

Introduction—*Didache: Faithful Teaching* 9:2 (January 2010)

(Dean) Welcome to *Didache: Faithful Teaching* edition 9:2 (January 2010), which brings a broad array of research, reflection, and insights from diverse institutions and historical settings, all addressing the wide intersections of education, culture and our Wesleyan tradition. In light of the diversity of insights “we “(Matt Price and Dean Blevins) have the daunting task of introducing the collection. In keeping with our respective roles with this edition we thought it best to mingle our voices as we introduce the journal. The first article in the journal probably deserves Matt’s attention but I take pleasure in presenting David Wesley of Nazarene Theological Seminary, particularly his research and meditation looking at the role of short term missions as a form of pilgrimage. David’s work begins the journal with a decided global and spiritual perspective, one based upon a contemporary practice that shapes a number of college students and church members engaged in short term missions.

(Matt) For generations missionaries and other cross-cultural workers have relished the words of the Anglican missionary Roland Allen living and working in China at the turn of the 20th century. He originally wrote in 1916:

“In face of the vast proportions of the work to be done, we are day by day seeking for some new light on the great problem how we may establish the Catholic [meaning universal] Church in the world. In this search, the example of the Apostle of the Gentiles must be of the first importance to us. He succeeded in doing what we so far have only tried to do. The facts are unquestionable. In a very few years, he built the Church on so firm a basis that it could live and grow in faith and in practice, that it could work out its own problems, and overcome all dangers and hindrances both from within and without.”

What brings people back to Allen is the continued relevancy of his words. Each generation of the Church seeks to refresh the world with Christ’s presence. This issue of *Didache* offers several selections of how this work can be accomplished.

Deborah Berhó from George Fox University insists language learning is not just a matter of transferring content through vocabulary lists and verb conjugations. Rather, it is bring alive the “Word” or as a Spanish speaker would say, “the Verb” into the daily context of existence. The matter of language instruction can by its method actually teach the learner how to encounter the “exile” and “other” as a fellow sojourner, and truly communicate the Message of the living Word. Lisa Long of Lee University continues this conversation with a qualitative study of the practice of Eucharist in middle America finding it as a means of “transformation toward a more authentic reflection of the image of Christ.”

(Dean) As Lisa Long’s treatise raises clear questions concerning the intersection of social science and theological practice, Kathy Armistead demonstrates how an outdated premise of Sigmund Freud, that ontology recapitulates phylogeny, fails both scientific and theological premises. While the treatise may seem unique to this journal, Dr. Armistead, editor of Abingdon Press and long standing member of the Society for the Study of Psychology and Wesleyan

Theology, notes that that this premise, while unfounded, remains a cultural phenomenon. To be honest the specter of this view “haunts” popular concepts of children, youth, and global cultures, often reducing groups to something more “primitive” in nature. Dr. Armistead’s research paper lays such assumptions to rest, providing needed conceptual space to listen to young and old alike.

(Matt) These pieces lead into the reflections of young church leaders (I call them “young” because they are my age!) on the reality and implications of the “emerging” church phenomenon as it relates to Wesleyan denominations in north America and western culture through an engaging “charitable discourse.”

(Dean) Well, if Matt is the young one I guess I know where that leaves me! Nevertheless our edition does continue by offering two articles that bridge the generations. First George Lyons and Kara Lyons-Pardue continue our “generations” conversation from last edition. George and Kara offer unique insight into their mutual passions as educators and Biblical scholars across the generations. Dr. Vicki Copp, with Nazarene Theological Seminary, offers an entertaining and educative reflection on mentoring with Mr. Bixby from Mark Twain’s *Life on the Mississippi*. Dr. Copp demonstrates how insights from historical narratives provide interesting space for our reflection on the role of mentoring each generation of leaders.

Listening to the writing of previous generations serves as a new theme in this edition but one that proves critical to the development of our own “tradition” in Wesleyan education. Tammy Condon, with the International Board of Education of the Church of the Nazarene, introduces us to a new project that hopes to collect a number of key historical documents that has guided this tradition. Included in this edition are original writings on education from Phineas F. Bresee, J.B. Chapman, and Bertha Munro. Working with Commissioner E. LeBron Fairbanks, the project hopes to collect a number of documents from around the globe that informs and enriches our understanding of Wesleyan higher education. Mrs. Condon welcomes new submissions to this project (you can email either the editor of this journal or contact Mrs. Condon direct through the IBOE). Additional documents can be found at the following website:
<http://nazareneblogs.org/lebronfairbanks/>.

(Matt) It is our hope these pieces taken together become a conversation starter for a continuing dialogue within the Church, in the spirit of Roland Allen 100 years ago. We trust it will be a dialog that encourages the Church in all its variety to “live and grow in faith and practice” and “work out its own problems, and overcome all dangers and hindrances” so that she may continue to fulfill God’s command to “be fruitful and multiply...on the earth.” (Genesis 1:22, NASB).

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Didache: Faithful Teaching remains a journal dedicated to being a resource for the total efforts of the Church of the Nazarene, and other educational institutions as this edition clearly indicates, all for the sake of global Wesleyan Christian education. One reminder: we continue to solicit articles written by your students for future editions. In addition to offering articles by our scholars and educators, *Didache* would like to showcase some of our best and brightest students, at both undergraduate and graduate level, on issues of education, culture and theology. Submissions should come with a recommendation from one of our institutional educators. For additional information please feel free to contact Dean Blevins at DGBlevins@nts.edu.

Dean Blevins & Matt Price
Co-editors, *Didache: Faithful Teaching*