CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

‘CALLED TO UNITE KNOWLEDGE & VITAL PIETY: INDIANA’S WESLEYAN-RELATED UNIVERSITIES’

Edited by Michael G. Cartwright & Merle Strege

A READERS’ GUIDE

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Called to Unite Knowledge & Vital Piety: Indiana’s Wesleyan-Related Universities
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It is a privilege to provide an introduction to the Readers’ Guide for Called to Unite Knowledge and Vital Piety. As someone who is a graduate of one of the seven institutions in the book (University of Evansville), and as a person concerned about the church’s role in cultivating a life of the heart and mind, I am glad to contribute in some small way to the ongoing drama of higher education in Indiana. It is good to know we can still pull up a chair to the family table and share in a conversation about our respective traditions.

The purpose of this Readers’ Guide is to continue the conversation amongst “cousins” in the Wesleyan/Holiness family that began at the conference on “Called to Unite Knowledge and Vital Piety” at the University of Indianapolis in 2008. Its goal is simply to provide questions for further reflection among persons and groups throughout the church: e.g., among clergy and laity in local churches, among colleagues in higher education and campus ministry, among administrators and teachers and professors at the respective institutions, and among church leaders, to name a few. All of these groups, or combinations thereof, will find “food for thought” here. Each set of questions will hopefully provoke deeper insight into the reform impulse that has characterized these schools in the past. Each set will tap into the rich histories that have provided the stage upon which the life of holiness has found expression.

And lest we think this exercise is purely “academic,” it may be worthwhile to share a personal connection: I can remember very well, before matriculating to the University of Evansville, how my grandmother warned me how too much education could hurt the life of piety. A very committed United Brethren/EUB laywoman—and the person who more than any other person influenced me to enter the ministry—my grandmother wanted to make sure I didn’t lose my faith at the hands of academic experts. To be sure, looking back, this was not a hostile warning. Rather, it was the kind of statement that wanted to protect the piety she believed was critical to the Christian life. All the education in the world could not make up for the life devoted to sharing the gospel and serving others.

What I would come to realize later, however, was the other side of the family equation: the importance of education for the life of faith. Here, the emphasis from the paternal side of the family, or the Methodist Episcopal side, was the joining together of knowledge and piety, as stated so eloquently in Charles Wesley hymn “Come, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost:” “let us join the pair so long disjoined, knowledge and vital piety.” The conjunctive nature of the Wesleyan approach to faith was a healthy example of Christian living, especially in response to growing anti-intellectual trends in American life. With respect to higher education, the issue was not “either-or” but “both-and:” a liberal arts education was not to be the enemy of faith but a necessary companion.

See these questions, then, as companions for the journey. May they assist in prompting and nudging us toward the kind of reform of higher education that can unite what we so often keep apart: knowledge and vital piety!

—Rev. Dr. Andrew D. Kinsey, Wesleyan Theologian, Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church
The questions are provided in the hope that the book that Michael G. Cartwright and Merle Strege have edited will stimulate conversation. We do not think that all readers will find the questions equally useful, but we have provided multiple questions for each of the chapters with the awareness that readers who want to discuss the book will likely select those questions that they find particularly relevant. We offer specific suggestions for different types of readers. Most questions are addressed as if the readers are connected with a particular university. Where necessary, please adapt the question to suit the group’s needs.

**University faculty and staff reading groups:** We imagine that persons who are employed at one of the seven Wesleyan-related institutions that are the focus of the book will likely want to discuss the materials that pertain to their own institution. We would be delighted if Wesleyan scholars in other locations discuss this material. In addition to the historical material in the introduction, chapter nine of *Called to Unite Knowledge & Vital Piety* invites readers to consider the ways that these institutions find themselves operating “on the university stage” in the 21st century.

**Pastors and laypeople:** Michael Cartwright’s introduction provides an orientation to the historical context about the historical phases in which these institutions were founded. Chapter two provides specific information about the Wesleyan origins of education, and chapter three identifies critical issues for institutions that were founded by persons associated with the Holiness Movement in American Christianity. In addition, some readers may wish to read a particular chapter or set of chapters. For example, you might want to read about institutions located near your congregation, or church-related universities that were founded by your denomination with which your congregation is affiliated. We also encourage readers to explore those institutions that they may not know as much about.

**Conversations between church leaders and university leadership:** We are not familiar with what may have occurred in other Wesleyan churches in the state of Indiana, but we can testify that we have found it productive to be part of regular conversations hosted by the University of Indianapolis over the past decade that have gathered United Methodist Church leaders with the leadership of the University. One of the things that we have discovered through this experience is that both parties often lack the kind of information about historical context that can inform their conversations. If this readers’ guide makes it more probable that future conversations about possible collaborations between the Wesleyan-related churches and universities in Indiana will be fruitful, then our modest efforts will have been worth the time we have devoted to this task.

—Michael G. Cartwright, University of Indianapolis & Andrew D. Kinsey, Grace United Methodist Church, Franklin, Ind.

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QUESTIONS FOR MICHAEL G. CARTWRIGHT’S INTRODUCTION

1. In the introduction, Michael Cartwright identifies five “stages” in the history of Wesleyan higher education in the state of Indiana. In what ways do these patterns fit the history of your own institution? In what ways does your institution’s history not fit into this schema?

2. What features of the 1798 “plan of education” that guided early Methodist efforts to found colleges in the United States do you find most striking? Are there aspects of this plan that you find alien to your purpose at the institution where you serve?

3. Cartwright describes the ways that the pursuit of accreditation for each of these institutions is intertwined with the professionalization of the faculty role. In what ways have faculty continued to serve as role models for the integration of faith and learning on your campus?

4. In what ways has your university deliberately not tried to conform to the “research university” paradigm of American higher education?

5. How are faculty and staff of your university responding to the “call to reform” today? In what ways can you see faculty from previous generations serving as role models for their 21st-century heirs?
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 1
(PAUL CHILCOTE’S ESSAY)

1. At the outset of his keynote address, “Knowledge and Vital Piety: A Wesleyan Vision of Holistic Formation,” Paul Chilcote clarified what he means by “education in the Wesleyan mode.” He explains that it is “a process of self-discovery, liberation, and formation from the inside out; it is a process that permits the spirit of God to transform men and women so as to discover their true identity as children of God.” Chilcote goes on to correlate this with the ancient Greek concept of *paideia*, which he defines as “essentially instruction through action.” Are these concepts that you think the faculty, staff, and students at your university find meaningful for the purpose of explaining what they do as employees of a Christian college or university? Why or why not?

2. Paul W. Chilcote identifies a series of eight “conjunctions” that he regards as the constitutive aspects of a Wesleyan approach to education: “The constitutive aspects of this paideia include commitment, community, contextuality, communication, conjunctivity and compassion, with their respective values of relationality, connectedness, indigeneity, attentiveness, balance, and self-giving love.” Which of these values and practices do you find most interesting and/or helpful for thinking about your own work? Why?

3. Invoking Robert Banks’ image of the seminary as a “crossroads hamlet somewhere between Athens and Berlin, though facing more towards the latter. It is one with *paideia* in viewing theology as a set of capacities directed toward knowing God truly, but is one with *Wissenschaft* in endorsing the role and rigor of academic disciplines in this process.” Chilcote goes on to affirm: “The Wesleyan heritage, I believe, offers a compelling vision of holistic formation that builds a bridge over this chasm.” Paul W. Chilcote’s focus at this point in his essay is theological education, and his recommendation is that when mission is linked to formation, this pedagogical problem can be addressed and ultimately resolved. What Chilcote does not address as clearly is how the faculty of a church-related university should think about these matters where undergraduate education is concerned. Do you still think that it is possible in the 21st century to “bridge the chasm” between the kind of scientific study of disciplines that privileges intellectual rigor and conforms to the canons of modernistic certainty and the kind of holistic formation that seeks to “unite the pair so long disjoined”? If so, how do you see that happening on the campus where you teach and study with students in the context of undergraduate education?
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 2  
(MERLE STREGE’S ESSAY)

1. The opening illustration that Merle Strege uses in his essay on “Place and Higher Education in the Holiness Tradition” is as deliciously ironic as it is disconcertingly apt. Strege draws upon Stephen Toulmin’s discussion of the life of Rene Descartes to show that “one cannot conceive of Descartes’ revolutionary philosophy, or the work of any other person, apart from the socio-political location it inhabited.” As Strege makes clear—although Enlightenment influenced philosophers have sometimes acted as if “Descartes work is the product of a disembodied mind”—to take this view is to ignore the ways in which human life is embedded in the particularities of history. In his essay, Strege does not directly address the ways that faculty make sense of their lives, but the thrust of his argument suggests that faculty who are tempted to tell their life stories in ways that are segregated from their institutional settings are not being as truthful as they should be. In sum: if you teach and study at a Christian university, how should that make a difference in how you tell your life story?

2. The primary argument that Strege makes in the first part of his article can be summarized this way: “Those institutions that pretend to deny the existence and influence of such locations sever the connections that make them intelligible and distinctive.” Do you agree with his contention? In what ways can you say that this is true of your own institution? In what ways has “place” mattered at your institution? Does the “place” in which you are located still matter? If so, how? If not, why do you think that the case?

3. Strege also deploys a prescriptive argument that goes along with his initial discussion. In the second part of his paper he contends that “universities should practice a politics, a way of being together, that embodies the intellectual traditions of their constituent communities.” Did you find his argument to be persuasive? What lingering questions do you have about what it means for the faculty of a university to “embody an intellectual tradition” by practicing a politics?

4. In the third part of his article, Strege describes “the possible politics” of Anderson University, the institution in which he teaches and studies. Did you find the case that he makes for the importance of ideas like the health and wellness, the church as a gathered community, the importance of religious experience, academic freedom and Christian vocation (all of which are central to the Church of God Anderson Reformation tradition) to be plausible account of how faculty at Anderson University might make of their institution’s intellectual tradition? In what ways might you be able to make a case for the possible politics of your own institution? What specific characteristics can you identify that meet Strege’s criterion of having their origin in the particularities of institutional historical locations?

5. The final section of Strege’s article invites readers to take the measure of a biblical story, the account of Daniel and the Bright Young Men of Israel found in chapter one of the prophecy of Daniel. Strege uses this to call attention to MacIntyre’s point about the importance of narratives for making sense of the question of moral identity. Strege explains that he has chosen to end his paper with this story because the Book of Daniel is “determinative” for “the scholarly life together” of Anderson University. What biblical story do you think would be most apt to illustrate the “possible politics” for your own institutional location? Why?
1. John Baughman’s essay about the changes and challenges that have marked the history of DePauw University asserts that the founders would not be disappointed in what has transpired at DePauw. One reason that he gives to support this conclusion is that the institution was not founded to be a specifically Wesleyan university. Rather, the founders stated purposes associated with the broader patterns of “liberal education.” Based on the material presented in his essay, do you agree with his conclusion? What other historical evidence might be called upon to address this concern?

2. The institution that was founded as “Indiana Asbury University” in 1837 later came to be associated with the Holiness Movement through one of its principal benefactors (Washington DePauw). As Baughman stipulates, however, the faculty of DePauw never identified itself explicitly with this movement. Even so, this association has been one of the factors cited by critics of DePauw University across the years, and some see it as a marker in the progression of secularization on that campus. Others see this circumstance as a site for asking other kinds of questions about the church affiliation. Given the fact that benefactors and faculty are not always in agreement about how to administer church-related institutions and at times neither one may be fully representative of institutional identity, what are the most stable referents for locating institutional identity especially with respect to the church affiliation?
1. One of the principal issues discussed in Brian Erickson’s essay about what unfolded in the wake of the decision to “remove” Moores Hill College to Evansville is the question of financial responsibility. Erickson calls attention to the Methodist conference’s failures to pay its obligations, and explains how Evansville’s civic leaders (including Presbyterian, Catholic, and Jewish clergy and laity) ultimately were the ones who met the financial obligations of this marginally viable institution. How would you define the responsibility of the United Methodist Church (or other ecclesiastical bodies) to those institutions that were founded to be church-related colleges and universities? By what measures can we define “faithfulness” in such matters given that the church is not always able to meet its own financial aspirations for such endeavors?

2. Erickson’s essay about the University of Evansville also displays some of the ways in which the parent-child image has been used as a primary analogy and metaphor for explaining the relationship between the United Methodist Church and the universities that have been founded by and/or affiliated with the church across time. In your judgment, how helpful is this filial metaphor for talking about the relationships of ecclesial bodies and academic institutions? At what point(s) do you think the analogy breaks down? In the 21st century, should such imagery be used at all given the transformations that have taken place in higher education?

3. Brian Erickson’s discussion of financial struggles at Moores Hill College also calls attention to the college’s motto: *esto quid esse videris*, “Be What You Seem to Be.” He narrates how President Hughes wrote to Henry Ford in desperation with the invitation to rename the institution after the automobile manufacturer if Ford would give the college one-million dollars. This tragic-comic episode highlights the plight of administrators who have to exercise fiduciary responsibility—including the tasks of raising money to keep the institutions solvent in the midst of economic turmoil! But perhaps even more pointedly, it raises questions about what are the best measures of authenticity and/or academic integrity for church-related institutions of higher education? On what basis do you think we can we say that an institution has been “true” to its own stated mission as a church-related institution of higher education?
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 5
(TAYLOR UNIVERSITY)

1. Robert Lay’s article about the lives of Monroe and Culla Johnson Vahinger calls attention to the religious experience of this pair of “Hoosier Reformers.” As the children of German-speaking immigrants, Monroe and Culla shared the experience of many frontier Americans who were converted in the context of Methodist camp meetings, and they would live their lives in enmeshed in a variety of ecclesiastical and informal relationships that sustained their endeavors. What kinds of “connections” sustain your work as a member of the faculty at the institution where you serve?

2. Lay describes the services of the German Methodists in the Indiana town of Milan as “more pedagogical than liturgical” and suggests that although the membership was likely bilingual, what mattered most was the shared sense of “evangelical unity” that also converged with the factors of holiness teaching and a resolve to abstain from alcohol. The portrait that Lay offers of the congregational life not only foregrounds the Wesleyan emphasis on spiritual literacy (see Cartwright’s introduction), but also offers us a glimpse into a world in which Methodists functioned in bilingual networks of association. In the 21st century, the challenges of globalization are calling on Christians throughout the world to engage beyond borders of linguistic uniformity. Do you see analogies to the kind of “evangelical unity” on your campus? If so, please describe these. If not, what obstacles thwart the growth and extension of this kind of shared purpose?

3. Lay’s description of the Vahingers also brings into clearer focus the network of association that existed between various Methodist and Holiness leaders in relation to the Women’s Christian Temperance Union led by Frances Willard as well as the Epworth League in which Monroe was an active leader in the Midwest. As Lay shows, these circles also proved to be critical sources of financial support for the struggling Fort Wayne Female College that today we know as Taylor University. What are the most significant Christian sources of financial support for your own institution of higher education?

4. The initial Methodist Episcopal Church resolution for creating Fort Wayne Female College that was proposed in the North Indiana Conference in 1847 envisioned that the proposed institution would be the counterpart to Indiana Asbury College (now DePauw University). As Lay shows, the institution actually served a less elite and more diverse student body than the men’s college in Greencastle, and the sources of financial support for the college actually came from popular networks such as National Association of Local Preachers and the Temperance Movement. In what ways, if at all, do popular religious movements associated with evangelism and moral reform intersect with institutions like Taylor University today?
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 6
(ANDERSON UNIVERSITY)

1. Merle Strege asks a very direct question in the first section of his essay: “What is the role of the church in the life of its university?” As you think about the university where you teach, what is the role of the Christian community that has been most involved in your institution’s history? Has that role changed across the years? If so, how would you describe that change?

2. Strege argues that the convictions of the Church of God Anderson—not secular canons—have underwritten the cherished notion of academic freedom at Anderson University. Did you find his case to support this contention to be persuasive? Why or why not?

3. Strege also stresses the communal dimension. How is academic freedom defined on your campus? Is there some sense in which it derives from communal values, or is it a standard of excellence that is defined in terms of individual faculty prerogatives?

4. “What kind of people do we intend to graduate?” Strege’s invocation of Wendell Berry’s question for the purpose of inviting conversation at Anderson University is as provocative as it is straightforward. That same question could be addressed to any of the seven universities in the state of Indiana that were founded by the heirs of the Wesleyan and Holiness movement. Is there a consensus on your campus about this matter?

5. Strege also invites readers to consider the question of whether it is possible to “institutionalize” academic virtues such as truthfulness, and if so, what if anything might we be able to do about institutionalizing holiness? Strege offers examples from the history of Anderson University. Did you find these examples to be convincing? Why or why not?

6. In the final section of his essay, Strege discussed the sense in which we might think of holiness in relation to concepts of justice and wellness. Would there be a comparable way to register this concern on your own campus? Why or why not?
1. In his article about the founders of Indiana Central University (now known as the University of Indianapolis), Michael Cartwright identified the four different “directions” that the founders of Indiana Central could have gone about the creation of this successor to Hartsville College. Which of these directions have turned out to be most fruitful? Why?

2. Cartwright also raised questions about the emergence of a new way of thinking about holistic formation that appears to have tried to avoid the contentious patterns of the past. In what ways is a “well-rounded student” a lesser aspiration than the aspirations of the moral crusades associated with the founding of Hartsville College. Does it matter whether these descriptions are correlated with biblical affirmations such as the imagery of Ephesians 4:13?

3. Later in his article, Cartwright goes on to flesh out what the founders of Indiana Central University might have had in mind by talking about the life and work of Bishop Ezekiel B. Kephart, who was known for being a “progressive conservative” in the United Brethren in Christ Church. Is it possible for someone to embody the “progressive conservative” stance in the 21st century? If so, can you name examples? If not, what are the obstacles that prevent this stance from being registered at your university?

4. Cartwright’s essay does not attempt to resolve the ecclesiological fissures that ultimately resulted in the schism between the “Old Constitution” and “New Constitution” groups of the United Brethren in Christ Church, but he does recall the eschatological image of the “Church of Philadelphia” that Philip William Otterbein and Martin Boehm saw as the hopeful prospect for the United Brethren movement. By foregrounding the troubled history of Hartsville College and the subsequent founding of two institutions in the state of Indiana that attempted to carry forward that vision, Cartwright makes explicit the embarrassing facts of the matter that cast a shadow of Indiana Central and Central College in Huntington alike. How should the Hoosier universities founded by Wesleyan and Holiness groups incorporate the memories of division in their educational projects?
1. Edwin Woodruff Tait begins and ends his discussion of Huntington University by raising the question of whether someone like him—who is not a member of the parent denomination of Huntington University, but who is “an Episcopalian with Holiness roots”—can properly represent a university that is affiliated with the United Brethren Church. But he goes on to point out that for the founders of the United Brethren, as well as for many of the early Methodists, it was very common for leaders of the movement to retain their membership in church bodies like the Church of England, the German Reformed Church, etc. In raising this issue, he confronts a circumstance that many church-related institutions face. Namely, the parent body is only represented by a minority of people on the campus. What percentage of faculty on your campus are members of the Christian community that founded your university? At your institution, how extensive is the overlap between church membership in the parent denomination and the current composition of the academic community of faculty, staff, and students?

2. Woodruff Tait also calls attention to the ecclesiological issues that were at stake in the division between the “Conservatives” (Old Constitution group) and the “Liberals” (New Constitution group) of United Brethren. He goes on to explicate a distinction that Milton Wright, the leader of the “Conservatives,” made between two kinds of separatists—those that “strike” for greater purity and those that separate for reasons of lesser purity, to defend a greater degree of compromise with the world than the parent body would allow. On the one hand, Wright and the Conservative faction accepted the doctrine of the “invisible church” (that he inherited from the founders of the United Brethren), and on the other hand, they “insisted on organizational legalisms . . . .” This has created a “paradox” that Woodruff Tait thinks continues to “shape the identity” of the church to which Huntington University is affiliated. How, if at all, does ecclesiology matter for the identity of the university where you teach?

3. Huntington University is the product of the schism of 1889, and it remains the only institution of higher education associated with the Church of the United Brethren in Christ (Old Constitution) denomination, but Huntington University does not define itself primarily in terms of a United Brethren identity. Even more paradoxically, however, as Woodruff Tait points out, “the denomination itself has taken steps to downplay its denominational identity,” a disposition that is reflected in its recent efforts to “rebrand” itself as an evangelical Christian community. And Woodruff Tait reports that some members of the faculty believe that the denomination lacks a sufficient basis for continued separate existence. In what ways has your institution struggled with its “brand” as a church-related institution?

4. At the end of his article, Woodruff Tait pinpoints the problem that he thinks lies at the heart of these ecclesiological muddles. “As long as we define tradition and heritage primarily in denominational terms, we will be unable to resolve the tension between the universal call to proclaim the gospel and the particularistic demands of institutional identity.” He continues: “the answer to the petty idolatries of our divided identities is not a renunciation of particularity but an embrace of our true identity as members of the historic Catholic Church as described in the ancient creeds . . . .” How would the members of your academic community regard Woodruff Tait’s resolution of the identity issue?
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 9
‘WHO DO WE THINK WE ARE?’

1. Michael Cartwright notes the strong connection between identity and mission in Wesleyan higher education in Indiana and the importance of institutional memory in understanding that connection. How does the importance of place or geography influence the study of that connection when it comes to telling the story of these seven institutions in Indiana? In what ways do you think the importance of place has or has not been considered in connecting with what these institutions have become?

2. What role does “forgetfulness” play in terms of the institutional patterns of “reform and resistance” that have become characteristic of higher education in American and elsewhere? In what ways does the Wesleyan impulse of “uniting of knowledge and vital piety” offer a helpful critique to this kind of historical amnesia and to rediscovering the historical links between these seven institutions?

3. In what ways does Michael Cartwright’s use of Donald Dayton's work illustrate the kinds of rediscovery that can assist Wesleyan institutions of higher learning to understand the rich historical texture of the stories they inhabit? How might Dayton's example serve faculties and administrations in the areas of future research and teaching?

4. After reading Cartwright’s chapter “Who Do We Think We Are?” what kinds of collaborative possibilities emerge with respect to carrying on the conversation about the mission and identity of Wesleyan-related institutions of higher education in Indiana? What are some of the institutional and historical challenges facing this kind of collaboration? How might the “unstable aspects” of the Wesleyan theological heritage (Dayton) serve to hinder or spark such ongoing conversations?

5. Cartwright, utilizing Paul Chicote’s essay on the conjunctive capacity of the Wesleyan tradition, shares how one of the most important challenges facing Wesleyan-related universities is how they may go about developing a robust conception of the academic vocation. How do you think such of conception of the academic vocation coincides with Louis Menand’s directive that universities today must struggle to discern what to keep and what to let go? What are the implications of this struggle for understanding the patterns of reform and resistance affecting higher education as well as the academic vocation itself?

6. How might leaders at the seven Wesleyan-related institutions of higher education in Indiana go about practicing the kind of “attentive posture” to which Cartwright alludes in cultivating conversations that will continue the Wesleyan impulse to unite knowledge and vital piety? After reading these sets of essays, what resources do you believe are available to these institutions that would enliven the various conversations at the family table? How might the “cousins” in these conversations avoid what Cartwright sees as the “errors of idiosyncrasy and self-indulgence?”

7. What do you see as the next “act” in the drama of Hoosier higher education at the seven Wesleyan universities? What might this “act” entail in terms of the ongoing impulse in the Wesleyan tradition to unite the pair so long disjoined—knowledge and vital piety—and in terms of the ongoing dynamics of resistance and reform?
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 10
(SERMON BY BETH FELKER JONES)

1. In the sermon that Beth Felker Jones offered at the beginning of the symposium, she called attention to a biblical passage from the first chapter of St. Paul’s letter to the Corinthians. “Think of what you were . . .” is a directive that can be addressed to the individual faculty member, but it also reminds us of those who were the first persons at our respective institutions that joined the processional of faculty. How are the founding faculty regarded by present faculty? Given that many of the latter are better trained than the founders, it would be easy to have condescending attitudes toward persons who did not have the proper credentials. On the other hand, we can also be intentional about being grateful for the sacrifices and contributions of our predecessors, who—like us—displayed fallibility as well as remarkable courage. Are there lessons that can be learned from the founding faculty?

2. Felker Jones also distinguishes between “true wisdom” that is oriented by “the righteousness, holiness, and redemption of Jesus Christ,” and the kind of worldly wise sensibility that is often “directed to self-aggrandizement.” In what ways can the faculty and administration of your institution be seen making this kind of distinction?

3. At the end of her sermon, Jones offers a challenge to her audience of faculty and administrators from church-related universities: “The grace of weakness frees us from trying to be something that we are not. It frees us to be Indiana and not New York. It frees us to be Wesleyan and not Reformed or liberal arts and not technical or holiness and not nondenominational. It frees us to be faithful to particular missions and particular students. Weakness frees us to strive for excellence in acquiring and teaching God’s wisdom . . . .” This challenge also speaks to the situation that Brian Erickson described in his essay, and arguably to all of the institutions discussed in this book: What does it mean for your institution “to be faithful to particular missions and particular students?”

4. Finally, in what ways does the ongoing effort “to strive for excellence in acquiring and teaching God’s wisdom” constitute a “call to reform” that each of us must answer?
A clergy leadership formation program of the Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church