narrated the longer story of campus ministry, examined its present challenges, organized his collaborators’ studies of campus ministry, and schematized both volumes around a fourfold mapping of the ministry of the whole church—pastoral roles of faith and ministry; priestly and preaching roles of faith and ministry; teaching and prophetic inquiry roles, and roles of administration and governance.

Underwood took especial interest in the second of these Christological offices, that of prophet and teacher. By advocating and by exhibiting experiments in campus ministry, Underwood imagined something of a reinvention of Baker’s Wesley Foundation. In his reimagining, campus ministry became far more than a service center for students. Indeed, in the margin between church and university, Christian faculty, national leadership of the churches, contiguous congregations, judicatory officials, and students and campus ministers would think and act prophetically for the whole church and for the nation. Margin would be elevated to pulpit, campus ministry made into cathedral for the twentieth-century society, and the campus minister called to be cathedral dean. The “legitimacy of the campus ministry,” he affirmed, “is bound up with its ability to help the whole church appropriate creatively and critically the potentially revolutionizing knowledge of the university.”

Phillip Hammond, engaged with Kenneth Underwood in the Danforth Foundation Study of Campus Ministries, rendered his own estimation of the vocation, concurring in viewing it as having utility for the churches but assessing its marginal status more negatively. He concluded, for instance, that the several modes of collegiate religious presence had not institutionalized, matured, and achieved professional status in large measure because of their
interstitial location, twofold identities, and “dual-contingency” positions (here we would differ with regard to Methodists and United Methodists). Campus ministries, he found through surveys, enjoyed varying levels of commitment and support from the academic and confessional communities but predominantly indifference on the part of the one and neutrality to distrust on the part of the other. The more cosmopolitan and diverse academic settings proved the most indifferent to and least supportive of campus ministry. Those contexts required creativity, innovation, initiative, and interdenominational alliances to function well, and such experimentation and ecumenicity on the part of campus ministers elicited suspicion and distance from ecclesial systems and authority.62

However, Hammond suggested that the exercise of such roles—however disdained, disapproved, or discounted by the church—nevertheless served to renew the church. Campus ministry was “a means of routing innovation into the church via campus clergymen who return to the parish, students drawn into church life, and the leadership campus ministers can give to ‘radical’ causes such as (in our day) civil rights protests and the ecumenical movement.” Alongside its renewal value, Hammond posited three other functions that campus ministry provides the church: “(1) an additional device for recruiting clergymen, (2) a haven for clergymen too ‘radical’ for the parish structure, (3) another means of alignment (along with seminaries) between church and intellectual centers.”63 In an essay for the Danforth Foundation Study, Hammond built on his book to sharpen not only the conflictual and ambiguous status but also the renewing function of campus ministers. Documenting the sharp attitudinal difference between campus and parish ministers, and imaging the former as radical, Hammond again posited that campus ministry served as a safety valve, “draining off dissidence” and as a leaven “providing a source of new ideas.” Organizations, he insisted, need their radicals for renewal, but “the forces for renewal may also destroy.”64

The latter potential—the growing clergy radicalism, its church-destructive capacity, the danger that campus ministers and other nonparish ministers would tear the church apart—impressed another sociologist involved in the study. In “The House Divided,” a chapter for Underwood’s second volume and in a separate book, The Gathering Storm in the Churches,65 Jeffrey Hadden elaborately documented the growing clash between lay and clergy attitudes on a wide range of social, political, and theological issues. In the book, Hadden illustrated with 72 tables (charts of attitudes) and described various crises that a new breed of liberal or radical clergy posed for themselves and for the church with which he insisted they were out of touch. In the chapter for Underwood, Hadden’s hysteria focused on campus ministers whose trajectory, he argued, headed them toward “institutionless Christianity,” a “Christianity without an institutional base,” a ministry cut off from its supply lines and support systems.66

A separate study, The Campus Ministry of The Methodist Church,67 launched on the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of that first Wesley Foundation and undertaken with guidance from a committee of persons deeply involved with ministries in Methodist higher education,68 also reported just as tensions between church and campus were worsening. Among the study’s many orienting questions were: “What are the sources of conflict within the campus ministry? between it and the church? between it and the university?”69 Of particular interest are the study’s findings of campus ministers’ attitudes toward the near-campus church, typically the founding and most supportive congregation. Campus ministers complained that local churches are “often anti-university, anti-intellectual, and anti-Wesley Foundation” and “too much concerned with themselves.” The near-campus or sponsoring church, they insisted, demanded “conventional methods”; resisted experiments in student work; and was, in general, not supportive. “Often the campus minister feels isolated from members of the annual conference. He may be told he is in ‘detached’ service, and he may lack status.”70

Attitudes on the church side—near-campus pastors, district superintendents, bishops, agency officials—proved less strident and conflicted but nevertheless often critical. Pastors viewed campus ministry as neglecting the larger population of students, catering to the radicals and malcontents, coddling their hostility to the local church, neglecting its evangelistic and formational responsibilities, and supporting political action.71

The problems went deeper than attitudes, the study concluded. The connectional system was not geared to render strong engagement with and support of campus ministry. Clergy were not appointed to the near-campus church with a view to their intellectual gifts, concerns for education, understanding of the university, or experience with campus ministries. District superintendents did not, “in practice,” supervise or exercise authority over campus ministers and others in special appointments. Bishops—already becoming essentially diocesan and therefore lack-
ing experience with and knowledge of campus ministries across the church—had neither the capacity nor the inclination to exercise their appointive powers to move campus ministers from one Wesley Foundation to another. The study detailed responsibilities on the connectional level of the Division of Higher Education, Joint Staff on Youth and Student Work, Department of College and University Religious Life, Commission on Standards for Wesley Foundations, Interboard Committee on Campus Ministry (formed only in 1964), and informal Joint Student Staff (from boards of Education, Missions, Christian Social Concerns, and Evangelism). But for all of the organization, the study judged that the church has too few persons to exercise the responsibilities; that it deploys them illogically; that it lacks unity or coordination of effort; and that it works insufficiently with “bishops and other officials on problems of long-range strategy, personnel, interpretation, and new ministries to the campus.” Nor did the local body charged with “direct and final responsibility for supervision of the Wesley Foundation”—its board of directors—function effectively to claim the attention and engage the connection at local, district, conference, and national levels. Many boards that swelled to include a range of church officials and represent various church bodies, ironically, proved too large to exercise the intended mediation; and members attended too erratically for the board to function effectively. The study charged the Methodist media—Together, Christian Advocate, and The Methodist Story—with too little, uninformative, and insufficiently interpretive coverage of higher education, generally, and campus ministry, particularly.

The first of the study’s fifteen recommendations was that Methodist campus ministry—already highly ecumenical—fully embrace the University Christian Movement and the United Ministries in Higher Education. Over the next decade, from 1966 to 1975, Monk reports, the number of Methodist-supported ecumenical ministries increased from 43 to 247, and Wesley Foundations declined slightly (from 196 to 179). The timing of the study’s counsel and the church’s response could not have been worse. Two years after the study appeared, in 1969, the University Christian Movement voted itself out of existence—“a calamity of such proportions,” Shockley judged two decades later, “that we have yet to recover from it.” He continued, bemoaning the collapse of the long tradition of student conferences: “All of what might be thought of as the infrastructure of student Christian organizations in several denominations, built up over decades, was simply gone, and there was no easy way to bring it back.” The Methodist Student Movement dissolved as well. Monk concludes, “With no national or state MSM organizations and a reduced staff personnel to foster interconnection through conferences, training events, and service projects, the connectional aspect of campus ministry, traditionally so central to its life, quickly faded into memory.”

**Single Parenting**

Images, attitudes, perceptions, and feelings do not always coincide with or accurately convey realities but nevertheless prove important and motivational, even controlling. Demonstrations, teach-ins, riots, building seizures and the like imaged the university for many Americans and affected attitudes toward everything having to do with students, including campus ministry. Divorce may be too strong a word for what occurred; and even separation needs a little qualification. The boards of directors doubtless remained in some form. And the new church, The United Methodist Church, recreated a connectional apparatus with successor structures (and even greater complexity) to oversee campus ministry. But the 1960s, as the several studies cited above attest, ruptured what had been the thinning and strained relations between campus ministries and the regional connection (bishops, conferences, districts, and local churches). And, perhaps more ominously, the new left’s suspicions of authority, elites, power centers, bureaucracy, and national order gave way to a new right’s even more resilient and long-lasting paranoias over the same. Campus ministry’s most significant support system, its parent(s)—United Methodism’s national bureaucracies, its general agencies in Nashville, Washington, and New York—was as beleaguered, disdained, and attacked as the campuses. A Methodism that had prospered by creating institutions that, alone among the Protestant mainline, had been a university-creating and not just a college-founding church; that had filled the nation with hospitals and homes, camps, conference centers, and cathedral churches, as well as towers such as the Chicago Temple, boasting the highest cross in the world, or the fourteen story Wesley Building in Philadelphia—this institution-building Methodism had given way to a United Methodism that, at times and in places, seemingly could neither care less about nor take pride in what it owned. And as those attitudes crystallized, the new United Methodism chose to entrust campus ministry to one of the major attitudinal sources, the annual conferences.
An early intervention to counter such attitudinal drift, effectively conveyed with the title of its first book, *A College-Related Church,* came with the establishment of a National Commission on United Methodist Higher Education by GBHEM in 1975. Chaired by my former boss, Paul Hardin, President of Drew University, the Commission's sixteen members included other presidents (among them John Silber of Boston University), a congressman, the United States Comptroller General, the vice-president of Danforth, several heads of national educational-policy organizations, academics, a state and a federal executive—but no campus ministers. Its mandate was to review, assess, and provide guidance on all aspects of United Methodist higher education policy. The last and fifth of these charges was “[a]n analysis of the current system of campus ministries, including goals, problems, organizational relationships and support structures.”

To that latter task, the Commission devoted a separate volume, its fourth, titled *Ministry on Campus: A United Methodist Mission Statement and Survey Report.* The staff drew on counsel from Allan Burry, then university minister at Wesleyan University, and others, in crafting a questionnaire, a policy statement (“The Mission of The United Methodist Church in Its Campus Ministry”), and a multipoint resolution for the 1980 General Conference, calling for “Churchwide Support for Campus Ministries.” The study, featuring 31 tables of findings and accompanying analysis, drew on a 107-item questionnaire that elicited 222 responses from 404 Wesley Foundation directors, persons in ecumenical ministries, local church staff in campus ministries, and chaplains. Although the prophetic orientation of a decade prior remained important, campus ministers in the mid-1970s identified pastoral care as their top priority and registered a different tone in their responses than had their counterparts ten years earlier. Nevertheless, although annual conference provided much of the financial support for campus ministries, the trajectories of support were level or declining, having to compete with other apportionment causes. And while accountability to annual conferences was primary for Wesley Foundation directors (and important for others), only 15 percent of campus ministers (24.4 percent of Wesley Foundation directors) identified other conference members as their professional peers. A small number, 16.4 percent, saw themselves definitely leaving campus ministry in five years. Close to 33 percent imagined the campus as their ministry for the remainder of their careers, and 44 percent were uncertain about their tenure.

As Monk notes, in making conference boards of higher education and campus ministry the primary support, and the financial resource and oversight system, The United Methodist Church reoriented campus ministry from its local base and national networking and connections. He affirms:

*It is not surprising that by the mid-1970s campus ministers often found themselves struggling to understand their position and role within the church. Loss of the support of national and state infrastructure, accompanied by a distinct shift of accountability to local annual conference control and supervision, meant that they found themselves working in a new governance setting. Their traditional understanding of campus ministry as a distinctive, specialized ministry was also significantly diminished. Changing student attitudes and needs, combined with significant modification in college and university curriculums and programs, compounded their sense of working in a different world.*

In this hand-off of responsibility, GBHEM let staffing and budgeting for campus ministry decline in the late 1970s; and in Texas, once boasting the strongest connectational support system for the MSM, a similar reduction and staffing occurred. The church's decision to refashion its campus ministry machinery and the suspicions of campuses occasioned by the radicalisms of the 1960s ill prepared United Methodism to establish and implement strategies for a changing higher education environment.

Lodging support and interpretation for campus ministries with conference boards of higher education and campus ministry set up possibilities for subtle competition for attention, visibility, and resources between the campus ministries and higher education as a whole. The massive expansion of the public sector—state universities and community colleges—in the latter decades of the twentieth century opened new frontiers and opportunities for campus ministry. But if the church mounted never-self-sufficient ministries in those burgeoning institutions, if it followed United Methodist students into state universities, if it hired and deployed new campus ministries to staff such new work—would it expand its higher education budget comparably? And why should it endorse, even in this reactive fashion, the sending of United Methodist students to these secular institutions, when the church's own colleges needed the students? The very identity of these colleges as United
Methodist needed dramatic church affirmation—so argued their presidents. With declining enrollments, ever fewer United Methodist students, decreasing numbers of members on their faculties, and pressures to reorient their curricula away from religion-friendly liberal arts to business or other pre-professional programs—the United Methodist colleges and their leaders faced dilemmas. Should they downplay their United Methodist identity and shape programs to appeal to the broadest student markets? Or should they accent the church relationship and hope that local churches and United Methodist parents would steer their youth there? And with such a dire choice, how could the church make the state university part in creating a support system for campus ministry? When the small teacher’s or agricultural college, with its compact footprint, transformed itself into a huge state university, and its campus sprawled across the city or enveloped the college community, would a near-campus church rise to the occasion? Indeed, when state universities became like cities unto themselves, how many near-campus churches did they create? How many such proximate churches actually embraced such a new and demanding identity? And where in the exploding state university was the coterie of United Methodist faculty and staff who, amidst the new pressures to publish as well as to teach, would rise to the occasion and play their part in creating a support system for campus ministry?

From the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, campus ministers must have felt very much like single parents—alone with their collegiate brood, in a new place as it were, and needing to start over in building the relations (the campus equivalents to grocer, dentist, barber, hairdresser, doctor, grocery, or insurance agent) that make life manageable. Two of my predecessor fellow Emory University employees, Jack Boozer and Donald Shockley, depict campus ministry as feeling its way from radicalized alienation toward home-life stability. Boozer’s 1980s assessment of United Methodist campus ministry captures the situation with his titles. He called the book Edge of Ministry . . . The Chaplain Story81; and he entitled Chapter 2 “The Turbulent Years, 1945–1980: From Triumph to Vertigo” and Chapter 5 “Chaplains and the Church: Is Reconciliation Possible?” Shockley saw beyond divorce and custody battles to a newly ordered sense of campus ministry defining its own existence and environment. The subtitle of his book Campus Ministry: The Church Beyond Itself, as well as chapter titles, prove telling: “Overcoming Our Fear of Otherness: A Theology of Campus Ministry,” “Gathering the Church Beyond the Church,” “Campus Ministry as Mission,” “Getting Beyond the Sixties,” and “Missionary Metaphors for Campus Ministry.”82

Shockley and Monk credit Allan Burry, who assumed the post of Assistant General Secretary for Campus Ministry at GBHEM, with charting the way back to a more connected and networked system.83 Burry had served as director of Wesley Foundations at the universities of Miami and South Florida in the early 1960s, before going to Wesleyan University in 1966. He was named university minister there in 1971, leaving Wesleyan for GBHEM in 1983. (After his death in 1990, GBHEM established a scholarship in Burry’s memory.)84 Helen Neinast joined the staff at the same time and Richard Hicks four years later, the latter to care for ethnic concerns in campus ministry. From interviews with Neinast, Monk suggests that their agenda was twofold: “(1) to change the public image of campus ministry among the local churches and conferences, and (2) to encourage campus ministers to understand their work as an important and productive ministry.”85 Under their leadership, national student events resumed after a two-decade lapse—a Jubilee Conference to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the MSM and, building on its success, a delegated, national United Methodist Student Movement.86 Under Shockley, who succeeded Burry to the post of Assistant General Secretary for Campus Ministry, training events and Summer Companies to identify, nurture, support, inspire, and stimulate campus leaders followed. And in 1995, after a lapse of three decades, United Methodists in campus ministry formed a professional networking and training organization, the United Methodist Campus Ministry Association (www.umcma.org).

Reinvented Home

Campus ministry has reshaped itself over the past decade and a half, partly in consolidating the advances of the 1970s and 1980s and partly in response to the strains and conflicts in denominational and public life and to opportunities that digital communication presents. I find addressing this emerging shape challenging, for at least two reasons. First, interpreting a dawning era is always tough. In 2009, at a GBHEM-sponsored consultation, titled “The Promise of United Methodist Campus Ministry: Theological Reflections,” when I delivered a version of this essay and queried about present status, the participants assured me that something new was happening but found some difficulty in naming and defining it. Second,
sizing up the present and looking to its unfolding in the future are not the skills and perspective a historian brings to the task. At best, I can make some conjectures that draw on the consultation, recent work by Alice Knotts and others, stories in the *United Methodist Reporter*, and insights shared with me by Robert Monk.

Websites, e-mail, blogs, Facebook, and other ways of being virtually present have made possible new ways of exercising ministry with students and new connections of campus ministers with one another.87 Building on relations established in annual United Methodist Student Movement forums and United Methodist Campus Ministers Association events, college religion professionals can, with digital, online connections, provide resources to one another, pass along new ideas, strategize about initiatives, and variously collaborate in ways less dependent upon GBHEM and/or jurisdictional or conference offices and officers. Such virtual connections and the many *United Methodist Reporter* stories compensate, perhaps, for reductions in networking on conference and denominational levels when staffing reductions in college-related areas occur during denominational financial crises. So, digitally connected campus ministers can share frustrations over funding, discuss relations with local church pastors and conference officials, compare views on the current generation of college students, detail experiments with intentional residential communities, inventory the value of mission trips and community workdays, and converse about initiatives in caring ministries and spiritual direction with students.

Similarly, the website for College Union, underwritten financially and resourced technically by the Foundation for Evangelism, flashes with interactive content, features campus ministry openings, counsels chaplains on submitting articles and ideas, offers podcasts, and beckons campus ministers to multi-day “Refresh” annual meetings. The connection of College Union to the array of “Good News” organizations and caucuses seems at this point to be soft rather than hard-wired—as is its relation to the conservative-evangelical “Ivy Jungle” network. Still, one cannot help but note the degree of intentionality and well-designed strategy by Methodism’s unofficial but largest seminary in its training, mentoring, interning, placing, and networking of campus ministers. None of the official United Methodist schools, nor the collectivity of them, seems to have shown anything like that commitment to programming and placement in the arena of ministries in higher education.

At any rate, two networks for support of campus ministry function in some competition. Alongside the Association of United Methodist Theological Schools, GBHEM, and the United Methodist Campus Ministry Association exists an Asbury Theological Seminary–Foundation for Evangelism–College Union network. One blogger on the latter’s website contrasted the former (UMCMA) as more of a lobby and the latter as endeavoring “to better equip those in campus ministry.”88 Campus ministry, then, functions with two ecumenical networks, one National Council of Churches-like and increasingly interreligious, the other National Association of Evangelicals-like and tacking toward the conservative-evangelical networks; one liberal-prophetic and the other missional-evangelistic. The 2009 meeting of GBHEM-sponsored Student Forum, which serves the former network, featured progressive Muslim Eboo Patel, founder and director of the Interfaith Youth Core (Chicago) pleading for interfaith campus ministries. Among headliners in the 2009 Refresh Conference, serving the latter network, were inspirational speaker Sally Morgenthaler, author of *Worship Evangelism*, and conservative United Methodist theologian Billy Abraham.

Campus ministers do indeed seem to welcome all the help they can get and from wherever. They complain of inadequate support from conferences, of little appreciation on the part of the denomination of the importance of sustaining and retaining loyalty to the church among its members during their college careers, and of being on their own. Nor can they count on much interest from religion departments, which in the stronger private and state universities have largely given up thinking they had role in furthering vocations in ministry. Administrative departments in a few United Methodist-related colleges have reestablished offices of church relations and have aggressively rebuilt relations with annual conference offices and local churches across the conference. But such reintegration is rare. More frequently, campus ministry does indeed seem to be left to make a home for itself and to do as much building of neighborly relations as it can. And in some places, the situation is worsening. At least one important annual conference (my own) has signaled that it does not intend to ordain persons directly into college chaplaincies and other extension ministries. The church seemingly will leave it to campus ministers to reinvent a home life. Yet, as they do, and as they describe what they are about, they appeal again and again to the church, at local, conference, and connectional levels to join in this rebuilding.89
Redefinition?

The vision of the entire connection at every level engaged with higher education and of the ministries on campus forming and equipping new generations of denominational leaders seemingly guided Shockley, Neinast, and Burry in their rebuilding efforts. So such a vision had inspired Wilbur Fisk and Stephen Olin at Wesleyan. So had it motivated James Baker at the University of Illinois, preoccupied Wesleyan professor Kenneth Underwood in his survey of American universities, and beckoned Paul Hardin as he guided the assessment of United Methodism's colleges. So it has recurred for current campus ministers as they reach out for support on local, regional, and connectional levels.

One visionary can sometimes lead an entire church into a new day. And clearly the campus ministers and their leadership struggle to do just that. We are, however, far from being a college-related church and far from being able to bring the several levels of the church into engagement with the campus. Wesleyan University's story sadly shows why. As Underwood wrote, his university, once the church's flagship institution, dissolved its church into a university ministry. Currently, the university, first to bear the Wesleyan name, is without a United Methodist ministry. As already noted, a Christian chaplain, part-time and also pastor of First Baptist in Middletown, serves alongside Muslim and Jewish chaplains.

That multireligious situation on essentially secular university premises increasingly defines the work and the vision of a campus ministry that seems, as in the past, to be a frontier for the church. Campus ministry has taken—surely must and will take—an ecumenical, interreligious, or multireligious direction, as American campuses become intellectually and demographically more cosmopolitan and contexts in which the religions of the world meet. How significant will be United Methodism's presence there and how engaged in such ministries will the whole connection be? It is a big challenge for a ministry with great ambitions and little in the way of resources.

And how will university/college administrations and faculties react to, support, and engage with campus ministries that put themselves to work on problems and with populations that might explode, without the teaching, mentoring, modeling, and nurturing of cordial and civil relations between and among potentially hostile religious groups? Episcopalians and Methodists are unlikely to be at one another's throats, but Jews and Muslims might. And Christians concerned with the plight of the Palestinians or the defense of Israel might well find themselves sucked into campus chaos. Will the denomination weigh in on such issues, do so with some degree of unanimity, and engage the College Union side of its campus leadership? Campus ministry in an age both connected and disconnected digitally can do interesting things on behalf of the university and the church. Having United Methodism at all levels invested in collegiate experience and dramas and open to disciple-making beyond the very limited confines of the local church might just assure the denomination a new generation of talented leaders.

Notes


3. Yet another schema could be rendered that prioritizes the connectional identity of the campus minister in the several periods—appointed, professionalized, radicalized, beyond-the-local-church, and ecumenical (or self-sufficient). Perhaps more than others, this schema would lend itself to seeing the several phases as modalities, potentially harmonized.


12. Ibid., 6–7.


15. Ibid., 296.

16. Ibid., 294–98.

17. Ibid., 302.


19. Holdich, Life of Willbur Fisk, 308. A visiting committee to Wesleyan in 1862 reported, “Of the whole number of students—one hundred and fifty-two—one hundred and seventeen are professedly pious, and forty-six are licensed preachers. Several others intend to devote themselves to the work of the ministry.” See Minutes of the New England Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church . . . 1862, 21.


27. Ibid., 30–31; Potts, *Wesleyan University*, 13–17.

28. On the latter, the visitors reported: “Of the whole number of students—one hundred and fifty-two—one hundred and seventeen are professedly pious, and forty-six are licensed preachers. Several others intend to devote themselves to the work of the ministry.” *Minutes of the New England Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church . . . 1862*, 21.


31. “Pastoral Address . . . to the Ministers and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South,” *Journals of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Held 1846 and 1850*, 104–18; citation from 115–16.


35. See Monk’s gesture in that direction, ibid., 179.

36. See Bowser, *Living the Vision*, 7–43. She affirms that the Senate “was the first body in the United States to establish and apply standards for educational institutions on a nationwide basis”—a fact appreciated, she notes, by neither the regional accrediting associations nor other denominations. See also Myron F. Wicke, *A Brief History of the University Senate of The Methodist Church* (Nashville: Issued by Dept. of Public Relations and Finance, Division of Educational Institutions, Board of Education, The Methodist Church, 1956), and Gerald O. McCulloh, *Ministerial Education in the American Methodist Movement* (Nashville: General


39. This estimate comes from Samuel Plantz, The History of Education in the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1892 to 1917 (New York: The Board of Education of The Methodist Episcopal Church, 1918), 3–4.


48. See again the trilogy of 1994 items: Cuninggim, Uneasy Partners, Marsden, Soul of the American University, and Sloan, Faith and Knowledge. See also Cherry, Hurrying Toward Zion, and Marsden and Longfield, Secularization of the Academy.


50. Shockley, Campus Ministry, 34–35; Monk, “United Methodist Campus Ministry,” 179–82; Underwood, The Church, the University and Social Policy, 1:64–69.

51. Baker, First Wesley Foundation, 40. See also Underwood, The Church, the University and Social Policy, 1:67.

52. Ibid., 89.


60. Underwood, The Church, the University and Social Policy, 1:14.

63. Ibid., 111–15.
68. Chaired by Bishop James Mathews, the committee included Bishop James Thomas; present and past general secretaries; heads of other board divisions; Wesley Foundation directors; closely related conference and local church personnel; theologian John Deschner; and district superintendent, future seminary president, and past president of the MSM, Richard Cain.
69. Summary Report for the Committee on Consultation for the Study of Wesley Foundations, 4. These come as among the study questions posed for Chapter 5 and were one of six sets included in a short chapter titled “Perspective.”
70. Ibid., 9.
71. Ibid., 10–11.
72. Ibid., 12, 19–20, 22.
73. Ibid., 23–24.
75. Shockley, Campus Ministry, 97.
79. Ibid., 17–24, 32, 33, 53, 54–57, 61. The choices of “professional peers” were: “annual conference”; “institution with which affiliated”; “other campus ministers”; “other, including ecumenical groups”; “combinations”; and “no response.” Among United Methodists in ecumenical ministries, 6.4 percent identified peer relations with annual conference, 19 percent with their institutions, 22.2 percent with other campus ministers, 22.2 percent also ecumenically, 23.8 percent in some combination, and 6.3 percent gave no response.
83. “The Allan Jerome Burry Scholarship is designed to recognize a United Methodist undergraduate student’s outstanding academic performance, leadership skills, and participation in the activities of a United Methodist-related campus ministry or chaplaincy program at his/her college or university. Preference will be given to students engaged in Student Forum, Exploration, National Student Conference CELEBRATE or other UM sponsored campus ministry events on a national or jurisdictional level. The scholarship is named for the former assistant general secretary of the Campus Ministry Section, Division of Higher Education, United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Reverend Burry died August, 1990.” See GBHEM website: www.gbhem.org.
84. “The Allan Jerome Burry Scholarship is designed to recognize a United Methodist undergraduate student’s outstanding academic performance, leadership skills, and participation in the activities of a United Methodist-related campus ministry or chaplaincy program at his/her college or university. Preference will be given to students engaged in Student Forum, Exploration, National Student Conference CELEBRATE or other UM sponsored campus ministry events on a national or jurisdictional level. The scholarship is named for the former assistant general secretary of the Campus Ministry Section, Division of Higher Education, United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Reverend Burry died August, 1990.” See GBHEM website: www.gbhem.org.


89. See articles on United Methodist Reporter and on the College Union website (http://collegeunion.org).

90. E-mail from Ms. Suzy Taraba, Wesleyan University Archivist; see also the university’s website (www.wesleyan.edu).