S T Kimbrough, Jr.               Charles A. Green
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Contributors .................................................. 3
Introduction .................................................. 5

Minutes of the 2006 and 2007 Annual Meetings ......................... 9

Charles Wesley’s Dynamic, Lyrical Theology:
   The Power and Impact of Verbs .................................. 15
   S T Kimbrough, Jr.

A New Sermon of the Rev. Charles Wesley
   as Recorded in an Early Methodist Manuscript ...................... 35
   Thomas R. Albin

Charles Wesley and the Identities of
   the People Called Methodists Today ............................... 47
   Timothy S. A-Macquiban

Reforming the Church: Charles Wesley’s Ecclesiology
   and the Role of Lay Preachers ...................................... 59
   Patrick A. Eby

“Claim Me, for Thy Service”:
   Charles Wesley’s Vision of Servant Vocation ...................... 69
   Paul W. Chilcote

Memorial, Means, and Pledge: Eucharist and Time in the Wesleys’
   Hymns on the Lord’s Supper .......................................... 87
   Kenneth M. Loyer

Reviews ............................................................. 107
   Charles Wesley: Life, Literature and Legacy ...................... 107
   Charles Wesley: A Biography ........................................ 108
   Charles Wesley and the Struggle for Methodist Identity ........ 109
   The Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Charles Wesley, M.A. 111
   Sacred Harmony: The Musical Wesley Family: An Exhibition
      Celebrating the Tercentenary of the Birth of Charles Wesley 112
   Charles Wesley Die Predigten: Deutsche Auswahl ausgabe ........ 114

   Charles Wesley’s Tercentenary Celebration at the
      Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies .......... 117

   A Celebration of the 300th Anniversary of the Birth of Charles Wesley 119
   “Music of the Heart”: Celebrating the 300th Anniversary
      of Charles Wesley’s Birth ......................................... 127

   Charles Wesley Tercentenary Events ................................ 135
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Introduction

This is a special issue of the Proceedings of The Charles Wesley Society, celebrating the 300th anniversary of his birth in 1707. It includes papers presented at the 2006 and 2007 annual meetings of the Society, two additional papers (Eby and Chilcote) presented to the Wesley Studies Section of The Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies (2007) and one (Loyer) to the Wesleyan Studies Group of the American Academy of Religion (2007). In addition, there are reviews of books specifically related to Charles Wesley studies published from 2006 to 2008, as well as reviews of some events and exhibitions related to the Tercentenary year of Wesley’s birth, and a selected list of Tercentenary events.

“Charles Wesley’s Dynamic Lyrical Theology: The Power and Impact of Verbs” was presented by S T Kimbrough, Jr., in 2006 to the joint meeting of Sixteenth Annual Meeting of The Charles Wesley Society and the Canadian section of The Hymn Society in North America in Toronto, Canada. This article explores the theology revealed in Charles Wesley’s poetical language, particularly active verbs, as a “reservoir of dynamic response to God in acts of piety and acts of mercy.” The concept of “God as mystery” is explored here as being central to a dynamic theology from the Wesleyan perspective. Charles Wesley’s use of active verbs to engage the hidden God reveals a Wesleyan bridge between acts of piety and acts of mercy. A variety of Wesley’s texts related to two acts of piety, Holy Communion and the reading of the Scriptures, along with experiencing the passion of Christ, are examined for their employment of active verbs, which dynamically engage the readers/singers and move them to acts of mercy. Often Wesley’s use of active verbs is quite didactic in nature, prescribing precisely how one is to respond to human need. His art of using verbs “imbues his lyrical theology with a dynamism that aids the Christian in linking thought and action.”

Timothy S. A-Macquiban delivered “Charles Wesley and the Identities of the People Called Methodists Today” in 2007 to the Seventeenth Annual Meeting of The Charles Wesley Society held jointly with the Sixth Historical Convocation of The United Methodist Church in Chevy Chase, MD. Drawing particularly on three publications of the tercentenary year of Charles Wesley’s birth—Gary Best’s Charles Wesley: A Biography (2006), Gareth Lloyd’s Charles Wesley and the Struggle for Methodist Identity (2007), and Charles Wesley: Life, Literature and Legacy, edited by Ted Campbell and Kenneth G. C. Newport—Macquiban presents ten hallmarks of the Wesleyan movement which he sees as explanatory of the differences in identity within the world Methodist/Wesleyan family today. These are: all the world as my parish, Methodism and the mother church (Church of England), Methodists as a singing and reading people, mission alongside the poor, Catholic spirit, health and healing, ministry of the whole people of God, personal experience and the work of the Holy Spirit, personal and social holiness, covenant fellowship of love and discipline (one heart and one

Macquiban vibrantly describes these hallmarks in the context of the eighteenth-century Methodist movement.

“A New Sermon of the Rev. Charles Wesley as Recorded in an Early Methodist Manuscript” was presented by Thomas R. Albin to the Seventeenth Annual Meeting of The Charles Wesley Society at its 2007 joint meeting with the Sixth Historical Convocation of The United Methodist Church in Chevy Chase, MD. Albin discusses a sermon of Wesley that is included neither in the volume he edited with Oliver A. Beckerlegge in 1987, Charles Wesley’s Earliest Evangelical Sermons: Six Short-hand Manuscript Sermons now for the first time Transcribed from the Original, nor in the publication of Oxford University Press, The Sermons of Charles Wesley: A Critical Edition with Introduction and Notes, edited by Kenneth G. C. Newport. The sermon is not in Charles Wesley’s handwriting or shorthand; rather it is included in a manuscript volume of an early Methodist of Leeds who claims to have heard the sermon and recorded it. Interestingly, however, Roberts was a disaffected Methodist who left the movement and included Wesley’s sermon in his rather large volume to prove the false aspects of Methodist doctrine. Albin concentrates on the didactic aspect of the sermon and its understanding of spiritual life, which he believes are congruent with Wesleyan doctrine and undergird the authenticity of the sermon. He also shows how Roberts writes his own theological perspective into the history of Wesley’s discourse. At the conclusion of the article there is a transcription of the MS sermon, a modern English version, and two scanned pages of the original manuscript.

The next two articles were presented to the Wesley Studies section of The Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies at its meeting at Christ College in Oxford, UK 2007. Given the Tercentenary emphasis of 2007, a number of papers of the Wesley Studies section dealt with themes related to Charles Wesley.

Patrick A. Eby addresses the subject “Reforming the Church: Charles Wesley’s Ecclesiology and the Role of Lay Preachers.” He finds this to be illustrative of how Charles Wesley dealt with the dilemma of renewing the Church of England without separating from her. Eby explores three questions with a specific focus on lay preaching. (1) What type of renewal was necessary for the Church of England? (2) What were Charles’s actions to implement such renewal? (3) How were his actions perceived by persons within the Church of England? The focus is primarily on the 1750s, since this is the period in which John asked Charles to examine the lay preachers.

The author provides an assessment of Charles’s critique of the Established Church, its theology and clergy practice(s), and of both his support of and apprehension about lay preaching. Of particular interest are the views of Charles Wesley expressed in a manuscript The Preachers, 1751. He articulated three major concerns. (1) He did not wish to admit anyone who was not genuinely committed to the church. (2) The number and influence of the lay preachers
Introduction

should be limited. (3) The character of the lay preachers must be above reproach, but some are lazy and others are unduly proud. Charles was apparently stricter in his views in these matters than his brother John. The question of ordination and administering the sacraments loomed on the horizon for some lay preachers who felt entitled to both. Ultimately Charles felt that lay preaching could not effectively reform the Church of England but would lead to separation and thus he parted ways with John on this matter.

In the article “Claim Me, for Thy Service” Paul Chilcote addresses, as the subtitle suggests, “Charles Wesley’s Vision of Servant Vocation.” He explores the linkage of this vision with the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion and the shaping of the faith community’s conceptualization and implementation of mission. Both are intimately bound to self-sacrifice, conformity to the mind of Christ, and the sacrament of Holy Communion. The three sections of this study, (1) The Servant-Mind of Christ, (2) Conformity to the Mind of Christ, and (3) Eucharist and Self-sacrifice, are punctuated with a variety of Charles Wesley’s poetical texts which illumine Chilcote’s discussion of servant vocation, particularly a kenotic understanding of service.

“Memorial, Means, and Pledge: Eucharist and Time in the Wesleys’ Hymns on the Lord’s Supper” by Kenneth M. Loyer is a study of the relationship between the Eucharist and time as an essential facet of Wesleyan sacramental theology. He examines this relationship in terms of its Wesleyan authenticity, as well as constructive ecumenicity. Christ presence in the meal, which transcends the past, present, and future, is the means of sacramental contact between human beings and God. While Loyer deals with all three of these temporal dimensions individually, he also shows that often Charles Wesley brings all three modes together to reveal the distinctiveness of the sacrament as a means of grace. The Eucharist is the denouement of God’s way with humankind and humankind’s way with God in all times, and in the concept of the “pledge of glory” Charles expresses a vital eschatological dimension of the sacred meal.

Loyer sees the Wesleyan view of the relationship between Eucharist and time as well balanced. It does not run the risk of stressing one mode of time over another, rather integrates past, present, and future into a synthetic whole. Hence, the Eucharist is seen as memorial, a means, and a pledge. The author goes on to show the convergence of the Wesleyan perspective with Thomas Aquinas and stresses that this is an opportunity for common exploration by Roman Catholics and Methodists.


S T Kimbrough, Jr., Editor
Director of Publications, The Charles Wesley Society
Minutes of the 2006 and 2007 Annual Meetings

Seventeenth Annual Meeting Minutes

Emmanuel College
Toronto, Canada
October 14, 2006

Meeting called to order at 4:15 p.m. by President Paul Chilcote

President’s Report (Paul Chilcote)
A. expressed concern about the lack of a secretary for the Society
B. discussed his work in preparation for the tercentenary
C. Society website
   1. Bill Clemmons was thanked for his work on the site
   2. inquiries have been received through the site—most regarding Charles Wesley in general; few inquiries about the Society
   3. some sales have been generated through the site
   4. discussion about the placement of the Proceedings on the site
      a. table of contents only?
      b. Proceedings to be catalogued with ATLA?

Vice-President’s Report (Timothy Macquiban)
A. no report of accounts for this year from Peter Forsaith
B. suggested that regular publication of the Proceedings could help with payment of UK memberships

Treasurer’s Report (figures were distributed in Charles Green’s absence)
A. concern was expressed about the high banking charges—might another bank be found?
B. question raised: Might funds for the Charles Wesley Heritage Centre be used for scholarships for internationals attending the Oxford Institute?
C. question raised: Should money be given directly to the Heritage Centre?
D. Motion: That the Executive Committee be authorized and empowered to act in regard to the matters of the bank account and the Heritage Centre funds. Passed.
E. US dues not being paid; might be a problem with checks being cashed in a timely fashion
F. questions raised: Do we need a membership secretary? Should mailings go out from the Archives? A meeting will be held with Charles Green to determine what is manageable for him.

By-Laws

Motion: to approve amendments to the By-Laws. Unanimously approved.

General Secretary’s Report (Robert Williams)

A. Sixth Historical Convocation, July 20-22, 2007
   1. plenary speakers are to be named by the Society
   2. distinguished service award to be given to S T Kimbrough, Jr., who will give a plenary address
   3. Paul Chilcote may be the preacher for Sunday morning

B. Oxford Institute meeting of the Charles Wesley Society
   1. plenary to be given by Timothy Macquiban
   2. musical program to be coordinated by S T Kimbrough, Jr.
   3. annual meeting to be held during the first week of the Institute
   4. meeting to be advertised on both the Charles Wesley and Oxford Institute websites

Publications Report (S T Kimbrough, Jr.)

A. facsimile reprint of *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1739)
   1. to be out in June, 2007
   2. will have stemma, index of first lines, all variations of text

B. question raised about the publication of the 2006 papers; discussion

C. *Hymns for our Lord's Resurrection* needs to be reprinted; discussion about costs, possible runs, etc.

D. five to six papers from the German conference (2005) need to be published

E. continue to make money from *Songs for the World*

F. new resources
   1. “Charles Wesley at 300” (CD): 8 Lampe tunes as done in the 18th c. with 8–10 contemporary settings
   2. cantata based on the Good Samaritan poems of CW to be available as print on demand
   3. Tomas Boström has just made a recording of CW hymns, *o populum*

G. Charles Wesley’s journal has been completed and is being copyedited for publication by Kingswood; his letters are in process

H. new publications
   1. books to be published by Epworth Press and the Rylands Library Journal
   2. Lorna Khoo’s thesis has been published in Australia
   3. Charles Wesley bibliography to be done by Peter Forsaith
2008 Meeting
A. possible content: symposium around 2007 publications (e.g., Epworth and Rylands publications for the tercentary
B. venue: Princeton, 1st weekend of October? S T Kimbrough, Jr., to investigate
C. involvement of graduate students to be encouraged

Elections
A. Paul Chilcote was authorized to appoint a nominating committee
B. election of Patrick Eby as secretary of the Society
C. Motion: That the By-Laws be set aside to allow an officer to serve for an additional quadrennium. Passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Westerfield Tucker, Acting Secretary
Meeting called to order at 8:40 a.m. by President Paul Chilcote
In attendance—Paul Chilcote, Patrick Eby, Tom Albin, S T Kimbrough, Jr., Timothy Macquiban, Sam Young, Jonathan Kerry, William White, Grace Han, Art Swarthout, John Tyson, John Cook, Gwen Cook, Karl Heinz Voigt, Ulrike Schuler, Robert Williams, Judi Manuel, Steven Manskar

Opening Devotions
Review of 2006 Minutes
Minutes approved by consensus.

Reports
1. President
   • The president participated in about two major events per month during the year; most were related to Charles Wesley.
   • Thankful for having a full executive committee.
2. Vice-President (U.K.)
   • Dec 18, 2007 Marylebome Church Climax of Year. Largely in the hands of the Church of England
   • Local celebrations
   • One day devoted to celebration of Charles Wesley’s birth at the Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies
   • September conference at Liverpool Hope University
   • Bristol meeting that was secular.
   • Remains of Charles Wesley are to be moved to the new garden near Marylebone Church and interred there.
3. Secretary
   • Membership is up to date
   • Newsletter to be emailed
   • More content needs to be added to the website.
4. Treasurer
   • Discussion of addendum to Treasurer’s Report
     ▪ First two Actions. Moved/Seconded/Approved (M/S/A)
     ▪ Recommend Budget for 2006 to be approved for 2007 M/S/A.

Agenda
1. Publications
   • HSP 1739 is available.
   • Proceedings for 2005 meeting Freudenstadt is in final stages.
• Out of stock *Hymns for Our Lord’s Resurrection.* Need to reprint. Approve to reprint if funds available.
• Plan for expanded 2006–2007 edition of *Proceedings* by summer 2008;
• to include in depth book reviews: Best (Eby), Lloyd (Heitzenrater), Newport (Yrigoyen) by Dec 2007.

2. Oxford Celebration, August 14, 2007
• Keynote lecture—Macquiban
• Full day planned including tours of Oxford and Cantata *Good Samaritan* to be presented in an evening musical celebration.
• Will be publicized locally.

3. Heritage Centre Fund
• The funds for Heritage Centre Fund are to be transferred immediately to the British CWS and they are to be used at the discretion of the officers of the CWS in Great Britain, as relates to the Heritage Centre. M/S/A

4. Future Meetings
• 2009—Salisbury. Oct 2–4 or 14–16 Presented as alternatives. Date set 13th for the board meeting, 14th–16th meeting. M/S/A with the motion above.
• 2010—20th Anniversary—St. Simons Island, Epworth by the Sea

5. Elections
• Tom Albin brought forth a nominations slate: Robert Williams for treasurer, Jason Vickers for program director, Paul Chilcote for president, Timothy Macquiban for vice president, and William White for a board member. M/S/A to approve the report of the Committee on Nominations and elect these officers.

**Other Business**

Life membership Discussion
• Motion by Tom Albin to raise Lifetime Membership to 750. M/S/A
The resignations of Charles Green and Elaine A. Robinson were noted, and gratitude was expressed for their service to CWS.
There was a presentation of two Honorary Lifetime Memberships by President Chilcote to Charles Green *in absentia* and to S T Kimbrough, Jr. Robert Williams mentioned that the Historical Society is planning a meeting in Europe in 2010.

Respectfully submitted,
Patrick Eby, *Secretary*
Charles Wesley's Dynamic, Lyrical Theology
The Power and Impact of Verbs
S T Kimbrough, Jr.

The Wesley brothers, John and Charles, were often criticized by advocates of
the established church of eighteenth-century England as too experientially orien-
ted in their approach to the Christian faith. In other words, they placed far too
much emphasis on a religion of experience, one in which human emotions played
a decisive role. One need only read the journals of these two founders of the
Methodist movement to discover the strong role of experience in the spiritual for-
mation of the people involved in the evangelical revival they led within the
Church of England. John Wesley, for example, believed that one of the primary
functions of the use of music among the faithful was to evoke a passion for God,
all humankind, and creation itself. A cursory reading of Charles's hymns reveals
his use of language that emphasizes the experience of God in all aspects of one's
daily life, individually and corporately, within the body of Christ, the church.
John Wesley used the term, "practical divinity," to indicate a way of spirituality—
acts of piety and acts of mercy or compassion. The Wesley brothers' under-
standing of the Christian faith was not passive, rather one of the dynamic engage-
ment of the followers of Christ with God, others, and the whole of creation along
the path toward holiness.

In this article I will explore the theology couched in Charles Wesley's poeti-
cal language as a reservoir of dynamic response to God in acts of piety and acts
of mercy. Of particular interest will be the way he uses verbs as a bridge between
a religion of the head, heart, and hands, i.e., a religion that mutually links how
one thinks, feels, and shows God's love in the essence of one's being and one's
behavior.

Historically the church and its leaders seem to prefer a theology, embedded in
prose and laden with nouns. We notice that the poetry of Charles Wesley, how-
ever, is characterized in large measure by verbs. Some of the most important
words of his hymns and poems for theology and practice of faith are the follow-
ing verbs: to know, to think, to feel, to care, to sing, to do, to act.

God as Mystery

We begin the discussion with a central focus of Wesleyan theology, namely,
God as Mystery. This may seem to be a rather strange beginning point, for we
may ask: How can one of the most illusory aspects of faith, God's hiddenness,
be at the heart of a dynamic theology, one that engages the faithful with God, oth-
ers, and creation?

There can be no question that for Charles Wesley God and God's ways are a
marvelous mystery. "'Tis mystery all, the immortal dies," writes Wesley in one
of his most famous hymns, "And can it be that I should gain." There is an endur­ing tension between the unrevealed mystery and the revealed mystery of God, the God who is so far removed from us that we cannot fully know all dimensions of the divine life, and the God who is so near that we may be indwelled by the divine, resurrected Son of God, Jesus Christ.

2. 'Tis Myst'ry all! th'Immortal dies!
   Who can explore his strange Design?
   In vain the first-born Seraph tries
   To sound the Depths of Love Divine.
'Tis Mercy all! Let Earth adore,
   Let Angel Minds enquire no more.¹

In this stanza there is an essential element of the Wesleyan approach to God as mystery. We may confess our faith and raise questions about it in the same breath. "'Tis Mystery all: the Immortal dies!" is a powerful confession of faith in God's act in Christ on Calvary. "The Immortal dies," the divine Son endures death. Who can believe this paradox, that the Immortal can die? Yet, this is at the very heart, the core, of the Christian faith, that God gives of the divine self through Jesus the God Child, who is both human and divine. Wesley then raises the most profound question about such an act: "Who can explore this strange design?" Confession and questioning go together for the Wesleys. Try as they may, says Charles, even the angels cannot fathom this incredible reality.

   In vain the first-born Seraph tries
   To sound the Depths of Love Divine.

One comes then to another important facet of the Wesleyan approach to God as mystery in this stanza, namely, the life of the Christian is a life of doxology. "'Tis mercy all! Let earth adore," exclaims Wesley. Realizing that all of life is imbued with God's mercy, one enjoys life itself as an act of God's mercy. Therefore, one spends that life with all creation actively engaged in the adoration of the Creator.

There is also an eschatological dimension to living in the context of God as mystery. We may know something of the mystery, but our knowledge is limited, and we can look forward to the revelation of the full mystery of God and God's love.

In the eloquent English translation of a hymn by Gerhard Tersteegen, John Wesley writes about God as Mystery:

¹John and Charles Wesley, *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (London: Strahan, 1739), p. 118; henceforth cited as *HSP* (1739). This is stanza 2 of the well-known hymn "And can it be that I should gain."
Thou hidden love of God; whose height,
    Whose depth unfathomed knows,
I see from far thy beauteous light
   Inly I sigh for thy repose;
My heart is pained, nor can it be
At rest, till it find rest in thee.2

The height of the love of God remains unfathomed to humankind. Yet, one receives glimpses of it in this life. It is described by Wesley here as “beauteous light” that one sees from afar and for which one yearns. Notice the verbs: “see from far” and “inly I sigh.” This is the indescribable longing of the human heart for peace and rest that can only be found in God. It is a painful longing—to know fully the love of God and to be at complete rest and peace.

After his 1738 conversion, Charles Wesley spent the rest of his life in wonder over God’s amazing love, knowing that he could never fully comprehend it. It would be a constant struggle. He understood well the lines his brother John had penned in translating Tersteegen’s hymn: “my heart is pained, nor can it be / at rest till it find rest in thee.”

Over a year after his conversion he wrote in his Journal: “I never knew till now the strength of temptation, and energy of sin. Who, that conferred with flesh and blood, would covet great success? I live in continual storm. My soul is always in my hand. The enemy thrusts sore at me, that I may fall; and a worse enemy than the devil is my own heart. . . . I received, I humbly hope, a fresh pardon in the sacrament at St. Paul’s” (Journal, 1:157).

’Tis Mystery all: the Immortal dies!
   Who can explore his strange Design?

The silent reply to his question is: You and I can explore “his strange design.” In the journey toward holiness throughout our lives we are exploring God’s strange design. Like Charles Wesley we learn to live the mystery—that questions and confession go together; that to be emptied of everything but love is what it means to serve a God who in Christ was emptied “of all but love.” Living the mystery means that one is willing to let the Mystery be the Mystery. This is not in some esoteric mystical sense, rather it is part of the Christian’s daily affirmation that God, though hidden, is the source of strength for life itself. Charles Wesley confessed this simply in the following lines.

2 Stanza 1 of John Wesley’s translation of the hymn “Verborgne Gottes Liebe du” by Gerhard Tersteegen. Wesley’s translation was first published in the volume he edited, A Collection of Psalms and Hymns (London: [Bowyer for Hutton], 1738), p. 51. Italics have been added by this author.
One spends a lifetime exploring God’s strange design of love and actively hides oneself in the name of Jesus. It may seem a strange paradox that one can be “secure” in that which is hidden. One must be willing to put one’s trust in the all-sufficient, divine love expressed in Jesus that gives one the repose and peace to withstand one’s foes and the difficulties of life. The God of “hidden love” reveals the divine self-giving love, which is the hallmark of the way of God on earth and in heaven. John and Charles Wesley came to understand through numerous experiences that the “hidden source of calm repose” was indeed all-sufficient and in the midst of the most radical and violent opposition one could have inner peace from this Source.

In the hymn “With glorious clouds encompassed round” Charles Wesley summons worshippers to a vision of the “Unsearchable,” which is enhanced and enabled through a series of verbs.

With glorious clouds encompassed round,
Whom angels dimly see,
Will the unsearchable be found,
Or God appear to me?

Will he forsake his throne above,
Himself to me impart?
Answer, thou Man of grief and love,
And speak it to my heart!

In manifested love explain
Thy wonderful design;
What meant the suffering Son of Man,
The streaming blood divine?

Didst thou not in our flesh appear,
And live and die below,
That I may now perceive thee near,
And my Redeemer know?

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3Charles Wesley, *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (Bristol: Farley, 1749), 1:245. Italics have been added by this author.
Come then, and to my soul reveal
The heights and depths of grace,
The wounds which all my sorrows heal,
That dear disfigured face.

I view the Lamb in his own light,
Whom angels dimly see,
And gaze, transported at the sight,
Through all eternity.4

Notice the verbs of vision: stanza 1: see, appear; stanza 2: appear, perceive, know; stanza 3: reveal, view, gaze. Again, this is a prayer for an enlarged vision of the revelation of "the heights and depths of grace." The last four lines are a fascinating description of the worshipper's vision received in the process of singing this hymn within the community of faith. Such a vision makes clear that the hymns of Charles Wesley are moved by the mystery of God's presence. This vision of God necessitates human response both in acts of piety and acts of mercy.

Acts of piety

There are corporate and individual, public and private, acts of piety, but they are all performed within the context of the body of Christ, the Church. Both are integral to the life lived in the presence of God and the practice of the vocation of doxology. It is not possible in this paper to address all of the corporate and individual acts of piety integral to the Wesleyan movement and the formation of Wesleyan spirituality, but I shall address a few of them. It is not a simple matter to respond to the vocation of doxology, but this is the foundation of all acts of piety and acts of mercy. Learning to wonder and adore is not a simple task, especially for those who want tangible answers to all of life's questions. I begin with the corporate act of piety central to Wesleyan spirituality, Holy Communion.

(a) Holy Communion

For Charles and John Wesley the vocation of doxology is best learned and practiced at the table of the Lord in the corporate act of Holy Communion. This common act of the Body of Christ, the Church, is the fulcrum of Christian life and behavior. Even so, in one of Charles's Eucharistic hymns he speaks of the depth of God's divine love as "unfathomable grace," both in terms of awe and incomprehensibility.

O the Depth of Love Divine,
Th'Unfathomable Grace!
Who shall say how Bread and Wine
God into Man conveys!

4 Charles Wesley, Hymns for the Use of Families (Bristol: Pine, 1767), Hymn 161, pp. 171–172, stanzas 1–5, 8. Italics have been added by this author.
How the bread his flesh imparts,
How the Wine transmits his Blood,
Fills his Faithful People’s Hearts—
With all the Life of God!

Though Wesley is here specifically referring to the unfathomable grace in God’s love, which one encounters at the table of the Lord, his statement patterns for the followers of Christ precisely how they must live. They may grasp the depth of God’s gift of grace in Jesus, God’s Son, and comprehend what God has done for them, but they cannot fully comprehend how it is that the God of the universe acts in this caring way for every human being. That is unfathomable and one can but stand in awe throughout one’s life before this incredible divine act and live the mystery. In the second stanza of this hymn for Holy Communion, we encounter his use of a verb, which immediately thrusts the act of piety at the Lord’s table into the arena of active engagement with others. The verb, show, underscores how one is to live the Mystery.

Let the wisest Mortal show
How we the Grace receive;
Feeble Elements bestow
A Power not theirs to give;
Who explains the Wondrous Way,
How tho’ these the Virtue came?
These the Virtue did convey,
Yet still remain the same.

Those who are wise show they have received the unfathomable grace. Through them God’s grace becomes visible to others. They show to others that the least suspecting, most common elements of daily life, bread and wine, are a means of experiencing the wonder of God’s grace. They demonstrate in thought, word, and deed the selfless love they have experienced at the Lord’s table. This is why the Wesleys could not think of convening a Society for preaching and evangelization or the classes and bands for study and examination without admonishing all to go to the parish church to receive the elements of bread and wine.

This was not, however, a simple matter. While in the Church of England the practice of Holy Communion in the eighteenth century was indeed erratic and a large, uneducated segment of the population to whom the Wesleys ministered had neither knowledge nor experience of this practice, they did not shrink from insisting on the centrality of this sacred meal in Christian practice.

For Charles attendance at the table of the Lord is not an option. It is the will of God. This he both knows and feels.

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5 Hymns on the Lord’s Supper (Bristol: Farley, 1745), Hymn 57, p. 41; henceforth cited as HLS followed by hymn, stanza, and page numbers. Italics for Th’ Unfathomable have been added by this author.
Nay, but this is his Will
(We know it and feel)
That we should partake
The Banquet for All He so freely did make.\(^6\)

There is a paradox, however, with which the Wesleys learned to live and
which becomes seminal to their spiritual walk with Christ and the Church. It is
expressed in the opening lines of the fourth stanza of the hymn, “O the depth of
love divine,” cited above.

Sure and real is the Grace,
The Manner be unknown;
Only meet us in thy Ways
And perfect us in One.
Let us taste the heavenly Powers,
Lord, we ask for Nothing more.
Thine to bless, ’Tis only ours
To wonder and adore.\(^7\)

Can Charles really mean what he says? “Sure and real is the grace, / The man-
ner be unknown.” Grace that is sure and real is revealed in an unknown manner?
That sounds like doubletalk. Yet, Charles means exactly what he says. One can
experience the surety and reality of God’s grace and may not be able to describe
the manner in which the truth of God’s grace has been made known. For exam-
ple, each experience of the Eucharist is new. One cannot anticipate the manner
in which the grace of God will be made known in the breaking of bread and the
drinking of wine, but of this one can be sure—God’s grace is revealed time and
again and often in very different ways. One must be willing to trust the reality of
grace, though the manner in which it is revealed is unknown.

**(b) Reading of the Scriptures**

The reading of Scripture is both a corporate and individual act of piety and is
essential to the public and private worship of God. One need only read the jour-
nals of John and Charles Wesley to discover how essential public acts of Scripture
reading and preaching were to the early Methodist movement. The Scriptures
provided an important bridge between theology and faith practice, between which
the brothers wanted no separation. Hence, one reads the Scriptures from the per-
spective of life experience.

In 1762 Charles published a commentary on the entire Bible in poetry. The
two volumes entitled *Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures*
included 2,349 hymns and poems based on passages from the books of the Bible

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\(^6\) HLS, 92:3, pp. 78–79. Italics for *know* and *feel* have been added by this author.

\(^7\) HLS, 57:4, p. 41.
from Genesis to the Revelation of John. All of the hymns and poems were based on a verse or verses of the Bible. One of them was written in reflection on the Sh’ma Y’israel (Deut. 6:4–7) and how it is to be integrated into daily life in one’s personal acts of piety.

The table of my heart prepare,
(Such power belongs to thee alone)
And write, O God, thy precepts there,
To show thou still canst write in stone,
So shall my pure obedience prove
All things are possible to love.

Father, instruct my docile heart,
Apt to instruct I then shall be,
I then shall all thy words impart,
And teach (as taught myself by thee)
My children in their earliest days,
To know, and live the life of grace.

When quiet in my house I sit,
Thy book be my companion still,
My joy thy sayings to repeat,
Talk o’er the records of thy will,
And search the oracles divine,
Till every heart-felt word is mine.

O might the gracious words divine
Subject of all my converse be,
So would the Lord his follower join,
And walk, and talk himself with me,
So would my heart his presence prove,
And burn with everlasting love.

Oft as I lay me down to rest,
O may the reconciling word
Sweetly compose my weary breast,
While on the bosom of my Lord
I sink in blissful dreams away,
And visions of eternal day.

Rising to sing my Saviour’s praise,
Thee may I publish all day long,
And let thy precious word of grace
Flow from my heart, and fill my tongue,
Fill all my life with purest love,
And join me to thy church above.8

8Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures (Bristol: Farley, 1762), 1:91–93; henceforth cited as Short Hymns (1762) followed by volume and page numbers. Italics have been added by this author.
In the poem just cited the verbs are italicized for emphasis in order to illustrate the role that verb-orientation plays in Wesley's poetry. While nouns can be stagnant and static, verbs tend to thrust those who take seriously the statements of Wesley's poetry directly into the practice of faith. One cannot remain passive. Just as the table of the Lord is prepared for communicants to receive the elements of bread and wine, the table of one's heart is prepared to receive God's Word. One wishes to be instructed, taught "to know, and live the life of grace."

What an image Wesley sets before our eyes of sitting quietly in our houses and repeating and searching the words of Scripture "till every heart-felt word is mine!" Thus, the Scriptures become the nerve center of human conscience and memory so that we will "burn with everlasting love."

*Fill all my life with purest love,*
*And join me to thy church above.*

The goal of all instruction through Scripture is to shed abroad God's love in our hearts. This is not, however, experience at the expense of intellect. Both John and Charles are ever praying: "Unite the pair so long disjoined: / Knowledge and vital piety."

Wesley's poems and hymns call Christians to a dynamic, active theology, as illustrated by the following phrase from the second stanza of the above-cited poem, which, in one sense, is an answer to the ultimate question—Why do we read the Holy Scriptures?—"to know, and live the life of grace."

Though, as already noted, the Wesleys stress almost daily the importance of the public act of the Scripture reading, this poem clearly emphasizes the importance and value of its private reading. This is a discipline that accompanies one's rising, daily activities, and retiring for rest in the evening. The goal is that one will be filled with God's love! Charles wants to be so consumed with the Scriptures that they will be the subject of his daily conversation and he will literally burn with the love he discovers there.

*(c) Experiencing Christ's passion*

The personal experience of Christ's passion is a vital element of Wesleyan theology and it has a strong verb orientation. Note the verbs in the following stanza from the hymn, "O Love divine, what hast thou done!"

*Behold Him, All ye that pass by,*
*The Bleeding Prince of Life and Peace!*
*Come see, ye Worms, your Maker die,*
*And say, Was ever grief like his!*
*Come feel with me his Blood applied:*
*My Lord, my Love is Crucified!*¹⁹

¹⁹ John and Charles Wesley, *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (Bristol: Farley, 1742), p. 26; henceforth cited as *HSP* (1742) followed by page number. Italics have been added by this author.
Wesley says one must “behold” what transpires at Calvary, not merely pass by. The next step is to “come” and “see.” One can see the cross event from afar and not be as impressed or moved as when one comes nearer and truly sees what transpires there. Then one is to speak, to open one’s mouth and utter the words in awe, “Was ever grief like his?” Finally, one is to “come” and “feel” with Wesley the blood of Christ applied to one’s life. What can this possibly mean—“feel with me his blood applied.” “Feel” is an extremely important word for Charles Wesley in discussing Christian experience. So often in his biblical interpretation he attempts to place himself in the context of biblical characters and situations and to play out the spectrum of emotions and human experience connected with persons, events, and situations. Here he tries to imagine the pain of the cross and Christ’s agony through a sense of Christ’s blood applied to his life. If one thinks of the annual practice of the Samaritans to this day in Nablus at the time of atonement when the blood of a sacrificial lamb is literally sprinkled on the members of the community, one has perhaps an idea of what Wesley has in mind, though he uses the physical imagery in a spiritual sense. Wesley is saying that all those who take time to “come” and “see” what truly transpires at Calvary—God the Maker dying on behalf of all humankind—may indeed feel Christ’s redemptive blood applied to their lives. They will catch the healing stream of love, which flows from the cross. They will give up their hearts to him and their constant conversation shall be:

Of nothing think or speak beside:  
My Lord, my Love is crucified!10

In the hymn, “Glory to God, and Praise, and Love,” written on the anniversary of his conversion, from which the well-known “O for a thousand tongues to sing” comes, Wesley also uses an interesting array of verbs. One stanza summons the Christian and the nations of the earth to look to Christ.

Wesley affirms, however, that the redemption of the nations cannot transpire without the redemption of every individual. Through imperative verb forms, directed to every individual, he admonishes all to give full attention to Christ.

Look unto Him, ye Nations, own  
Your God, ye fallen Race!  
Look, and be saved thro’ Faith alone;  
Be justified by grace!11

While he drew much from Luther in the illumination of the teaching of justification by faith, no doubt it was the insight which Luther brought to the biblical text which influenced Charles most of all. He expressed his own surprise at having

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10 HSP (1742), p. 27; last two lines of stanza 4. Italics have been added by this author.
11 John and Charles Wesley, Hymns and Sacred Poems (London: Strahan, 1740), p. 122; henceforth cited as HSP (1740) followed by page number. Italics have been added by this author.
thought that this teaching might be foreign to the doctrines of the Church of England, when he found it clearly among its Articles of Religion. Wesley says in this hymn what Ephesians 2:8 had affirmed long ago, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing.”

The summons to “look unto him” is to the nations of the earth; no one is excluded! He echoes Isaiah’s call: “Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth!” (45:22) For Wesley this summons is as up-to-date now as it was during the time of the prophet Isaiah, centuries before Jesus was born. It mandates, however, giving full attention to Christ in what we think, say, and do.

In the stanza seventeen of his hymn written on the anniversary of his conversion are two lines with two verbs in the imperative that are vital to mission, evangelization, and the experience of Christ:

*Awake from guilty nature’s sleep,*  
*Cast all your sins into the deep!*\(^{12}\)

This is no new summons, for the prophet Micah once prayed in confidence to God on behalf of the people: “You will cast our sins into the depths of the sea” (7:19). In Christ this has been done! When we awaken from the dark sleep of sin, Charles reminds us, in the spirit of St. Paul’s words: “Christ shall give you light” (Ephesians 5:14).

Stanza eighteen of the hymn, “Glory to God, and Praise, and Love,” includes a perspective summarized in four verbs, which give balance to the church and Christians in mission: *know, feel, anticipate, own.*

*With me, your Chief, you then shall know,*  
*Shall feel your Sins forgiven;*  
*Anticipate your Heaven below,*  
*And own, that Love is Heaven.*\(^{13}\)

One can *know* and *feel* one’s sins forgiven. In other words, the whole person (not merely head or heart, but head and heart) experiences the reality of forgiveness. One is conscious of and senses that sin is forgiven by God. *Knowing* and *feeling* are vital for mission with integrity, for they keep missioners in touch with the reality of people as they are—persons with thoughts and emotions, with multiple needs in both of these arenas of life. Mission that attends to one at the expense of the other cannot be fully Christ’s holistic mission. Redemption is for the whole person.

When you *know* and *feel* your sins are forgiven, the final couplet of Wesley’s text can become a reality, for you can—

*Anticipate your Heaven below,*  
*And own, that Love is Heaven.*

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\(^{12}\) *HSP* (1740).

\(^{13}\) *HSP* (1740), p. 123. Italics for *feel, anticipate, and own* have been added by this author.
So much of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures reminds us that God is among us, with us, and dwells in love on this earth. While there is much to be anticipated beyond this world which we know tangibly, there is so much to be anticipated in the mission of the church in realizing the heaven of God's love lived out on this planet. This is a mandate of Christian mission, for what is there that can surpass a love, Christ's love, which heals, makes new, breaks down barriers of prejudice, makes friends of enemies, and reclaims all of creation, all earth, and its life! That is heaven on earth. That is the power of God's love in Jesus Christ. That is new birth! This is why Charles Wesley articulated anew the averment of his Moravian friend, Peter Böhler, that if he had a thousand tongues with which to sing, he would use them all to praise God. That is why Wesley's song, "O for a thousand tongues to sing," has become the universal song of all Christians!

**Linking and integrating "acts of piety" and "acts of mercy"**

We should not have to struggle to relate "acts of piety" and "acts of mercy" as they are a part of a holistic understanding of Christian discipleship. Charles Wesley's use of verbs helps to integrate the two and to understand how they reciprocally flow in and out of one another. There is a stanza in the hymn "Christ the Lord is risen today" to which Wesley gave the title "Hymn for Easter-Day," originally published in 1739, that eloquently illustrates how he does this. The original text has eleven stanzas, not four or six, the form in which it most often appears in hymnbooks today.

In this hymn Wesley invites us to enter into the spirit of the resurrection of Christ and he leads us through a broad range of feelings and emotions, which are related to the resurrection: the cry of victory, overcoming of death and time, and eternal life. Wesley asks—How does one live eternal life as a present inheritance in this world? We must look at stanza 11 of the original text, if we want to discover Wesley's formula for living eternal life now. He writes:

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King of Glory, Soul of Bliss,
Everlasting Life is This:
Thee to know, thy Pow'r to prove,
Thus to sing, and thus to love.  
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Eternal life, maintains Wesley, as in the New Testament, is a present reality. He defines eternal life here with four verbs:

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Thee to know, thy Pow'r to prove,
Thus to sing, and thus to love.  
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*Thee to know.* Wesley's words recall Jesus' prayer, "And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (John 17:3). If we know Jesus Christ, says Wesley, we know him in the pre-

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14 *HSP* (1739), p. 211. Italics have been added by this author.
sent moment and we are already experiencing eternal life. First John 5:20 explains, “And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.”

*Thy power to prove.* Eternal life is evidence of the power of God. Wesley does not mean, however, that we ourselves must prove the power of God, rather, that we embody this power in the present. We are the evidence of the power of God in a world that prefers its own power and puts its trust in the power of human beings.

*Thus to sing.* Eternal life is a joyous song! The entire creation sings to the Creator because death no longer is a threat. As St. Augustin said, “The Christian must be an Alleluia from head to foot.” The outburst of “Hallelujah” is the Christian’s eternal hymn.

*Thus to love.* The content of eternal life is love. Eternal life means—Christians love as Christ loved, even when it means sacrifice. This love seeks others, who are in need. One gives of self out of love for one’s neighbor and for creation.

Christians must not wait for eternal life. One experiences and lives it now! Wesley did not write: “Christ the Lord was risen,” nor “Christ the Lord will arise,” rather “Christ the Lord is risen today!” It is a contemporary event! It transpires now! It is the foundation of all joy and celebration!

Hence, the verbs *know, prove, sing,* and *love* provide the bridge between faith and practice, between acts of piety and acts of mercy. Their implementation leads to active engagement with God, others, and the world. Here is the bridge between personal and social holiness. We cannot have one without the other.

There is another text by Wesley, Hymn 155, “Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,” found in *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper* (1745), that also eloquently articulates the integration of acts of piety and acts of mercy. Stanza 4 of the hymn reads:

> Take my Soul and Body’s Powers,
> Take my Mem’ry, Mind, and Will,
> All my Goods, and all my Hours,
> All I know, and all I feel,
> All I think, and speak, and do;
> Take my Heart—but make it new.15

Again, the verbs Wesley uses express how, when one is totally absorbed in God, not only is one personally transformed, made “new,” others are impacted by speech and action. What they experience from such a transformed person is the personified love of God that goes in search of others at all costs. He does not stop with simply saying that all he *knows, feels,* and *thinks* is changed. The way he speaks and acts has been changed for ever and his knowledge, feelings, thought, speech, and action will now impact the lives of others. His personal holiness has a social impact.

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15 HLS, Hymn 155, p. 130. Italics have been added by this author.
Acts of mercy

When it comes to “acts of mercy,” Charles Wesley’s poetical vocabulary is filled with verbs, and often in the imperative. In “acts of mercy” one is engaged as a transforming agent of Christ’s love in the world among believers and non-believers. One is a servant of both. A classic Wesleyan statement about service to others is found in a hitherto unpublished hymn/poem, “Your duty let the apostle show.”16 Stanza 2 reads:

Work for the weak, and sick, and poor,
Raiment and food for them procure,
And mindful of God’s word,
Enjoy the blessedness to give,
Lay out your gettings to relieve
The members of your Lord.

This is not a faith stance of retreat from the world, rather its dynamic engagement. Note the repertory of persons articulated by Wesley for whom one is to work: the weak, the sick, the poor.

Here one finds mandates for acts of mercy. Note the verbs: work, procure, lay out (spend). When Wesley says “work for,” he does not mean to step in and do others’ work for them, though there might be occasions when that would be appropriate. One aspect of work, however, is defined succinctly by Wesley. You are to lay out your gettings (what you have earned) “to relieve [aid] / the members of your Lord.” Notice he does not say, “the members of the church” or “the members of the household of faith,” but “the members of your Lord.” But who are they? If we take our cue in this regard from the Wesleys’ service to others, they did not limit their work for others only to members of the church or even the Methodist societies, classes, or bands. While they appealed to people wherever they went to accept Christ as Savior, turn from sin, place full trust in God’s justifying grace, and remain faithful to the prayers and sacraments of the Church, they knew that all people on earth were God’s creatures, and, in this sense, all were members of the Lord, whether they acknowledged this or not.

Another aspect of work for others is defined thus by Wesley: “raiment and food for them procure.” This is by no means a nebulous mandate. The verb procure means to obtain something, especially with care or effort. In one sense, this might be understood as a programmatic statement. In other words, see to it that the weak, sick, and poor have the food and clothing they need. Your own earnings are to be used toward this end.

Wesley is also clear that one cannot use all of one’s resources in this way. In stanza 1 of this text he says,

Your calling’s works at times pursue,
And keep the the tent-maker\(^{17}\) in view
And use your hands for God.

In another previously unpublished hymn he states this reality quite pointedly.

Of your abundant store
You may a few relieve,
But all to feed the poor,
You cannot, cannot give,
Houses and lands for Christ forego,
Or live as Jesus lived below.\(^{18}\)

As a husband and father, he was fully aware that he had responsibilities to his family, hence, he could not give “all to feed the poor.” This by no means, however, lessens the obligation of the mandate to procure food and raiment for the weak, the sick, and poor.

This mandate is also eloquently expressed by Charles Wesley in a hymn, “Jesus, the gift divine I know,” which survives in the British Methodist hymnal, *Hymns and Psalms* (1983).

Thy mind throughout my life be shown,
While listening to the wretch’s cry,
The widow’s and the orphan’s groan,
On mercy’s wings I swiftly fly
The poor and helpless to relieve,
My life, my all for them to give.\(^{19}\)

These are not options of Christian social engagement, rather a mandate.

Acts of mercy are requisite to social holiness according to the Wesleys. And, if we seek social holiness, we oppose the forces of evil in the world that would wound and destroy creation. Through acts of mercy we become advocates for creation and opponents of all forces that are contrary to God’s purpose of harmony, love, and peace for all creation. Hence, Wesley speaks out strongly against violence, cruelty, and war.

1. Our earth we now lament to see
   With floods of wickedness o’erflowed,
   With violence, wrong, and cruelty,
   One wide-extended field of blood,
   Where men, like fiends, each other tear
   In all the hellish rage of war.

\(^{17}\)The Apostle Paul.

\(^{18}\)MS Acts, pp. 74–75; see *Unpub. Poetry*, 2:197–198. Italics have been added by this author.

\(^{19}\) *Short Hymns* (1762) 2:380.
2. As listed on Abaddon’s side,  
   They mangle their own flesh, and slay;  
   Tophet is moved, and opens wide  
   Its mouth for its enormous prey;  
   And myriads sink beneath the grave,  
   And plunge into the flaming wave.

3. O might the universal Friend  
   This havock of his creatures see!  
   Bid our unnatural discord end,  
   Declare us reconciled in thee,  
   Write kindness in our inward parts,  
   And chase the murderer from our hearts

4. Who now against each other rise,  
   The nations of the earth constrain  
   To follow after peace, and prize  
   The blessings of thy righteous reign,  
   The joys of unity to prove,  
   The paradise of perfect love.²⁰

The eighteenth century was teeming with wars on many fronts: the American Revolution, the numerous frontier wars with Native Americans, the Thirty Years War, and on and on, and on! It is Wesley’s eternal prayer for peace. When Charles Wesley published the hymn in 1758 in *Hymns of Intercession for All Mankind*, the hymn bore the title “For Universal Peace.” When his brother, John, published it in *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists* in 1780, it was included in the section “For Believers Interceding for the World.”

The hymn, composed in a century riddled with war and rumors of war, may reflect public accounts of fierce battles, for example, of the killing field of Culloden, which took place in April of 1745, and is as up-to-date now as it was then.

Wesley uses some images which are less familiar today but are descriptive of the horrors of war and death. The second stanza includes Satanic images from the depths of Sheol, drawn from Revelation 9:11: “They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit,” whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon [Destruction], and in Greek is Apollyon [Destroyer].

The most gruesome of Israel’s aberrations was the sacrifice of children as burnt offerings to the god Baal at an illicit place of worship in the Valley of Hinnom known as Tophet (2 Kings 23:10, Lev. 18:21).

Hear the Wesleyan summons to peace and for the obliteration of war! Advocate an end to war and the advent of the reign of perfect love! Every act for peace is an act of mercy!

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²⁰Charles Wesley, *Hymns of Intercession for All Mankind* (Bristol: Farley, 1758), Hymn 2, p. 4.
Charles Wesley once reflected on Luke 10:5, “Into whatsoever house you enter, first say, Peace” and wrote:

1. Peace to this house! the greatest good
   Which sinners can from God receive!
The peace Divine on all bestowed
   Who in a suffering Christ believe,
The peace which seals your sins forgiven,
   And brings you here a taste of heaven.

2. We cannot wish our neighbor more
   Than present and eternal peace,
The riches these of Jesu’s poor,
   With which the sons of men now bless,
   And spread through earth the precious prize,
   And turn it into paradise.21

What a haunting thought that soldiers would have on their lips as the first word upon entering the home of the enemy: Peace, Salaam, Shalom, Paix, Friede, Pax. Wesley asks: Are you willing to act on behalf of peace? Are you prepared to “spread through earth the precious prize” of peace “and turn [earth] into paradise”?

War is not the evidence of social holiness, rather it is “unnatural discord.” Hence, Wesley passionately prays that God will “chase the murderer from our hearts!” As followers of Christ, we have a responsibility to seek peace, to act for peace. If we seek the “paradise of perfect love,” we must advocate for the nations of the earth to follow after peace. We must prize the “joys of unity” of all peoples.

One of the fruits of the Spirit is peace advocacy, according to Wesley’s hymn, “Jesus, God of peace and love.” To seek unity (“make us one”) one must oppose war and advocate for peace. Faithful Christians will seek to be purged of malice, guile, and pride that are stumbling blocks to unity. Faithful Christians will seek the multiplication of the Spirit’s fruit, namely, “love, and joy, and quiet peace.” If faithful Christians seek the mind of Christ, they will also seek the reign of love and peace. They will seek the end of hatred and war, the rule of peace, love, and unity in every heart.

1. Jesus, God of Peace and Love,
   Send thy Blessing from above,
   Take, and seal us for Thine own,
   Touch our Hearts, and make us One.

Charles Wesley often wrote about those who lived exemplary lives filled with "acts of mercy." Here are some selected stanzas from a long poem about Mary Naylor.23

1. The golden rule she has pursued,
   And did to others as she would
   Others should do to her:
   Justice composed her upright soul,
   Justice did all her thoughts control,
   And formed her character.

2. Affliction, poverty, disease,
   Drew out her soul in soft distress,
   The wretched to relieve:
   In all the works of love employed,
   Her sympathizing soul enjoyed
   The blessedness to give.

3. Her Savior in his members seen,
   A stranger she received him in,
   An hungry Jesus fed,
   Tended her sick, imprisoned Lord,
   And flew in all his wants to afford
   Her ministerial aid.

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4. A nursing-mother to the poor,  
For them she *husbanded* her store,  
Her life, her all, bestowed;  
For them she *labored* day and night,  
In *doing good* her whole delight,  
In copying after God.

5. Away, my tears and selfish sighs!  
The happy saint in paradise  
Requires us not to mourn;  
But rather keep her life in view,  
And still her shining steps pursue,  
Till all to God return.

Mary Naylor was a woman who lived by acts of mercy, for “justice composed her upright soul, / justice did all her thoughts control, / and formed her character.” Hence, she was drawn to those who were afflicted, poverty stricken, or diseased. She was employed in “all the works of love.” She nursed the poor and gave her all for them day and night. Doing good was her whole delight.

Once again Wesley’s use of verbs to describe this woman and her faithfulness reminds us of how we are to be engaged in “acts of mercy”: she tended the sick, fed the hungry, flew to the aid of prisoners, husbanded the poor, labored for the poor day and night.

I conclude this section on “acts of mercy” with Charles Wesley’s admonition, which might be called a “Credo of Acts of Mercy.”

1. Help us to help each other, Lord,  
   Each other’s Cross to bear,  
   Let each his friendly Aid afford,  
   And feel his Brother’s Care.

2. Help us to build each other up,  
   Our little Stock improve;  
   Increase our Faith, confirm our Hope,  
   And perfect us in Love.

3. Up into Thee, our Living Head,  
   Let us in all Things grow,  
   Till Thou hast made us free indeed,  
   And Sinless here below.

4. Then, when the Mighty Work is wrought,  
   Receive thy Ready Bride;  
   Give us in Heaven an happy Lot  
   With All the Sanctified.24

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24 *HSP* (1742), p. 83, stanzas 3–6. The poem is entitled “A Prayer for Persons joined in Fellowship.” Stanza 1 of the original text begins “Try us, O God, and search the ground.”
Conclusion

Finally, what may we say about Charles Wesley’s poetical rhetoric, i.e., his art of effective or persuasive writing? His use of active verbs is a distinctive compositional technique that creates a persuasive and impressive effect in his poetry. He is not given to grandiloquence, pomposity, or extravagant language that obscures his purpose. He does not construct empty rhetoric. Verbs that he uses in the indicative mood tend to link thought with action. Often he uses the imperative form of the verb to challenge the reader to specific action. For example, when he addresses the importance of linking knowledge and piety, he does not simply use the two nouns and aver that they should be joined. He confronts one with the immediate task by using the imperative of the verb.

Unite the pair so long disjoined,
Knowledge and vital piety,
Learning and holiness combined,
And truth and love let all men see
In these, whom up to Thee we give,
Thine, wholly Thine, to die and live.25

This not a matter to be pondered, rather one that requires immediate action. Thus, often his use of verbs in the indicative thrust one on to the plane of action. Thought and action are immediately joined.

While there are many other aspects of Charles Wesley’s rhetoric, his use of metaphors, figures of speech, etc., which have been examined by scholars, his art of the use of verbs, which is no doubt conscious and unconscious, imbues his lyrical theology with a dynamism that aids the Christian in linking thought and action—head, heart, and hands. They are a vital linguistic bridge joining theology and faith practice.

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25 Charles Wesley, *Hymns for Children* (Bristol: Farley, 1763), Hymn 40, p. 36. Italics have been added by this author.
A New Sermon of the Rev. Charles Wesley as Recorded in an Early Methodist Manuscript

Thomas R. Albin

The 300th anniversary of the Reverend Samuel and Susanna Wesley’s youngest son, Charles, is a fitting occasion to look again at this remarkable person. For many who sing his hymns, Charles Wesley is known as John’s younger brother and a significant writer of sacred verse. This article will look at the Reverend Charles Wesley, M.A., sometime student of Christ Church, Oxford1 from the perspective of one early Methodist, Samuel Roberts of Selby and Leeds.2 Roberts completed a 261-page manuscript volume, leather bound in book format. Within this volume is a three-page record of Charles Wesley’s sermon to the Methodist Society in Leeds, 1747/8.

The complete text of the sermon will be printed below.3 It is of interest for several reasons: (1) the text of this manuscript account is not contained in the shorthand sermons of Charles Wesley4 or the critical edition recently published by Oxford University Press;5 (2) it provides an insight into the nature of the instruction given to the Methodist Society when they gathered apart from the public preaching of the Word; (3) it reflects the Methodist understanding of the spiritual life in the mid-eighteenth century; and (4) it reveals how the theological perspective of the writer (Samuel Roberts) is written into the history of Charles Wesley’s discourse.

1. The Manuscript Account

At the bottom of page 223 in the manuscript volume one finds these words:

A Discourse of CHARLS Wesly. 1747
To § Society at Leeds.

At the top of the following page the account begins in a manner consistent with Charles Wesley’s style and manner of preaching. Quoting word for word

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2This writer is indebted to Dr. John Walsh of Jesus College, Oxford, for the permission to share the content of the Samuel Roberts Manuscript volume.

3See the transcription and photographic reprints below.

4Charles Wesley’s Earliest Evangelical Sermons: Six Short-hand Manuscript Sermons now for the first time Transcribed from the Original, ed. Thomas R. Albin and Oliver A. Beckerlegge (occasional publication of the Wesley Historical Society, 1987). Hereafter referred to as Sermons CW.

from the Authorized Version of the Bible, the discourse begins with Ezekiel 33:12 and continues with an appeal to the listeners to respond positively to God’s call to turn from their wicked ways and live. Human response to grace is both possible and necessary for salvation. “So my Brethren you See Plainly that if we be Damd it is our own falts.”

The next portion of the discourse is an extended story drawn from “Reding a Sarton Author” who “Gave an Acount How lucyfer ye Cheff Devil in hell Sent 3 of his Sarvants or Under Devils to go & walk to & fro on ye Earth” to collect all the souls they could. When the time came to report on their dark mission, the first devil said that he had caused a great storm that destroyed a large fleet of ships. And “I have brought all thare Souls to hell with me.” Lucifer’s response affirmed the success in language similar to that of the Bible: “Well Done thou has Done a wonderful Exployet.”

The mission of the second devil was also successful. This demon had burned a large city “in Such a furious Manner. yt a Most all ye In habitance was Consumd in ye flames, & I have Brought all thare Souls to hell alongue with mee.”

However, it was the third devil that received the greatest praise from Lucifer, the chief devil. Although the under-devil had brought only one soul to hell, it was that of an old man that “has been a Child of God a bove 20 years.” This devil had caused the Christian man to commit adultery with a woman and “then Causd him to hang his Self in a Destrected mind.” Having successfully destroyed the faith of one who had been a Christian for many years, Lucifer affirmed this servant above all others, “thou has’t Done ye Greatest & ye best Exployt of all ye three.”

The final portion of Charles Wesley’s discourse to the Methodist Society, according to Samuel Roberts, was an exhortation to “Watch & Pray allways least you enter into temtation. for your Avasary ye Devil goes aboute like a Roring lyon Seeking whome he may Devour.” In addition, Charles contrasted the futility of the temporary pleasures of sin to the terror of the “Everlasting fier Prepard for ye Devil & his angels.” Therefore, the society members were exhorted to persevere in their discipleship. The sermon concludes with these words:

My Dear brethren if you Doe but Porforme ye tearsms of ye Gospil. & walk Clocely in ye Condishons of grace you Shall one Day be holy in lip & life for which God of his Infinate goodness & Marcy Grant for Jesus Xt Sake.
2. Instruction in the Society

It is clear from the journals of John and Charles Wesley, as well as other historical records, that the Methodist practice of Christian instruction and formation took place in a variety of different settings. The open air services were the only preaching setting that was open to the public as well as the members of the Methodist society. The meeting of the United Society took place at a different time and place. All those who attended were required to show a valid class or band ticket to the steward at the door of the meeting house. This same requirement was true for the Class Meeting, the Band Meeting, the Leader’s Meeting, the Prayer Meeting, and the Trial Band, etc. Each of these settings for members of the United Society provided different opportunities for specific modes of religious instruction to distinct groups of men and women at differing places in their spiritual journey.\textsuperscript{14} Samuel Roberts’ account of Charles Wesley’s address to the society in Leeds fits this setting well. The message focused on God’s desire and provision for the salvation of those seeking Christ and those who had been born again. There is also a clear reminder of the importance of watchfulness against the wiles of the devil, and a clear exhortation to persevere in the spiritual journey toward holiness of heart and life.

3. The Nature of the Spiritual Life

Charles Wesley’s discourse to the Methodist Society in Leeds presents the nature of the Christian life as one of struggle, not just against human forces alone; but, against the spiritual forces of evil as well. Lucifer, the chief devil in hell, and all of his under-devils are actively and persistently at work in the world to distract and destroy the spiritual life of the Christians, particularly those who had been disciples for many years. The references to the Devil, Lucifer, or Satan and all his demons in the Roberts manuscript are all congruent with the theology contained in the 23 sermon texts attributed to Charles Wesley.\textsuperscript{15} Roberts’ account and Charles’s other sermons, written and preached by 1748, clearly portray the importance of the Christians watching in order that they not fall into temptation because the adversary, the Devil, is like a roaring lion seeking those he might devour. Therefore, it is important that the Christian community be aware of “Satan’s devices” (see John Wesley’s published sermon by this title\textsuperscript{16}) and support one


\textsuperscript{15}Sermons CW (OUP), pp. 95–390.

\textsuperscript{16}The Works of John Wesley, vol. 2, Sermons, ed. Albert C. Outler (Nashville: Abingdon, 1985), pp. 138–151; hereafter Works JW. It is noteworthy that John had preached on this text, 2 Corinthians 2:11, at least four times prior to its publication in the 1750 Sermons on Several Occasions.
another on the Christian journey, because it is possible for the believer to backslide into sin and be lost for eternity.17

4. The Theological Perspective of Samuel Roberts

The theological perspective of Samuel Roberts manuscript volume is important for the interpretation of this discourse of Charles Wesley. The main purpose of the volume is two-fold: first, to persuade the reader that Roberts had a thorough knowledge of the Methodist movement; and, secondly, to convince the reader that the theology of the Wesley brothers was in fact false doctrine.

In the beginning pages of the well-worn manuscript, Samuel Roberts identifies himself as the son of Jonathan and Mary Roberts, natives of Selby. As a young man in a difficult apprenticeship away from his home, Samuel prayed to God for help. Within six months this prayer was answered and he was released from his first Master. Shortly thereafter in 1745 he became an apprentice at Leeds to Caleb Graves who lived in March Lane. Mr. Graves was a Dissenter and a despiser of the Methodists.18 However, like many young people curious about this new movement, Samuel went to hear the Methodist preachers who then preached near the town in a Close at an odd, old house called the Bogard House.

Not long after he began to hear these preachers, Samuel was converted and joined the Methodist society. He served in various capacities including that of a class-leader, band-leader, and leader of prayer-meetings until 1759 when Mr. Cudworth,19 a Methodist traveling preacher, was being expelled from the movement. Attending Cudworth’s farewell sermon, Samuel was convinced that he was preaching a more biblical theology and Samuel left the Methodists as well.

In the early pages of the manuscript volume Roberts carefully documents his knowledge and experience as a leader of Methodist classes, bands, and prayer meetings in order to show those who remained within the movement the faults of these structures and the dangerous errors of Wesleyan theology. He believed the Wesley brothers undervalued the sovereignty of God and the sufficiency of faith in Christ alone. He was intent to show how the Methodist doctrine taught the importance of Christian faith and works of obedience—which Roberts called a “conditional salvation” because human activity was required. Given this context,

18 Roberts MSV, p. 17.
19 William Cudworth (1718–63) was born in London. Converted at the age of twenty, he joined the Calvinistic Methodists through contact with John Cennick in 1743. Cudworth became a teacher at the Tabernacle School and a preacher at the Spitalfields Chapel. He left the Calvinistic Methodists in 1745 because of concern over his antinomian theology and views on church government. Dictionary of Evangelical Biography, edited by Donald M. Lewis (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 2004).
the final sentence of Charles Wesley's discourse below is an essential proof of the false doctrine taught by the Methodists:

... if you Doe but Porforme ye tearms of ye Gospil. & walk Clocely in ye Condishons of grace you Shall one Day be holy in lip & life for which God of his Infinate goodness & Marcy Grant for Jesus Xt Sake.

The question now emerges, did Charles Wesley actually say this to the Methodist Society in Leeds; or, did Samuel Roberts put these words into the document to strengthen his argument? An examination of Charles Wesley's sermon on Ephesians 5:14 preached before the University in Oxford on April 4, 1742, and printed as a pamphlet soon after helps clarify this matter. In the published sermon Charles warns his hearers to flee the wrath to come. A true Christian is portrayed as one who not only believes in Jesus Christ but also one who participates in the divine nature of righteousness and true holiness. Authentic Christian faith cannot be divorced from loving "God with all his heart, and serving him with all his strength." Therefore, the words recorded by Samuel Roberts are congruent with Charles Wesley's theology and doctrine.

Unfortunately, Roberts' own theology lacked the understanding of faith found in Galatians 5:6, "faith which worketh by love." Although he did not know it, Roberts' concern had emerged a decade earlier in London as John and Charles Wesley began to preach about the intimate relationship between saving faith, justification, sanctification and works of obedience that flow from a true and lively faith that "is fruitful in bringing forth good works." As a means of explaining and defending their theology in 1738 they published The Doctrine of Salvation, Faith and Good Works, Extracted from the Homilies of the Church of England. And one can only hope that Samuel Roberts was able to come to a better understanding of those aspects of faith that are "immediately" and "directly" necessary for salvation; and, those that are conditionally—a theology best presented in John Wesley's sermon, The Scripture Way of Salvation, first published six years after Samuel Roberts left the Methodist movement.

Transcription of the MS Text

The record of Charles Wesley's address to the Society in Leeds begins at the bottom of the page numbered 223 in the MS volume and continues through the end of page 225.

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20 Sermons CW (OUP), II.3, p. 217.
21 Sermons CW (OUP), II.8–13, pp. 218–219.
22 Sermons CW (OUP), III.10–14, pp. 222–224.
A Discourse of Mr CHARLS Westlay. 1748

To ye Sociaty at Leeds.

He yt thinketh he Standeth take hede Least he fall27 Ezekl. In ye 33 Chap 12 v.28 The Riteousness of ye Riteous. Shall not Deliver him In ye Day of his transgression. as for ye wickedness of the wicked he Shall not fall thearby, in ye Day yt he torneth from his wickedness. Nather Shall ye Riteous be able to live for his Riteousness in ye Day yt he, Sinneth Now my Brethren you See what ye word Plainly Express. Thear= =fore turn ye turn ye, for why will you Dye. As I live Saith ye Lord I Delite not in him yt Dyeth but Rather that he would turn from his wickedness & live29 behold Saith ye Lord I Set life & Death before you Chuse you which you will.30 So my Brethren you See Plainly that if we be Damd it is our own falts. A little time a goe I was Reding a Sarton {certain} Author.31 which Gave an Acount How lucyfer ye Cheff Devil in hell Sent 3 of his Sarvants or Under Devils to go & walk to & fro on ye Earth. & when thay had got all ye Pray {prey} thay Could. then thay must Return. so in Prosess of time those 3 Devils Returned & tould thare Lord Lucyfer what wonderful Suxsess thay all had got Says ye first I have rasd {raised} a Great East wind & have Destroyd a vast large fleet of Ships & Causd all ye men to Parish. & I have

26This date is problematic because Charles Wesley’s manuscript journal is fairly complete for 1748 and early 1749 (still 1748 by old dating). Charles traveled to Ireland, Wales, Bristol and London; however, there is no evidence of going north to Leeds. He was there in January of 1747 and preached on Malachi 4:2, “But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings . . .” It may be that Roberts was mistaken about the year; or, he may have been reckoning time by the Old Style Calendar. Within the Roberts MS text all braces { } designate insertions by the transcriptionist because Roberts uses both parentheses ( ) and square brackets [ ] in his original text.

27 I Corinthians 10:12.

28 The Authorized Version of the text quoted in the MS is an exact quote from Ezekiel 33:12: “Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth.”

29 “Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?” (Ezekiel 33:11). See also Ezekiel 18:31–32. Charles Wesley refers to Ezekiel 33:11 in two shorthand manuscript sermons: the sermon on 1 John 3:14 (Sermons CW [OUP], p. 142, note 141) and the sermon on John 8:1–11 (Sermons CW [OUP], p. 252, note 177).

30 “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live” (Deuteronomy 30:19). See also Jeremiah 21:8.

31 The author and the published text have not been identified.
brought all thare Souls to hell with mee. Well Done thou has Done a wonderful Exployte. Then Sade ye 2d Divil but I have Burnt Down a large sitty {city} in Such a furious Manner. yt a Most all ye In habitance was Consumd in ye flames, & I have Brought all thare Souls to hell alonge with mee. Then speaks ye 3d but I have temted an Ould man yt has been a Child of God a bove 20 years to Commit a Dultry a longe with a woman, & then Causd him to hang his

Self in a Destrected mind & I have brought his Soul with me to hell, Well Done Says lusefer. thou has’t Done ye Greatest & ye best Exployt of all ye three By this you Se my brethren what Rejoysing ye Devils make when thay overcome a belever. thearfore Watch & Pray allways least you enter into temtation.32 for your Avasary ye Devil goes aboute like a Roring lyon Seeking whome he may Devour.33 Come my frend a few more years will Se us all ather {either} in heaven or hell. & If ye Riteous Sca= =rcely Can be Saved whear Shall ye Sinner & Ungodly a Pear. (wear) before ye frowning face of God) & hear him Say Depart ye corsed34 into Everlasting fier Prepard for ye Devil & his angels whear ye worm Dyeth not & ye fier is Never quenshed.35 is a Place yt burns With fier & brimstone36 a Place of Obscure Darkness.37 A Place Cald ye Bottomless Pet38 {pit} whear ye Conshance is allways Nawing & Devils all ways tormenting Souls yt’s in Cheans is Allways Scriking {shrieking} houlling & lamenting with a Woe & a Mad rage to think of thare Neversing {never ceasing} torments.39 O Says ye Swearers & Iyers & Sabathbreakers. & {w}horemunggars & a Dulters O My Small moment of Plasures is Past. & for my

33 “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).
34 “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41).
35 “Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched” (Mark 9:44, 46, 48).
36 “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death” (Revelation 21:8).
37 “Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness” (Proverbs 20:20).
38 See Revelation 11:7–13, “And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.”
39 See Jude 6–8.
Conclusion

The manuscript volume of Samuel Roberts contains an exact record of a discourse delivered by the Revd. Charles Wesley to the Society in Leeds, 1747/8. This sermon on Ezekiel 33:12 provides the reader with a unique record of this address. In style and substance, the account is congruent with the theology and doctrine of Charles Wesley’s other sermon texts. Therefore, it is reasonable to consider this account as a valid Charles Wesley sermon.

A Discourse of Mr. Charles Wesley, 1748.
To the Society at Leeds.
[In modern English]

He “that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” Ezekiel, in the 33 Chapter, 12 verse, “The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby, in the day that he turneth from his wickedness. Neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth.”

Now, my brethren, you see what the word plainly express. Therefore turn ye, turn ye, for why will you die? As I live, saith the Lord, I delight not in him that dieth; but rather that he would turn from his wickedness and live. Behold, saith the Lord, I set life and death before you choose you which you will. So my Brethren you see plainly that if we be dammed it is our own faults.

40 See 2 Corinthians 6:2, “... behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

41 The phrase “in lip and life” appears frequently throughout the Roberts manuscript. It appears to have been in common usage at this time and conveys the same sentiment as the phrase “in word and deed” which is used today to represent the sum total of the words and actions of a person.
A little time ago I was reading a certain author which gave an account how Lucifer the Chief devil in hell sent three of his servants or under-devils to go and walk to and fro on the earth; and, when they had got all the prey they could, then they must return. So in process of time those three devils returned and told their Lord Lucifer what wonderful success they all had got.

Says the first, “I have raised a great east wind and have destroyed a vast large fleet of ships and caused all the men to parish. And I have brought all their souls to hell with me.”

“Well done, thou hast done a wonderful exploit.”

Then said the 2nd devil, “but I have burnt down a large city in such a furious manner that a most all the inhabitants was consumed in the flames, and I have brought all their souls to hell along with me.”

Then speaks the 3d, “but I have tempted an old man that has been a child of God above 20 years to commit adultery along with a woman, and then caused him to hang himself in a distracted mind and I have brought his soul with me to hell.”

“Well done” says Lucifer, “thou hast done the greatest and the best exploit of all the three.”

By this you see, my brethren, what rejoicing the devils make when they overcome a believer. Therefore, watch and pray always least you enter into temptation. For your adversary the devil goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

Come my friend a few more years will see us all either in heaven or hell. And if the righteous scarcely can be saved where shall the sinner and ungodly appear before the frowning face of God and hear him say, “Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels where the worm dieth not and the fire is never quenched—is a place that burns with fire and brimstone, a place of obscure darkness. A place called the bottomless pit where the conscience is always gnawing and devils always tormenting souls that’s in chains is always shrieking holing and lamenting with a woe and a mad rage to think of their never ceasing torments.

O, says the swearers, and liars, and Sabbath-breakers, and whoremongers and adulterers, O my small moment of pleasures is past and for my sins here must I lay for ever. O eternity, eternity, who can fathom the depth of eternity? Says one, O that I had never told no lies. O, says another, that I never swore. Says another, O that I had never committed adultery. But now, must I forever be in hell? O that I had my life to live over again, how devoutly would I spend every hour. But alas, this is no place of forgiveness but now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. My dear brethren, if you do but perform the terms of the gospel and walk closely in the conditions of grace, you shall one day be holy in lip and life; for which, God of his infinite goodness and mercy, grant for Jesus Christ sake.
They thinketh he standeth on high Least he fall to
In y. 33 Chap. 12. The righteous of y. Righteous Shall not die
Sum. In y. Day of his transgression, as y. wickedness of
he wicked he shall not fall bodily, in y. Day if he cometh
from his wickedness, Rather shall y. Righteous be able to live
for his Righteousness in y. Day & he sinneth. Now my
Breachmen. you see that y. word Plainly Expresseth
ye turn ye turn ye, for why will ye dye. for I live
faith if Lord J. not in him & Dyeth but rather
that he would turn from his wickedness live believe faith if Lord J. Set life & Death before you Choose you
which you will. so my Brethren you see Plainly
if we be Damned it is our own falls. A little time a
year I was riding a Taxton outlaw. which gave an
account. How lucret if Chief Devil in hell sent.
of his Servants & Under Devils to go & walk to a
place on y. earth & when they had got all y. pay
they could. then they must Return. So in Process
time these 3 Devils Returned & told the
& Lucyfer I what wonderfull Succeeds they all
had got says y. first I have Raisd a Great
large wind & have Destroyd a vast large fleet
of ships. & Caused all y. Men to Parish. & I have
brought all these Souls to hell with me. well done
then hast done a wonderfull Exploite. then save
the 2 Devil but I have burnt down a large
City in such a famous Maner. & a most all
y. Inhabitation was Consumed in y. Flames. & I have
brought all these Souls to hell alonge with me
then spoaks y. but I have landed an Old man y.
has been a Child of God above 20 years to Commit a Telle
a Telle with a Woman. & then Caused him to hang him.
John: A distressed mind & I have brought his soul with me to hell, Well done says here for thou hast done of greatest & left Employt. of all by Christ by this you so my brethren what rejoicing the Devil's make when they overcome a believer. Therefore why it's so always lead you to enter into temptation. For your adversary the Devil goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. Come my friend a few more years where we all in heaven or hell. If y'thou hast really can be saved where shall y' sinners be foundly a pear. (year) before y' shining face of God if he him may Depart yecond into everlasting fire. Prepared for the Devil his angels where I am, that where not my fire is never quenched is a place of worms. With fire to smite a place of obscure Darkness a place called Balsone. Of petroleum pet where y' conscience is all ways raining. Bern all ways tormenting souls y' in sheens is all ways starting howling & lamenting with a face & a world age to think y' have never being torment. O says y' hearers & lords y' Sabbath breaker & hear y' service y' hear y' sentence of my small moment of pleasure is past. I to my heart Must I say of Ever. O Eternally Eternally Who can fathom y' Death of Eternity. They one by one y' have never lived no lives or says an other if I had never were ways another if I had I never been a slave but Now Must I forever be in hell. O Lord had my life to live or again how favorably would I lead every hour but Alas this is no Place I forget it that Now is a Except time Now is a Day of Salvation. My dear brethren if you do that perform y' term if y' heart & work closely in y' conditions you shall once stay be holy in y' cap & y' bike for which god's infinite goodness & Mercy grant to Jesus.
Charles Wesley and the Identities of the People Called Methodists Today

Timothy S. A-Macquiban

Introduction

In this article, I want to offer a series of vignettes and ten hat-pegs upon which to hang some key ways of understanding the impact of Charles Wesley and his enduring contribution, which still informs Methodism throughout the world today. It is heavily dependent on the work of major writers who have produced a number of important works in the tercentenary year to whom I am indebted, particularly Gary Best and Gareth Lloyd, as well as the excellent collection of essays edited by Kenneth Newport and Ted Campbell.

1. All the World as My Parish—the Arminian Imperative

*From its beginnings, Methodism has been a radical renewal movement with evangelism at its heart challenging the prevailing Calvinist theology of many contemporaries and the settled ministry of the clergy.*

Samuel Wesley, Jr., tried to get his brother Charles to settle down in a parish in Cowley near Oxford in the 1730s but Charles opened his Bible and found the text “with stammering lips and with another tongue will I speak to the people.” It was this that gave him the scriptural warrant to ignore the expectations of his clerical father Samuel and enter the static territorial ministry of the Church of England. He continued to be determined to exercise his ministry within the Church which had ordained him to its priesthood but not to encourage dissent by separation from it. Rather he wished to promote a more vibrant church from within.

Charles stayed to do work in London or wherever directed by his elder brother John in the early post-Aldersgate days of the Methodist movement despite the warnings of the Archbishop of Canterbury and other bishops not to engage in illegal extra-parochial preaching. The crunch time came after March 1739. John Wesley wrote in June of that year: “I look upon all the world as my parish.” Charles Wesley responded that “this is the work I know God has called me to.” He too, submitted to the vile and dangerous task of preaching the good news out of doors to all comers in the fields surrounding Bristol and Kingswood. Preaching to and caring for those dying and in peril of their immortal souls became the crucial indicator of the Arminian imperative that was at the heart of the Methodist identity.

Despite the later efforts of the Public Peace Union in its attempt to keep the peace between Calvinists and Arminians, the hymns Charles wrote in the early

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1740s, particularly in *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* (e.g., "Father of mankind who love . . .") drove a wedge between the two evangelical groups. Any accord broke down in 1769 after George Whitefield left for America, fanned by the fulminations of Hill and Toplady, which led to a fierce pamphlet war with John Wesley. John Wesley fell out with the Countess of Huntingdon. The death of George Whitefield in 1770 and expulsion of John Fletcher and Joseph Benson from her training college at Trevecca ended any possibility of a rapprochement between the Calvinists and Arminians.

2. Methodism and the Mother Church—Its Relationship to Anglicanism

Despite its differences in theology and in patterns of ministry, the Methodist movement tried to maintain good relations with the Church of England from which it was hewn.

Charles Wesley resisted the notion of separation from the Church of England as long as he could. He was nurtured in the bosom of a high Tory Anglican family, which had rejected the religious dissent of their grandparents on both Wesley and Annesley sides. He was brought up by his mother Susanna to be a rational enthusiast and avoid the worst excesses of the religious intolerance that had besmirched the Restoration period under the Stuart monarchs. She had taught him to challenge the norms and to judge religion by the outcomes in a person's life: "Faith without morality is but downright hypocrisy."4

In the early days of the Methodist movement, two churches were acquired in 1743 in London (West St. and Snowfields) for services according to the Book of Common Prayer, including the sacrament of Holy Communion so central to Wesleyan spirituality. The *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* published in 1745 was indicative of this ardent desire to keep links with the mother Church and to encourage its sacramental worship.

In face of the accusations of Jacobitism which followed on from the criticism by others of such "catholic" practices, John and Charles made strong protestations of their loyalty to King and country. Methodists, they insisted, were not "a peculiar sect of men, separating ourselves from the Establishment." Charles Wesley declared: "I am as true a Church-of-England man and as loyal a subject as any man."

Abiding in their religious experience was the distrust of Dissent. Charles feared that local Methodist societies could potentially cease to link with their local parish church. He therefore urged local preachers not to fancy themselves "ministers or public teachers" in opposition or challenge to the teaching ministry of the local clergy. When things sometimes got out of hand his brother asked Charles to examine all the preachers for their teaching and morality. The 1755 Conference considered separation from the Church of England but this was firmly

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rejected. In 1758 John published his *Reasons against Separation from the Church of England*. In 1769 he reiterated: “We will not, dare not, separate from the Church . . . we are not seceders.”

But The Deed of Declaration and creation of Episcopal Methodist Church in America in the mid 1780s were the final straws. John’s “ordination” of Thomas Coke as General Superintendent and others as elders opened up a divide between the two brothers.

Charles asked his boyhood friend Lord Mansfield for a legal judgment. He declared: “ordinations amounted to a separation from the Church.” From this point Charles in sadness began to turn his back on the Methodist movement coinciding with his decline in health. The last three years of his life were very difficult for his relationship with John: “Let us not leave an indelible blot (of separation) on our memory,” he plaintively cried. Nevertheless he continued to pray for both the Church and for his secessionist brother John while breath remained.

3. Born in Song: the Learning Church—the Place of Music and Hymnody in Worship—Methodists a Singing and a Reading People

*At the heart of the Methodist movement there has always been singing. Charles taught the Methodists how to do theology through the hymns he wrote for their worship and meditation.*

It can be argued that Charles Wesley was more effective in his hymn writing than John Wesley in his sermons in shaping and informing the Methodist movement. He was schooled in a Rectory in which poetry and praise in worship were key elements. He was brought up by Susanna in a household where regular prayer and hymn singing, meditation and self-examination were guiding principles. Beyond Epworth, he was influenced by his elder brother, Samuel, Jr., at Westminster School and Abbey in worship and poetry through the classical education in which he was immersed.

As top scholar at school, as well as captain, he was marked for leadership. At Christ Church Oxford he was encouraged by Samuel senior to “take care to form their minds to piety as well as learning” in the education of the ancient University. In the formation of a small group of students, called by some “the Holy Club,” the principles of pious holy living were put into practice.

Some time after his return from America, Charles met John Frederick Lampe, bassoon player at Covent Garden Opera, who subsequently set many of his hymns to music. Charles was convinced of the benefits of hymn singing; for him the words mattered more than tunes: “attend strictly to the sense of what you sing.” From the late 1730s the hymns flowed from his pen as a tumble of hymnals fell upon the Methodists. Even in the most difficult situations, Charles’s poetic imagination was rarely stemmed. While ill in 1762, he recovered his health at the spa town of Bath by writing over 2000 *Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures*. 
The 1780 hymnal, *A Collection of Hymns for the People called Methodists*, became definitive of the theology and spirituality of the Methodist movement, containing 480 of Charles's hymns out of 525. There was, the Preface declared, in them: "No doggerel ... no feeble expletives ... no cant expressions ... no words without meanings." It was a work of pure lyrical theology in praise of God. Charles demonstrated that he was more a man of one book (i.e., the Bible) than John. For many of the hymns are poetic versions of Scripture, spiced with allusions from classical and English literature. The hymn book was to be the "handmaid of piety." Wife Sally's judgment was that her husband was a writer of poetic hymns which breathed the "religion of the heart," a heart which burst with a passion for Christ finding expressions in his words.

4. Mission Alongside the Poor—"Come Sinners to the Gospel Feast"

One of the chief features of this Arminian evangelical movement was its appeal to and for the poor and marginalized who were sought out by the Wesley brothers as objects of the particular concern of God's everlasting love.

Charles was influenced by his brother Samuel who took him to visit hospitals in the Westminster area of London and shared his interest in prisons, particularly the brave new Georgia experiment with General Oglethorpe. The beginnings of Methodist social witness are to be found in the prison ministry in which Charles and John engaged in Oxford and their interest in the establishment of the settlement of Georgia to which they were attracted as missionaries. Whilst in the Americas Charles Wesley had his first experience of slavery in Charleston and witnessed first hand the "horrid cruelties" inflicted on black slaves.

His greatest satisfaction in ministry was in the prison visiting at Newgate in London and elsewhere. Locked in cells overnight with condemned prisoners gave him unique opportunities to share the message of redemption with those under threat of death. At Tyburn he accompanied the many converts made through his preaching and prayer to their deaths by execution. The themes of imprisonment and release are prominent in many of his hymns which are products of this pastoral and practical ministry among the poor. The last collection of all his published hymns was one For the Condemned Malefactor.

Wesley also wrote many hymns and poems about life and ministry with and among the poor, most of which unfortunately remained unpublished at his death. "Raiment thou to all that need" (from "Come thou holy God and true") was a central motif of these hymns and implicit in the Wesleys' praxis. In this, the

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\(^{6}\) This is the first line of stanza 1 of the hymn edited by Kimbrough. *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1749), 1:38.
importance of the Matthew 25 injunctions is paramount, “making all these actions subservient to a higher purpose, even the saving of souls from death.” To “have the mind of Christ and walk as he walked” was central to the Wesleyan theology. Even though Charles Wesley mixed in high society in Bristol and London, he continued to visit the prisons and help the poor. The accusations of turning his back on the poor cannot be justified. As he said: “If you are ashamed of poverty, you are ashamed of your Master.”

5. The Catholic Spirit—Friends of All, Enemies of None: the Wesleys and Ecumenism

While we cannot claim that the Wesleys were ecumenists in the modern sense, their desire for unity and for a commonality of purpose with like-minded Christians within the Church as “one, holy, catholic and apostolic” make them proto-ecumenists.

The brothers were brought up in the Epworth household by mother Susanna to see predestination as “inconsistent with the justice and goodness of God.” This harsh view of Calvinism, described as the “injustice of reprobation” molded Methodist relations with Calvinists and spawned hostile hymns and pamphlets.

Charles Wesley was a “man made for friendship.” From his early days he gathered around him a circle of friends. At Oxford he befriended George Whitefield, a poor servitor at Pembroke College who owed him “greatest deference and respect.” Despite this friendship, the Methodist movement early on forged its Arminian identity in clear distinction. In 1740, Charles excluded a Calvinist from the Foundery society for “the hellish, blasphemous, explosive lie—the foulest tale—that was ever hatched in hell,” i.e., his Calvinist beliefs. It was the beginnings of an anti-Calvinist crusade in which the Wesley brothers tried to remain friends with George Whitefield, who was leading the Evangelical Revival in North America.

Charles was much less inclined to attack his Calvinist brothers especially Howell Harris, the leading evangelical preacher in Wales. But there were public clashes with John Cennick one of their erstwhile supporters at Bristol who wrote: “brother Charles pleases the world with universal redemption . . . no atheists can preach more against predestination than they.” Any attempted reconciliations with Calvinist Methodists and Moravians sadly never happened. Yet both sides agreed not to speak ill of the other and there was a mutual understanding that preachers should endeavor to avoid “preaching controversially.”

When it came to relations with the Roman Catholics, Charles seems to have inherited the xenophobic fear of all things Catholic which many of his British

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Protestant contemporaries shared. His view of Catholics was directed at Rome: they were “bound in ignorance and sin because of the sorcery of Roman Catholic priests” especially in Ireland, an area ripe for conversion and the target of over twenty visits on a mission to convert those in ignorance. And yet he came to the defense of “trembling persecuted Catholics” in the Gordon riots of 1780, denouncing the displays of bigotry and preaching for an alternative “peace and charity.” This may have been as much the product of the fear of social unrest as it was a plea for religious toleration:

Let the tools of anarchy

... Driven as by a whirlwind flee.9

6. Primitive Physic—Health and Healing in the Wesleys

The ordo salutis for the Wesleys was not just a matter of spiritual salvation but the liberation of bodies as well as souls through the Methodist blueprint for individual lives lived in holiness and an ethical approach to matters of wealth and poverty, which encouraged personal stewardship in a communitarian spirit.

The link between spiritual disease and physical disease was borne out of the personal experience of Charles, through his illnesses in Georgia and afterwards in London. This may have sensitized him and given him a keen interest in well being which was physical as well as spiritual. He may have recalled the words of Susanna: “Jesus is the only physician of souls, his blood the only salve which can heal a wounded conscience.”10

Many of his hymns take up this theme, including that which has appeared in all Wesleyan collections from the beginning, “O for a thousand tongues ...”: “Jesus the name that charms our fears ... .” Here was the hymn writer acknowledging the salvific power of Christ to quell the fears of physical ailments. Another illness in 1740 led Charles to compose “The Physician’s Hymn,” dedicated to his physician, Dr. Middleton:

Myself, alas! I cannot heal,
But thou shalt every seed expel
Of sin out of my heart;
Thine utmost saving health display,
And purge my inbred sin away,
And make me as thou art.11

9 Hymns Written in the Time of the Tumults, June 1780 (Bristol, 1780), Hymn 4, stanza 1, lines 5 and 7.
7. Extraordinary Messengers of God—
the Ministry of the Whole People of God

The use of uneducated lay people and women in preaching and in leadership within the infant Methodist movement, contrary to the rules of the Church of England, laid the foundation for the flexible patterns of ministry which have always characterized Methodism.

Charles was perhaps a more effective preacher than his brother John. He was certainly an effective, if strictly disciplinarian, mentor for the lay preachers employed in the early Methodist missions. And yet he feared their power and the threat they posed to church polity. His own vocation as a priest was somewhat reluctant, something he “exceedingly dreaded.” Yet having been ordained, he viewed it as obedience to the call to discipleship.

Following the crisis in Georgia, to be “converted or lost,” being a “prisoner of hope,” called “to spend and be spent” in “ardent love of souls” and his failure in ministry laid bare by his opponents, there was a period of misery and despair as he reflected on his vocation. The ensuing Aldersgate “conversion” experience of his brother John on May 24, 1738, Charles’s own conversion three days earlier, and his regained health shortly thereafter led to renewed preaching with a passion and enthusiasm for sharing good news wherever, even when traveling in coach. His first sermon written thereafter took the text from Galatians 3:22, “out of bondage into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.” He saw it as a mirror of his own experience which found a particular lasting expression in his most famous hymn, “And can it be that I should gain.” His preaching too changed with his widening appeal, becoming more extempore, more inspirational, and less dogmatic. Such enthusiasm brought him into conflict with the Bishop of London and other church leaders who forbade him to preach, but without much success.

George Whitefield, another great preacher of the age, was the trigger for the Wesleys’ own preaching ministry in the open air inaugurated on April 2, 1739 when he told them: “You must come and water what God has enabled me to plant.” John Wesley reluctantly submitted to “become more vile.” Charles took up invitations in the London area to preach in the open-air venues vacated by George Whitefield on Moorfields and Kennington Commons. Such action was challenged by the Archbishop of Canterbury but to no avail.

What was the difference between the three preachers John Wesley, Charles Wesley, and George Whitefield? This has been characterized as the difference in the three stages of preaching: Awakening – Conviction – Conversion. It is recorded that Margaret Austin, a single mother, who heard each, heard George and felt unworthy of God’s love, heard John and felt more of a sinner. But when she heard Charles, she experienced God’s forgiving love and such joy that she felt “all things new.”

Thomas Maxfield was recruited as the first lay helper at the Foundery chapel after Susanna approved of his preaching. John Cennick at Bristol was similarly employed. John Nelson, a Yorkshire stonemason, was converted in 1742 and became the chief lieutenant of the Methodist movement in the county. About forty others were recruited. Charles vigorously defended the use of lay preachers against the clergy’s refusal to evangelize among poor. God, he reminded them, had to use a dumb ass to rebuke the prophet. He acted as a mentor for the young preachers, disciplining them as well as supporting them as he felt necessary. At the 1744 Conference guidelines were laid down. Their task was first, to invite; secondly, to convince; thirdly, to offer Christ and lastly, to build up and to do this in some measure in every sermon. There was a need to study the Scriptures and have a clear understanding of salvation by faith. Charles was concerned not to overemphasize preachers at the expense of the ordained helpers. For this reason he latterly opposed the use of Local Preachers at the City Road Chapel unless there were no ordained clergy available. This led to a clash with John Pawson and the younger generation of preachers.

Charles’s own preaching was very extensive despite the transport difficulties and the opposition and hostility whipped up by the local clergy and squirearchy. Rioting was a very frequent occurrence, as at Walsall when he was beaten and at the Sheffield Meeting House which came under attack.

8. “I Felt My Heart Strangely Warmed”—
Personal Experience and the Work of the Holy Spirit

At the heart of Methodist theology is an understanding of God’s prevenient and justifying grace, the work which God achieves in us and bringing us to new birth as part of his new creation. The Aldersgate experience, celebrated each year in May by the Methodist people around the time of Pentecost, is pivotal in forming Methodist identity.

The inadequate faith experienced by Charles in Georgia with threats of death and persecution underlining his own sense of unworthiness, reduced him to illness and misery. The storms at sea on his return to England mirrored this sense of spiritual crisis: “I was overjoyed by my deliverance out of this furnace.” He had continued to preach brother John’s sermons especially those concerning sin and the need for rebirth; but was he preaching to himself? He felt that he had insufficient faith: “I who went to America to convert others was never myself converted to God.” He felt “unchanged, unhallowed, unrenewed.” He was ripe for conversion or a radical change.

The encounter with Moravian Peter Böhler, who urged the “necessity of prayer and faith” sent him back to Oxford but there he was seriously ill with pleurisy. Böhler convinced him that John was wrong to stress the need to earn salvation. The Oxford and Georgia experiments had proved the inadequacy of such a view. He came to recognize the need for transformation and new purpose.
Perhaps the Moravians’ six tests of the Christian Life with them back in London. Again he became dangerously ill with pleurisy which brought him to a spiritual crisis. He was forced to move from his friends to the home of John Bray, a Moravian, in Little Britain off Aldersgate Street.

There it was that he read the copy of Luther’s Commentary on Galatians with its emphasis on Salvation by Faith. On May 20th he was reading the story of the paralyzed man (Mt. 9) and the next day (Whitsunday) Mrs. Musgrave, his nurse, declared to him: “arise and believe, thou shalt be healed of all thy infirmities!” Confirmed then by the prayers of John Bray, which led Charles to the knowledge of salvation and healing (but not immediately of bodily healing). Significantly, Charles continued to doubt. But on May 24th John’s own “conversion” experience affirmed Charles’s. Strangely warmed hearts did not make them unquestioning of faith. New Birth did not bring Charles instantaneous joy, peace, love. These things were to come gradually in a process of growth. “And can it be . . . ;” the Methodist conversion anthem, was the mark of the beginnings of momentous changes not only in the life of Charles but of many others.

9. The Path to Perfection—Personal and Social Holiness

Justification and sanctification in Wesleyan theology were not to be kept apart, nor were the twin aspects of personal and societal salvation. Holiness was for both individuals and the public sphere. For Methodists, social action and personal lifestyle were the outworkings of individuals striving for Christian perfection.

The early influence through reading of William Law’s Serious Call and his exploration of the concept of Christian perfection, led to John’s sermon at St. Mary’s Church Oxford of which his brother did not approve. It met with some reservations expressed in this way: “what we can be better than what we are, we are not to think of ourselves as perfect.” Charles’s skepticism led also to his rejection of Molther’s Moravian “diabolical stillness” which viewed sacraments and engaging in social outreach as unnecessary for the saved. Charles wanted to retain a holiness which was thoroughly social and active.

There were several times of conflict with John over concept of Christian perfection. Charles preferred to stress perfection as being attained in stages as a person surrendered more and more to the action of God’s Holy Spirit. He held up his great friend John Fletcher as a personal example of holiness. He wrote: “my Perfection is to see my imperfection.”

But others were not so modest and claims to have reached a state of perfection grew in the early 1760s amongst preachers whom Charles had to discipline. John’s seeming encouragement of them led to Charles’s alarm.

Thomas Maxfield was asked to preach on perfection in London. This led to a widespread reaction to the view that God only works through the lives of the sanctified. Charles urged John to expel such perfectionists and his hymns warned against perfectionism, challenging his brother’s theology.
Perfection is my calling's prize
To which on duty's scale I rise;
And when my toils are past,
And when I have the battle won,
Thou in thy precious self alone
Shalt give the prize at last. 13

John Fletcher tried to reconcile the two not dissimilar viewpoints. John was eventually condemned for his over enthusiasm and overvaluing of inward feelings. In his defense he published Further Thoughts on Christian Perfection.

10. Make Us All One Heart and Mind—
Covenant Fellowship of Love and Discipline

Christian education and publishing were at the heart of the Methodist movement in which to be a member of a society was to be committed to growth in learning as well as “vital piety.” The membership of bands and classes where the Scriptures were expounded and Wesleyan pamphlets discussed was not an optional extra but a mark of belonging to a reading people bound together in mutual discipline and support.

Charles Wesley was the mainstay for the development of Methodist societies in London and Bristol. His many friends were the spokespersons of the movement. The Holy Club at Oxford was an early experiment in social religion but with no order or rules. From the 1740s the organizational skills of the Wesleys were channeled through the religious societies within larger circuits as the best means to build on preaching and awakening—a lesson they learned from the failure of George Whitefield to capitalize on the effects of his oratory. They had learned from the Moravians and the example of SPCK the vital necessity of small groups as vehicles for Christian Discipleship at heart of Christian Education. The Foundery and New Room societies in London and Bristol were the first Methodist experiments in community life. The class system inaugurated February 1742 in Bristol was not just a financial device but also a pastoral tool for evangelism:

Help us to help each other, Lord
Each other's Cross to bear,
Let each his friendly Aid afford
And feel his Brother's Care. 14

Originally the Wesleys had envisaged that such Methodist societies would be under the control of the clergy including the administration of regular commu-

14 Hymns and Sacred Poems (Bristol: Farley, 1742), p. 83; stanza 3 of "Try us, O God, and search the ground."
nion as part of their disciplined life. This soon broke down as the movement grew and the need for more lay help became evident.

**Conclusion**

Methodism's place in the development of religion in England in the eighteenth century is characterized by the contribution of Charles Wesley to its life. In *Charles Wesley and the Struggle for Methodist Identity* Gareth Lloyd rightly acknowledges Charles's role as hymn writer extraordinaire in what he calls "Methodism's most precious gift to her parent denomination."15 Yet, Charles has hitherto been seen mostly in this role as literary genius, who has shaped Methodist spirituality as well as being an outstanding preacher and insightful pastor. The genius of this book, however, is to see his contribution as rather more significant for Methodist polity and to analyze Methodism's own crisis of identity in terms of Charles's contribution as a loyal-conformist Anglican, to the compromise born of the different versions of evangelicalism he and John brought through dual leadership of the movement. A warm catholic evangelicalism, fully committed to social action and the place of the sacraments in worship, founded on biblical preaching for the salvation of individuals' souls and the betterment of society, was the hallmark of Charles Wesley. He was in the Church but not of it. The legacy of Charles Wesley is a paradoxical one, which explains many of the differences of identity within the world Methodist family today.

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15 P. 75.
Reforming the Church
Charles Wesley’s Ecclesiology
and the Role of Lay Preachers
Patrick A. Eby

Charles Wesley was known for his love of the Church of England. The extent of this commitment was reflected in his choice to be buried in the parish churchyard of St. Mary’s, Marylebone instead of in the crypt John had prepared for him behind Wesley’s Chapel. Throughout his life he continued to be committed to the liturgy of the Church of England, reading her offices daily, taking Holy Communion about once a week, and preaching from her pulpits whenever the opportunity arose. He also defended what he thought was her true theology, the theology of the early reformers as stated in the homilies. This love of and commitment to the Established Church and her ordinances made it more difficult for him to accept some of the extraordinary means that were a part of the evangelical revival. His love for the Church was not blind; in fact he was concerned about some of the challenges to her theology. These challenges, and the laxity of practice by some of her clergy led Charles to question her health. His love of the Church, and his concern for her health presented Charles with a dilemma: How could he renew or restore the Established Church, without either leaving or being driven from her doors?

In order to understand the kind of renewal Charles desired, it is important to explore the following questions. First—What type of reformation or renewal did Charles believe the Church of England needed? Second—What actions did Charles take (in concert with others) to effect this reformation? Third—How were these actions received and/or perceived by those in the Church of England? For the purpose of this study these questions will be applied to the role of the itinerant lay preachers in the evangelical revival, particularly in the early 1750s when John asked Charles to examine the lay preachers, in part because of the Wheatley affair.¹

Itinerant lay preachers were seen as an important part of the Methodist movement, but were rejected by many in the Church of England. Many perceived the use of itinerant lay preachers as a partial separation. Charles Wesley’s recognition of this perception, and his fear that the extraordinary ministry of lay preaching would become ordinary, explain, at least in part, his desire to limit the role and influence of the itinerant lay preachers in the 1750s. The way Charles expressed his displeasure at the ministry of the itinerant lay preachers mirrored two contemporary criticisms. The first was Charles’s criticism of some of the

clergy of Church of England. The second was the criticism of the itinerant lay preachers by some within the Church of England.

Charles Wesley's assessment of the need for a reformation of the Church of England in the eighteenth century may miss the mark, but to understand Charles's actions the accuracy of his judgment is not as important as what he perceived to be the needs of the Church, and the steps he would take to meet those needs. In his *Epistle to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley*, Charles recounted what he felt were several weaknesses within the Church of England. Even in this bleak assessment of the Established Church, he still asserted his fondness of and his commitment to her. His concerns were primarily theological and practical.

Charles was concerned with the desire of some to repeal her creeds and laws, even to change her liturgy. Maybe his greatest concern was a Christology that denied the divinity of Christ. In this epistle Charles described what he saw as the "true Church," and where that Church was to be found. He criticized a first group within the Church because they were setting aside those things, which Charles thought defined the Church. He wrote the Church would not be found in those,

Who wou'd her Creeds repeal, her Laws deride,
Her Prayers expunge, her Articles disown,
And thrust the Filial Godhead from his Throne.²

Charles's assessment of a second group within the Church of England started on a positive note. This group was committed to the local parish. Unlike the first group they subscribed to the creeds, articles, and liturgy of the Church, but according to Charles, they still were lacking, because they rejected the need for faith. Charles in effect rejected this group's soteriology, because he felt it denied experiential faith as a sign of enthusiasm.

"The Company of faithful Souls" are These,
Who strive to 'stablish their own Righteousness,
But count the Faith Divine a Mad-man's Dream?
 Howe'er they to themselves may Pillars seem,
Of Christ, and of his Church they make no Part:
They never knew the Saviour in their Heart.³

Another theological problem with which the Church of England struggled was the role of things indifferent, or the *adiaphora*. One specific issue was the vestments controversy. Charles showed his lack of concern for these arguments, and even implied these arguments are a waste of theological breath.

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² Charles Wesley, *An Epistle to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley* (London: J. Robinson, 1755), 4; henceforth cited as "Wesley" followed by page number(s).
³ Wesley, pp. 4–5.
Let Others for the Shape and Colour fight
Of Garments short or long, or black or white;
...
Copes, Hoods, and Surplices the Church miscall,
And fiercely run their Heads against the Wall.\(^4\)

It was not only the challenges to the theology of the Church of England that concerned Charles; he also was concerned with the practices of the some of her leaders. Although not a new problem, Charles was concerned with the problem of absenteeism. He portrayed this as a problem of laziness and greed.

The Altars theirs, who will not light the Fire,
Who spurn the Labour, but accept the Hire,
Who not for Souls, but their own Bodies care,
And leave to Underlings the Task of Pray’r?\(^5\)

Charles Wesley also argued the Church was no longer filled with saints, instead it was filled with those who were “Sensual, Covetous, and Proud.”\(^6\)

Charles Wesley, like his brother John, traced many of the ethical problems in the Church to pride and riches. One source of this pride and riches was the influence of the state. It was because of the influence of the state that the Church had added many “Human Appendages of Pomp and Power.”\(^7\) It was these additions that Charles proclaimed were “Wide of the Church, as Hell from Heav’n is wide, / The Blaze of Riches, and the Glare of Pride.”\(^8\)

Charles Wesley was not only concerned with the abuses he saw in the Church, he was interested in promoting a certain distinct form of theology and practice, which he thought reflected that of the early English Reformers. Two examples from his epistle to his brother illustrate some of his interests. His soteriology focused on an assurance of faith, which worked by “humble love.” Those who had this assurance would be marked by a purity of worship, which included using the means of grace and showing a reverence for the leaders of the state.

“All who have felt, deliver’d from above,
The holy Faith that works by humble Love,
All that in pure religious Worship join,
Led by the Spirit, and the Word divine,
Duly the Christian Mysteries partake,
And bow to Governors for Conscience Sake.”\(^9\)

\(^{4}\) Wesley, p. 6.
\(^{5}\) Wesley, p. 4.
\(^{6}\) Wesley.
\(^{7}\) Wesley, p. 5.
\(^{8}\) Wesley.
\(^{9}\) Wesley. This passage is set off by quotes in the original.
He also described an ideal image of the Church. It was a pure Church, marked by piety, and both internal and external holiness.

Diffus’d her true essential Piety,

... 
Clad in the simple, pure, primeval Dress,
And beauteous with internal Holiness,
Wash’d by the Spirit and the Word from Sin,
Fair without Spot, and glorious all within.\(^{10}\)

These challenges to the theology of the Church created a problem for Charles.\(^{11}\) How could he work to reform the Church and at the same time remain faithful to her? How do you challenge something, while at the same time showing it respect? Charles, like his brother John, had varied “from them [the Bishops] in some points of discipline; (by preaching abroad, for instance, praying extempore, and by forming societies;).”\(^{12}\) In the Epistle to his brother, Charles described these choices as becoming

Vile for her Sake, expos’d to general Scorn,
Thrust out as from her Pale, I gladly roam,
Banish myself to bring her Wanderers home.\(^{13}\)

Although it may seem that he had turned schismatic through these extraordinary methods, he never stopped emphasizing the importance of staying in the Church. As a result of these two seemingly incompatible emphases, Charles felt he had been rejected both by the Church and the Dissenters. He wrote,

By Bigots branded for a Schismatick,
By real Schismatics disown’d, decry’d,
As a blind Bigot on the Church’s Side:\(^{14}\)

Through a set of questions at the end of An Epistle to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley, Charles reminded John why they had chosen to become vile.

\(^{10}\) Wesley, pp. 6–7.
\(^{11}\) This is a problem that is not unique to Charles in the Evangelical revival, but it is impossible in a paper of this scope to address more than Charles’s recognition and response to this problem.
\(^{12}\) Thomas Jackson, The Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley, M.A., 2 vols., vol. 2 (London: John Mason, 1841), 396–98. This quote is in a letter from Charles to John dated Sept. 8, 1785. This passage is a quote from John’s reasons against separating from the Church. Charles added to the end of the quote “[might you not add, and by ordaining?]”
\(^{13}\) Wesley, p. 10.
\(^{14}\) Wesley.
When first sent forth to minister the Word,  
Say, did we preach ourselves, or Christ the Lord?  
Was it our Aim Disciples to collect,  
To raise a Party, or to found a Sect?  
No; but to spread the Power of Jesus’ Name,  
Repair the Walls of our Jerusalem,  
Revive the Piety of ancient Days,  
And fill the Earth with our Redeemer’s Praise.\textsuperscript{15}

Charles’s \textit{Epistle} received a response he probably didn’t foresee. A treatise condemning much of what Charles wrote was published under the pseudonym Christophilus. According to Christophilus, the Methodists, and specifically Charles in this \textit{Epistle}, were guilty of pride. He believed Charles was setting his private judgment above the judgment of the people God had placed in authority. According to Christophilus, by Charles’s broad attack on “The company of faithful Souls,” he had, taken the priesthood out of the hands of God’s chosen. Charles was acting like those rebels of old who rejected the leadership of Moses and Aaron. He continued by reminding schismatics that he was “afraid they will one day find themselves in as bad a case as Korah and his company.”\textsuperscript{16} Christophilus argued that true holiness was always accompanied “with true humility and charity, as well as faith that worketh by love.”\textsuperscript{17} Instead of humility, the Methodists were “puffed up with spiritual pride and good opinions of themselves.”\textsuperscript{18} One way the Methodists expressed this pride was in the way they attacked the leaders in the Church of England, but there was a second, equally dangerous way that they showed their pride according to Christophilus: they encouraged people to preach who had not been sent by the Established Church.\textsuperscript{19} In the end, Christophilus believed that Charles’s and John’s attempt to reform the Church would end in the division and destruction of the Church.

Christophilus was not alone in his criticism of the Methodist movement. Donald Kirkham listed several attacks made on the evangelical revival. In his chapter on “The Church in Danger,” he listed five main criticisms of the Methodist movement: “the Methodists were contemptuous of the clergy, they altered the Church’s doctrine, they depreciated the liturgy, they rejected the Church’s discipline, [and] they engineered schism.”\textsuperscript{20} According to Kirkham, Whitefield was the rashest in his criticism of the clergy, although John Wesley and the lay preachers were also guilty of criticizing the clergy.\textsuperscript{21} This rash criti-

\textsuperscript{15} Wesley, p. 11.  
\textsuperscript{16} Christophilus, \textit{A Serious Inquiry whether A late Epistle from the Rev. Mr. Charles Wesley to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley be not . . . .} ([London?]: Printed for the Author, 1755), p. 7.  
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., p. 7.  
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., p. 11.  
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., p. 237.
Kirkham noted that the criticism of Christophilus—that Charles and John had undermined or rejected the Church’s discipline by appointing lay preachers—was endorsed by several opponents of the Methodists. Some even began referring to John Wesley as a bishop because he appointed lay preachers and “excommunicated” backsliders. John was also criticized for issuing “what amounted to an episcopal pastoral letter.” Although Kirkham says these things about John, some of the same criticisms may apply to Charles’s ministry, especially during the early years of the revival.

Kirkham summarized the activities that caused the Methodists to be branded as schismatics. They included: Field preaching, the use of extempore prayers and sermons, itinerancy, the establishment of societies, the formation of bands and classes, the use of lay preachers, the erection of meeting houses, the innovation of love feasts and watch night services.

Even in the midst of these criticisms, there were still some in the Church of England who saw the value of Methodism. One example was Richard Hardy. In the early 1760s he argued that the Methodists had completed their reform of the Church and he was concerned about the continued use of itinerant lay preachers. He believed that the next step the Methodists should take, in order to protect the gains of the reformation and to prevent a schism, was to recall or suppress the itinerant lay preachers.

From this brief study, the following problems or concerns were stated in criticism of either the clergy of the Established Church, or in the Church’s criticism of the Methodist movement. Each thought the other was guilty of pride and a poor theology. The clergy of the Established Church were criticized for being lazy, greedy, sensual, covetous, and too attached to riches. The Methodists were accused of attacking the leaders in the Church of England, of using lay preachers, and of the use of many other extraordinary means. As I have already noted, Charles Wesley’s interaction with the itinerant lay preachers mirrored the disapproval he had of some in the Church of England, specifically the questions he expressed about their character. He also shared some of the concerns the Church of England clergy had with the Methodist movement. How exactly did Charles express these concerns?

Some of his concerns can be seen in a manuscript called The Preachers: 1751. This manuscript includes notes from Charles’s trip in July and August of 1751 in which he examined some of the preachers. It also includes a section enti-
tled “Hints for Conversation, out of my Br[other]’s Letters.”26 In this section, Charles recorded excerpts from some of his brother’s letters. Below each excerpt he put a question to ask John. In response to John noting that Charles Skelton and J. Cownley were railing against the Church more often, and with more bitterness, Charles wrote,

What assurance can we have that they will not forsake it, at least when we are dead? Ought we to admit any man for a preacher till we can trust his invariable attachment to the Church?27

Another major concern for Charles was to limit the number and influence of the itinerant lay preachers. The difference with John over the lay preachers was not limited to whether the grace or the gifts of the lay preacher was more important. Charles was concerned with the very role of the lay preacher. John was interested in staffing the societies;28 Charles wanted itinerant lay preachers whose extraordinary ministry would be temporary, ending when they had sparked a reformation in the ordinary ministers of the Church. If a lay minister desired a more permanent ministry they should pursue ordination in the Established Church.29 In notes from his examination of the preachers in 1751, Charles made it clear that most of the preachers he had interviewed needed to go back to work. He wrote, “The most effectual the only way (in my Judgment) [to avoid schism] is TO SET THEM TO WORK AGAIN. All of them, I mean, excepting a few, whom we can entirely trust.”30 He expressed these concerns in a much more measured tone with his brother at this time. Later in his life, Charles’s poetry dealing with lay preachers and ordination becomes much more abrasive. As his brother pushed for more lay preachers at this point in time, Charles questioned the qualifications of those they already had. In his Hints he wrote, “Should we

26 MS The Preachers, 1751. Presently in the MARC. The “Hints for Conversation, out of my Br[other]’s Letters” from this manuscript are included in Frank Baker, ed., Letters II: 1740–1755, The Works of John Wesley, vol. 26 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), pp. 470–481. Henceforth this section of the manuscript will be referred to as Hints in the text, and cited from Baker, ed., Letters II: 1740–1755. A section written in shorthand and a section with notes written in another hand are included in MS The Preachers, 1751.


28 In a letter dated Aug 8, 1751, John told his brother, “We must have forty itinerant preachers, or drop some of our societies.” Ibid., p. 473. Later in a letter to John Downes(?), John admitted that his brother was right to focus on the quality of the preachers instead of filling societies. He wrote, “I see plainly, the spirit of Ham, if not of Korah, has fully possessed several of our preachers. So much the more freely and firmly do I acquiesce in the determination of my brother that it is far better for us to have ten, or six preachers who are alive to God, sound in faith, and of one heart with us, and with one another, than fifty of whom we have no such assurance.” Ibid., p. 476.


30 MS The Preachers 1751. Emphasis is in the original. Capitalized words are printed in block letters instead of Charles’s usual cursive style.
not first regulate, reform, and bring into discipline, the preachers we have, before we look for more?"

In the Hints, he also questioned the very practice of sending preachers. He asked, "How far do, or ought we to, send men to preach? How does this differ from ordaining?" It was during this period that Charles sent a letter to Lady Huntingdon that was intercepted by John. In it Charles noted that one of the reasons he was involved in purging the preachers was to break John's power over the preachers, and to limit his authority. Was Charles in both of these instances, i.e., in attempting to break the power of John and in his purging of the pastors, trying to limit the role of both John and of the lay preachers because he felt appointing preachers was an Episcopal responsibility, and that John by appointing lay preachers had set himself up as a bishop? This is a criticism he will spell out with clarity after John ordains Coke in 1784.

So easily are Bishops made
By man's, or woman's whim?
W[esley] his hands on Cloke hath laid,
But who laid hands on Him?

The lay preachers only pushed for ordination after they failed to receive permission from John to administer the Lord's Supper. If Charles was aware of their desire in 1751 when he examined the lay preachers, he does not mention it in his notes; but in 1755, when Charles and Edward Perronet took the lead in requesting permission to administer the Lord's Supper, Charles leveled one of the same charges he leveled at the lay preachers in 1751; they were being arrogant.

A third concern for Charles was the character of the lay preachers. Some were lazy. Some were proud. Some saw entering the ministry as a way to gain respect. Charles's attitude toward these types of preachers, which his brother had appointed, can be found clearly stated in a journal entry omitted in Jackson's edition of the Journal.

Spoke kindly to Jo. Hewish and got from him his Book and Licence to preach. I wish he were the only worthless, senseless, graceless man to whom my brother had given the same encouragement under his hand.

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32 Ibid., p. 471.
33 Ibid., p. 479.
According to Richard Heitzenrater this was not a new complaint for Charles; he had complained about the inadequacies of the lay preachers since about 1741. Both John and Charles agreed that one of the major problems facing them was that many preachers would not work (of course their idea of what constituted a full day’s work may seem excessive to some of us today). John noted how idleness, namely, “absolute idleness,” had damaged the work in Ireland. Because he feared some of his preachers were idle, John wanted Charles to ask them how they spent their day. If they were idle, Charles should suggest that they either return to their trades or spend the same amount of time reading they had formerly spent working. John stated his disappointment with lazy preachers, “If our preachers do not or will not spend all their time in study and saving souls, they must be employed close in other work, or perish.” Charles responded to the idleness of the preachers by suggesting that the only way to solve the problem was for them to go back to their trade, which would result in their ceasing to itinerate, but not necessarily keep them from preaching locally. He wrote, “Has not God showed us both the disease and the remedy?” Charles confronted Michael Fenwick, a lay preacher who was lazy. Charles recorded the following reflections on his conversation with Fenwick, “I talked closely with him, utterly averse to working, and told him plainly he should either labour with his hands or preach no more.”

Charles’s work with the lay preachers is a clear example of how he tried to balance a commitment to the Church with a desire to see her reformed. At times Charles saw the benefit of lay preaching, but when it seemed to him to be leading to separation, he worked to limit the role and influence of the itinerant lay preachers. It seems probable, that one of the reasons that Charles withdrew from working with John in leadership of the Methodist movement in the 1750s was he felt that what began as a extraordinary ministry, the use of itinerant lay preachers, had become ordinary. In the end, Charles felt that the continued use of itinerant lay preachers would not lead to a reformation of the Church of England, instead it would lead to the Methodists leaving the Church of England, which would weaken her health and strength.

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37 Heitzenrater, p. 488.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
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“Claim Me, for Thy Service”
Charles Wesley’s Vision of Servant Vocation
Paul W. Chilcote

In one of the great Trinitarian hymns included in John and Charles Wesley’s *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper*, the singer beseeches God:

Claim me, for thy Service, claim
All I have, and all I am.

Take my Soul and Body’s Powers,
Take my Mem’ry, Mind, and Will,
All my Goods, and all my Hours,
All I know, and all I feel,
All I think, and speak, and do;
Take my Heart—but make it new.1

The disciple of Christ asks the Three-One God to claim every aspect of his or her life in an oblation that can only be described as covenantal. In typical Wesleyan fashion, a series of “alls” characterizes the plea. All I have, all I am, all my goods, all my hours, all I know, feel, think, speak, and do. The all-encompassing sacrifice of self—the offer of one’s whole being in service to God—rests secure, as Charles makes abundantly clear throughout, on the foundation of a heart transformed by God’s prevenient action. In hymns like this one, Charles Wesley cultivates a profound vision of servant vocation, a missional conception of Christian discipleship summarized tersely in the simple phrase: “Claim me, for thy service.”

One can hear echoes of the baptismal covenant, perhaps, in Charles’s use of language. The Sacrament of Baptism, of course, is that place where discipleship begins, that event in which God claims each person as God’s own. It also signals the commitment of the individual and the community to God’s mission. The ambiance of many Wesley hymns elicits a profoundly missiological vision of Christian community and engagement with the dominion of God in the world. Despite the centrality of this missional ecclesiology to the Wesleyan movement, few scholars have examined the missiology of Charles Wesley and the contribution of his hymns to the concept of servant vocation in the early Methodist heritage. Before his untimely death, Tore Meistad explored this theme in a preliminary way and even sought to link the Wesleyan concept of mission with the Eastern Church.2 In this brief essay I hope to build upon his insights as we exam-

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1 John and Charles Wesley, *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper* (Bristol: Farley, 1745), 155:3–4, pp. 129–130; hereinafter HLS.

ine Charles Wesley’s understanding of service or self-sacrifice as the orienting principle of his missiological vision of Christian vocation.

Of course, Jesus functions as the primary exemplar and mentor in Charles’s development of this vision. His frequent use of the ancient kenotic hymn (Phil. 2:5–11, particularly verse 7) elevates self-sacrificial love in Jesus’ own character and mission in the world. After an examination of this foundational portrait I turn my attention to Charles’s conception of conformity to the mind of Christ in light of the kenotic imagery of his hymns. In several signature hymn texts from the “For Believers Working” section of the 1780 A Collection of Hymns for the use of the People Called Methodists, he develops something approaching a “theology of servant ministry” along these lines. I conclude with an examination of Wesley’s concept of self-sacrifice as it relates to the Sacrament, particularly as developed in the final section of the brothers’ Hymns on the Lord’s Supper, and demonstrate how this sacramental paradigm of sacrificial servanthood both shapes and reflects Charles’s understanding of Christian vocation.

I. The Servant-Mind of Christ

Charles Wesley’s Lyrical Settings of Philippians 2:5–11

In his examination of “Kenosis in the Nativity Hymns of Ephrem the Syrian and Charles Wesley,” S T Kimbrough, Jr., claims that both of these important theologians “view God’s self-emptying, self-limitation, and self-effacement in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ as the foundational foci for Christian spirituality.” They drew these images, of course, from St. Paul’s letter to the Philippians in which he reminds the community to imitate the Christ of whom they sing in one of the earliest hymns of the church:

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (2:5–11, NRSV)

This so-called kenotic hymn figures prominently in the sacred poetry of Charles Wesley. Owing perhaps to the influence of Nicolas von Zinzendorf, the concept of kenosis—or self-emptying—was taken up and elaborated theologically as a theory of the Incarnation. It is not my purpose here to speculate about possible Pietistic influence upon Charles through the Zinzendorf connection or to discuss

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4 See the discussion and critique of this Christological theory in Donald M. Baillie, God Was in Christ: An Essay on Incarnation and Atonement (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1948), pp. 94–98.
the Christological implications of this concept; rather, I am interested in how the kenotic imagery associated with Jesus functions as a paradigm for faithful Christian discipleship in the hymns of Charles.

Although Wesley provides no lyrical paraphrase of this Philippians hymn in his *Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures* of 1762, allusions to the hymn can be found widely in his other collections. In the Wesleys’ *Hymns and Sacred Poems* of 1742, Charles reflects on St. Paul’s introduction to the ancient hymn in a twenty stanza lyrical paraphrase of “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:5). The brothers published thirteen of these stanzas in their 1780 *Collection*, verses describing Christ’s mind in turn as quiet, gentle, patient, noble, spotless, loving, thankful, constant, and perfect. One of Wesley’s most effective paraphrases of the kenotic hymn itself, however, comes in a four stanza hymn entitled “to be sung at Work,” beginning “Son of the Carpenter, receive,” published in *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1739). Attribution of this hymn to Charles remains uncertain, but the brothers published the last three verses of the hymn in the 1780 *Collection* as one of the lead selections in the section “For Believers Working.” Since this hymn focuses on the believer’s quest to conform to the mind of Christ, rather than on the character of Jesus, I will examine the text in greater detail in the second section of the paper dealing with the kenotic paradigm of Christian discipleship.

In another extremely significant hymn of *HSP* (1739) collection—not to be confused with the famous “atonement hymn” with the same first line “Arise, my soul, arise”—Wesley explores the titles of Christ. Four verses of the fifteen afford what may be his most profound exposition of the kenotic theme:

> Arise, my soul, arise,
> Thy Saviour’s sacrifice!
> All the names that love could find,
> All the forms that love could take,
> Jesus in himself has joined,
> Thee, my soul, his own to make.

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7 1780 *Collection*, Hymn 345, pp. 507–9; verses 1–2, 7, 9–10, 13–20 from the original in *HSP* (1742), pp. 221–223.


Equal with God most high,  
He laid his glory by:  
He, th' eternal God was born,  
Man with men he deigned t' appear,  
Object of his creature's scorn,  
Pleas'd a servant's form to wear.

High above ev'ry name,  
Jesus, the great I AM!  
Bows to Jesus ev'ry knee,  
Things in heav'n, and earth, and hell;  
Saints adore him, demons flee,  
Fiends and men and angels feel.

He left his throne above,  
Emptied of all, but love:  
Whom the heav'n's cannot contain,  
God vouchsaf'd a worm t' appear,  
Lord of glory, Son of Man,  
Poor, and vile, and abject here.  

Self-emptying: The Kenotic Paradigm

Three primary themes of a kenotic paradigm emerge from this hymn, namely, humility, estrangement, and self-emptying. The God revealed in the Incarnation is a self-humbling God. The Nativity Hymns, as Kimbrough has pointed out, provide some of the most powerful imagery related to a God "humbled to the dust." These themes are reflected in Wesley's paraphrase of the Gloria in excelsis where he binds humility and glory together as one:

See th' eternal Son of God,  
A mortal son of man,  
Dwelling in the earthly clod,  
Whom heaven cannot contain!

This paradox extends to the concept of estrangement as well. Again, Kimbrough observes: "Charles Wesley comprehends well this dimension of kenosis, when he writes:

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10 HSP (1739), pp. 165–168; stanzas 1–2, 9–10. The Wesleys published versions of this hymn in three other collections: John and Charles Wesley, Hymns and Spiritual Songs (London: Strahan, 1753), Hymn 40, [hereinafter HSS (1753)]. and John Wesley, Select Hymns with Tunes Annexed (London: n.p., 1761), Hymn 97, both hymns consisting of fifteen verses, as well, with one from 1739 omitted and another added. The hymn is reduced to nine verses in 1780 Collection, Hymn 187; verses 1–4, 8–12, pp. 315–317.


12 HNL, Hymn 4:3, p. 6.
Wrapped in swathes the immortal stranger,
Man with men,
We have seen
Lying in a manger.  

Father Francis Frost explored the same dynamic understanding of estrangement in Wesley’s religious verse in an exceptionally incisive essay entitled “The Veiled Unveiling of the Glory of God in the Eucharistic Hymns of Charles Wesley: The Self-Emptying Glory of God.” Frost appropriates the language of the well-known line of “Hark, the herald angels sing,” “Veiled in flesh, the Godhead see,” in an effort to articulate the central mystery of the Incarnation. All the kenotic themes converge as we “sound the depths” of the incarnate God of love. Frost attempts to articulate the central paradox:

The self-emptying is also a veiling of the Godhead. Why? Jesus did not cease to be God in the self-emptying. Precisely because the very love which is God is in the self-emptying, the self-emptying is a manifestation of the Godhead. But it is an unveiling of it in veiling. The love unveils itself in the veiling of self-emptying.

The essence of the kenotic paradigm, therefore, and the key to the mystery of love, is self-emptying. The concept is everywhere in Charles’s poetry. In his Hymns on the Lord’s Supper we sing, “He came self-emptied from above, / That we might live through him.” “Jesus, Thou art th’ Anointed One,” Wesley confesses, “Who camest self-emptied from the sky.” Pondering with Mary the miraculous nature of Jesus’ birth, Charles observes:

O may I always bear in mind
The Saviour’s pity for mankind,
Which brought him from his throne,
Emptied of all his majesty,
A Man of griefs to comfort me,
And make my heart his own.

In his famous hymn entitled “Free Grace,” published in HSP (1739) and more popularly known by the opening line, “And can it be, that I should gain,” Wesley condenses the whole kenotic doctrine into a single line:

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15 HSP (1739), p. 207.
16 Frost, “The Veiled Unveiling,” p. 88. Frost also quotes the famous statement of Charles de Foucauld in this context: “Self-lowering is of the essence of love.”
17 HLS, Hymn 60, “Come to the feast, for Christ invites,” p. 60.
19 Poet. Works, 11:118. This is stanza one of a two-stanza poem based on Luke 2:19, found in MS Luke, p. 28.
He left his Father's throne above,
(So free, so infinite his grace!),
Empty'd himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race:
'Tis mercy all, immense and free!
For, O my God! it found out me!\(^{20}\)

No image of self-emptying impresses itself on our minds with greater veracity
than the pervasive and distinctive phrase, "Emptyed himself of all but love." It is
there in his Nativity Hymns:

All-wise, all-good, almighty Lord,
Jesus, by highest heaven adored,
E'er time its course began,
How did thy glorious mercy stoop
To take thy fallen nature up,
When thou thyself wert man?

The eternal God from heav'n came down,
The King of glory dropped his crown,
And veiled his majesty,
Emptied of all but love he came;
Jesus, I call thee by the name
Thy pity bore for me.\(^{21}\)

We find it in Wesley's paraphrase of Job 23:3:

O that I knew the way to find
That Saviour of our sinful kind,
That Friend of misery!
Who left His blissful realms above,
Emptied Himself of all but love,
And died to ransom me!\(^{22}\)

Although found in his hymns as early as 1739, a close examination of this phrase in
A Collection of Psalms and Hymns (1741) may even provide some clue to its origin—
perhaps the editorial work of John rather than the creative mind of Charles:

He left true bliss and joy above,
Emptied himself of all but love;
For me He freely did forsake
More than from me He e'er can take:
A mortal life for a divine
He took, and did even that resign.\(^{23}\)

\(^{21}\)HNL, Hymn 15:1–2, p. 19.
\(^{22}\)Poet. Works, 9:259, Hymn based on Job. 23:3; original in MS Scriptural Hymns 1783, p. 29.
This hymn is actually a very careful redaction (improvement?) of one verse from "The Resignation," a religious poem by the Cambridge Platonist, John Norris, published in his *A Collection of Miscellanies* in 1692, the original of which reads:

He left true Bliss and Joys above,
Himself he emptied of all good, but love:
For me he freely did forsake
More good, than he from me can ever take.
A mortal life for a Divine
He took, and did at last even that resign.24

In a brilliant essay on "'Experimental and Practical Divinity': Charles Wesley and John Norris," Dick Watson suggests the many ways in which Norris may have influenced the younger poet, but makes no mention of this particular connection to the Wesleyan corpus.25 Regardless, whether originally John's or Charles's in its original form, the younger brother takes ownership of the idea and, as Father Frost has observed: "'Emptied of all but love He came.' That is a poetic way of intimating, not so much that Jesus manifests his love for us in the absence of all else, as that the love is in the very self emptying."26

*Footwashing: The Servant Character of Christ*

In Jesus' life among his followers, nowhere was this self-emptying love manifest more poignantly than in the Upper Room. Here, among his closest friends, Jesus translates humility, estrangement, and self-emptying into a profound sign act in his washing of the disciples' feet (John 13:1–20). Jesus acts out the meaning of the Incarnation. He demonstrates the paradoxical lesson that greatness in the community of his disciples is to be measured in terms of willingness to serve.27 Jesus left no doubt that he is the chief of all servants who invites all into the ministry of self-emptying love. In Charles Wesley's lyrical exposition of John 13, all of the kenotic themes converge into a compelling portrait of life in a self-emptied Lord whose example compels others into the path of kenotic service for others:

Jesu, by highest heavens adored, 
The church's glorious Head;  
With humble joy I call Thee, Lord,  
And in thy footsteps tread.

Emptied of all thy greatness here
While in the body seen,
Thou wouldst the least of all appear,
And minister to men.

A servant to thy servants Thou
In thy debased estate,
How meekly did thy goodness bow
To wash thy followers' feet!

And shall a worm refuse to stoop,
His fellow-worms disdain?
I give my vain distinctions up,
Since God did wait on man.

At charity's almighty call
I lay my greatness by,
The least of saints, I wait on all,
The chief of sinners I.

Happy, if I their grief may cheer,
And mitigate their pain,
And wait upon the servants here,
'Till with the Lord I reign.

II. Conformity to the Mind of Christ

"The servant shall be as his Lord."

In his hymns Charles Wesley relentlessly articulates God's invitation to allow the Spirit to conform the mind, the life, the "image" of the disciple to that of Christ. He enunciates this central theme in a unique formulation of Matthew 10:25, "it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher," first expressed, perhaps, in his "Thanksgiving" hymn of 1742:

My spirit meek, my will resigned,
Lowly as thine shall be my mind,
The servant shall be as his Lord. 29

For Charles, this call to conformity to Christ defines the disciple—it characterizes the Christian who is altogether God’s—but it is also a promise. In virtually every hymn in which this phrase appears, it implies both a demand and a gift. "I stay me on thy faithful word," cries the follower of Christ "Groaning for

28 Charles Wesley, Hymns and Sacred Poems, 2 vols. (Bristol: Farley, 1749), [Hymns for Believers], Hymn 12, 1:213–214; hereinafter HSP (1749). The complete hymn is quoted here.

29 HSP (1742), 169; 1780 Collection, Hymn 355:5, "Before Any Work of Charity," p. 524; portions of the hymn also appeared in HSS (1753) and in John Wesley, Select Hymns with Tunes Annext, 2nd edn. (London: n.p., 1765).
Redemption,” “The servant shall be as his Lord.” In the powerful hymn, “Prisoners of hope,” this statement of vocation and promise functions as the refrain for the concluding stanzas:

Thou wilt perform thy faithful word:
“The servant shall be as his Lord.”

. . .
We only hang upon thy word,
“The servant shall be as his Lord.”

Called to service, the service itself becomes God’s greatest gift.

The fifth section of Part Four of the 1780 Collection includes eight selections “For Believers Working.” In these hymns Wesley elevates this call to servant ministry in conformity to Christ. I return here, therefore, to the hymn mentioned earlier, “Son of the Carpenter, receive,” as it deals with the kenotic paradigm of Christian discipleship and the disciple’s imitation of the Master:

Servant of all, to toil for man
Thou wouldst not, Lord, refuse;
Thy Majesty did not disdain
To be employed for us!

Thy bright example I pursue,
To Thee in all things rise;
And all I think, or speak, or do,
Is one great sacrifice.

Careless thro’ outward cares I go,
From all distraction free;
My hands are but engaged below,
My heart is still with thee.

Wesley presents at least three critical insights in this brief hymn. First, Christ takes upon himself the form of a servant because this is the nature of God’s love. Second, imitation of Christ requires the sacrifice of one’s whole self to God. Finally, only those who bind themselves to Christ and work the works of God are truly free in life.

The hymns of this section enunciate some of the other primary themes of servant ministry as well. Wesley links the significance of the disciple’s service to the sacrifice of Christ.

30 HSP (1742), p. 169; 1780 Collection, Hymn 364, stanza 1, line 6, p. 533.
31 HSP (1742), 234, 11:5–6, 13:5–6; 1780 Collection, Hymn 369, p. 540, which includes only nine of the original thirteen stanzas. Cf. HSP (1749), 2:179, Hymn 25:7: “We rest on His word / We shall here be restored / To His image; the servant shall be as his Lord.”
32 HSP (1739), 193–194; stanzas 2–4; 1780 Collection, Hymn 313, p. 468.
"Jesu, this mean oblation join
   To thy great sacrifice.
   Stampt with an infinite desert
   My work he then shall own."³³

The servant of God pursues his or her "daily labor" in order to walk in a closer fellowship with God: "In all my works thy presence find."³⁴ Service is its own reward.

   Joyful thus my faith to show,
      I find his service my reward;
   Every work I do below
      I do it to the Lord.³⁵

In what might be called the "signature hymn" of this section of the 1780 Collection, "O thou who camest from above," Charles articulates one of his most critical insights related to Christian servanthood: "Increase in us the kindled fire, / In us the work of faith fulfil." Reflecting upon this couplet, Oliver Beckerlegge observed:

   It should not be forgotten that the early Methodist Conferences were "Conversations about the work of God", not the work of man for God! The flame of faith can be lit only from outside and above—it is the gift of the Holy Spirit. Christ is the subject and agent.³⁶

But what is the character of this graciously enabled labor of love?

   The Practice of Christian Service

Charles Wesley goes to great lengths to specify the character of Christian service. First, the servant simply offers to others what he or she has freely received from God. Harkening back to the episode in which Jesus washes his disciples’ feet in the Upper Room, Wesley reveals the heart of the "primitive Christian:"

   O might my lot be cast with these,
      The least of Jesu's witnesses!
   O that my Lord would count me meet
      To wash his dear disciples' feet!

³³ 1780 Collection, Hymn 312:3-4, p. 468; the first two lines of stanza 3 and the first two lines of stanza 4; original in HSP (1739), p. 195.
³⁴ 1780 Collection, Hymn 315:2, p. 470; from "Forth in thy name, O Lord, I go"; original in HSP (1749), 1:246.
³⁵ 1780 Collection, Hymn 316:2, p. 471; original in Hymns for those that seek, and those that have Redemption in the Blood of Jesus Christ (London: Strahan, 1747), p. 8; hereinafter RH (1747).
³⁶ 1780 Collection, footnote, p. 474.
This only thing do I require:
Thou know'st 'tis all my heart's desire
Freely what I receive to give,
The servant of thy church to live.\textsuperscript{37}

Servants, in other words, engage in evangelism—offering God's grace to all in word and in deed. After preaching on one occasion at Gwennap Pit in Cornwall, Charles celebrated this aspect of service to God:

All thanks be to God,
Who scatters abroad
Throughout every place,
By the least of his servants his savour of grace!\textsuperscript{38}

The unique feature of Wesley's vision, however, is the way in which he connects the sharing of grace with the restoration of the mind of Christ in the believer. In a composite hymn, opening with a lyrical paraphrase of "Jesus and the woman at the well" (John 4:10–15), Wesley conjoins the "mind" of Philippians 2 with the "action" of James 1:

Thy mind throughout my life be shown,
While listening to the wretch's cry,
The widow's and the orphan's groan,
On mercy's wings I swiftly fly
The poor and helpless to relieve,
My life, my all, for them to give.\textsuperscript{39}

To have the mind of Christ, in other words, is to care for the poor.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Jesus' words concerning the judgment of the nations in Matthew 25 should figure prominently in his depiction of authentic discipleship and Christian service. Wesley's lyrical formulation of the pertinent text comes, of all places, in a hymn written for Charles's bride, Sarah Gwynn, on the occasion of their wedding:

Come let us arise,
And press to the skies;
The summons obey,
My friend, my beloved, and hasten away!
The Master of all
For our service doth call,
And deigns to approve
With smiles of acceptance our labour of love.

\textsuperscript{37} 1780 \textit{Collection}, Hymn 17:7–8, stanzas 7 and 8, p. 101; original in \textit{HSP} (1749) 2:336.
His burden who bear,  
We alone can declare  
How easy his yoke;  
While to love and good works we each other provoke,  
By word and by deed,  
The bodies in need,  
The souls to relieve,  
And freely as Jesus hath given to give.  

Then let us attend  
Our heavenly friend  
In his members distressed,  
By want, or affliction, or sickness oppressed;  
The prisoner relieve,  
The stranger receive,  
Supply all their wants,  
And spend and be spent in assisting his saints.  

The early Methodist people, like their leaders, took this “call to serve the present age” with utmost seriousness. They lived out their lives in solidarity with those people who were shut out, neglected, and thrown away. Charles admonished his followers to befriend the poor and needy. In his A Song for the Poor, S T Kimbrough, Jr., rediscovers some of Wesley’s most profound expressions of this servant spirit, including this composite hymn drawn from his manuscript poems on Luke and Acts:

The poor as Jesus’ bosom-friends,  
the poor he makes his latest care,  
to all his followers commends,  
and wills us on our hands to bear;  
the poor our dearest care we make,  
and love them for our Savior’s sake.

Charles was quick to point out those persons in whom this lofty ideal of gracious condescension was realized. He provides the following portrait of an early Methodist woman, Elizabeth Blackwell, whose character was shaped by her practice of befriending the least in her community:

Nursing the poor with constant care,  
Affection soft, and heart-esteem,  
She saw her Saviour’s image there,  
And gladly minister’d to Him.

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40 HSP (1749), 2:280, stanzas 1–3 of a four-stanza poem.  
Grace Bowen rejoiced "an hungry Christ to feed" and "to visit Him in pain." To the poor, Wesley observes, this servant gave her all.43

III. Eucharist and Self-Sacrifice

The Cross-shaped Life

Conformity to the mind of Christ—to live and serve in this world after the model of Jesus—ultimately means conformity to the cross as well. "When Christ calls a man," as Dietrich Bonhoeffer observed in The Cost of Discipleship, "he bids him come and die."44 Personal sacrifice characterizes the authentic Christian life. As my own theological mentor, Dr. Robert Cushman, said on many occasions, "The cross-shaped life is the only authentic Christian existence." The "suffering servants" of God take up their crosses daily in multifarious acts of self-sacrificial love.

Thy every suffering servant, Lord,
   Shall as his perfect Master be;
   To all thy inward life restored,
   And outwardly conformed to thee.45

"And lo!" cries the faithful disciple, "I come thy cross to share, / Echo thy sacrificial prayer, / And with my Saviour die."46 Nowhere do the images of self-empowering, service, and sacrifice—the signs of the cruciform life—converge more poignantly than in the Hymns on the Lord's Supper.

The Wesleys divided the 166 hymns of this 1745 collection into six sections, the fourth and fifth of which deal specifically with the issue of sacrifice. In Charles Wesley's sermon on Acts 20:7 (more properly what might be described as an introductory "treatise" to a larger, unfinished work on the Sacrament) we encounter a concept of sacrifice consonant with the view he espouses in his Hymns on the Lord's Supper devoted to this theme. Charles views the Lord's Supper as a "re-presentation" of the sacrifice of Christ.47 As J. Ernest Rattenbury demonstrated, his stress is persistently on the two-fold oblation of the church in the Sacrament; the body of Christ offered is not merely a sacred symbol of Christ's "once-for-all" act of redemption, but is also the living sacrifice of the people of God.48

43 CWJ, 2:324.
45 1780 Collection, Hymn 321:5, p. 477; original in HSP (1749) 2:11; line one of this stanza in 1749 reads "Thy every perfect servant, Lord."
The thirty hymns of Section Five in this collection, "Concerning the Sacrifice of our Persons," focus upon this living oblation of the church and all who seek to be faithful disciples of their Lord. The desire to "be all like Thee," inevitably leads to the heartfelt prayer, "Grant us full conformity, Plunge us deep into thy death." Wesley describes the full extent of solidarity with the crucified Lord:

His servants shall be  
With Him on the tree,  
Where Jesus was slain  
His crucified servants shall always remain.

Suffering for the sake of love identifies those who are truly bound to Christ. In a profoundly anamnetic hymn placing the believer at the foot of the cross, Wesley asks the rhetorical question, "Would the Saviour of mankind Without His people die?" The question elicits one of the most powerful images in the Eucharistic hymns: "No, to Him we all are join'd As more than standers by." Given the fact that Christ took the suffering of the world freely upon himself, even to the point of death on a cross, "We attend the slaughter'd Lamb, And suffer for His cause." Hardly a mission for the faint of heart, the path of discipleship requires all one has and all one is.

In the eucharistic hymns Wesley develops what might be called a sursum corda principle. In the Prayer of Great Thanksgiving, used in contemporary United Methodist congregations and drawn from the ancient practice of the church, the faithful "lift up their hearts" to the Lord. This "up-lifting" provides a paradigm of the oblation of life offered to God in Christ. In this act or gesture of self-oblation, the Christian confirms to God, "I offer my whole self to you anew." In the language of Charles's poetry: "Ourselves we offer up to God, Implunged in His atoning blood." Despite the limited or partial nature of our self-sacrificial acts, God accepts them and joins them to Christ's oblation:

Mean are our noblest offerings,  
Poor feeble unsubstantial things;  
But when to Him our souls we lift,  
The altar sanctifies the gift.

Another sacrificial hymn makes these connections even more explicit:

Thou art with all Thy members here,  
In this tremendous mystery  
We jointly before God appear,  
To offer up ourselves with Thee.

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49 HLS, 154:3, p. 129.  
50 HLS, 142:3, p. 120.  
51 HLS, 131:1, p. 112.  
52 HLS, 137:4–5, p. 117.
True followers of our bleeding Lamb,
    Now on thy daily cross we die,
And, mingled in a common flame,
    Ascend triumphant to the sky.\textsuperscript{53}

The sacrificial character of the Christian life, in which the worshiper participates repeatedly at the table of the Lord and its relationship to the sacrifice of Christ, is clarified in Charles's hymns. In this regard, Wesley adheres very closely to the position articulated in Daniel Brevint's \textit{The Christian Sacrament and Sacrifice}, an important theological treatise reprinted in abridged form as a "preface" to his hymns. "The main intention of Christ herein was not the bare \textit{remembrance} of His Passion;" claims Brevint, "but over and above, to invite us to His Sacrifice":\textsuperscript{54}

\begin{quote}
While faith th' atoning blood applies,
    Ourselves a living sacrifice
    We freely offer up to God;
And none but those his glory share,
    Who crucified with Jesus are,
    And follow where their Saviour trod.

Saviour, to thee our lives we give,
    Our meanest sacrifice receive,
    And to thine own oblation join,
Our souls and bodies we resign,
    With joy we render Thee / Our all, no longer ours, but Thine / Through all eternity!\textsuperscript{57}
\end{quote}

\textit{The Living Sacrifice of Romans 12}

St. Paul's word to the Roman Christians, "to present your bodies as a living sacrifice" (12:1), clearly alluded to in the hymn just cited, provides the foundation upon which the disciple builds this kenotic, self-sacrificial vision of life. With regard to the offering, Wesley clarifies several important points in the hymns. First, the Spirit makes our self-sacrifice possible. To live as Christ lived means to be filled with the Holy Spirit. "Yes, Lord, we are Thine," confesses Wesley, "And gladly resign / Our souls to be fill'd with the fulness Divine."\textsuperscript{56} Second, the offering is holistic, involving both soul and body; Wesley guards against any false separation of the spiritual from the physical in the life of the believer. "Our souls and bodies we resign," claims Wesley, "With joy we render Thee / Our all, no longer ours, but Thine / Through all eternity!"\textsuperscript{57} Third, we

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{53} HLS, 141:7-8, p. 120.
  \item \textsuperscript{54} Rattenbury, \textit{Eucharistic Hymns}, p. 178.
  \item \textsuperscript{55} HLS, 128:3-4, p. 110.
  \item \textsuperscript{56} HLS, 156:4, p. 131.
  \item \textsuperscript{57} HLS, 157:4, Ibid.
\end{itemize}
restore to God what God has already freely given. "Now, O God, Thine own I am," affirms the servant of the Lord, "Now I give Thee back Thy own." Fourth, self-sacrifice, while an act of obedience and compliance, roots us in love; self-giving love and God are one. Wesley expresses all of these themes eloquently in a hymn of supplication echoing the words of the prayer after Communion in the liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer:

Father, on us the Spirit bestow,
Through which Thine everlasting Son
Offer'd Himself for man below,
That we, even we, before Thy throne
Our souls and bodies may present,
And pay Thee all Thy grace hath lent.

O let Thy Spirit sanctify
Whate'er to Thee we now restore,
And make us with Thy will comply;
With all our mind, and soul, and power
Obey Thee, as Thy saints above,
In perfect innocence and love.

In those hymns in which Philippians 2:5–11 figures prominently, Charles Wesley develops a kenotic paradigm of servant ministry—a vision of servant vocation—Jesus himself being the primary exemplar as the One who seeks to serve others in life. Wesley demonstrates how conformity to this servant-mind characterizes all who seek to be faithful disciples and practice Christian service. In his hymns on the Eucharist, he emphasizes the centrality of the cross-shaped life. The Sacrament functions both to exemplify the living sacrifice of Romans 12 and to form the followers of Christ into those who sacrifice self for the sake of the world—those God claims for service for the sake of love. S T Kimbrough, Jr., expresses it succinctly: "to be emptied of everything but love is what it means to serve a God who in Christ was emptied of all but love."

We conclude, therefore, where we began, with lines from the hymn described by J. Ernest Rattenbury as "perhaps the greatest hymn of personal consecration in our language":

58 HLS, 155:5, p. 130.
59 HLS, 150, p. 126. Following the rubrics of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, after the congregation has received the Sacrament, the priest prays: "O Lord and heavenly Father, we thy humble servants desire thy Fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving . . . . And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto thee," etc.
61 Rattenbury, Eucharistic Hymns, p. 126.
Claim me, for thy service, claim
All I have and all I am.

Take my soul and body's powers,
   Take my memory, mind, and will,
All my goods, and all my hours,
   All I know, and all I feel,
All I think, and speak, and do;
Take my heart—but make it new.

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
   One in Three, and Three in One,
As by the celestial host
   Let Thy will on earth be done;
Praise by all to Thee be given,
Glorious Lord of earth and heaven.⁶²

⁶² HLS, 155:3–4, 6, pp. 129–130.
Memorial, Means, and Pledge: 
Eucharist and Time in the Wesleys' 
_Hymns on the Lord's Supper_ 
Kenneth M. Loyer

In _The Grace Given You in Christ_, the 2006 Seoul Report of the Roman Catholic–Methodist International Dialogue, an invitation is issued for Methodists to devote additional attention to a theology of the Eucharist.\(^1\) The lasting influence of J. Ernest Rattenbury's classic _The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley_ (published in 1948 and reprinted in 1990) has done much to foster a renewed interest in Wesleyan eucharistic teaching and devotion.\(^2\) Yet the Seoul Report rightly identifies the need for further work in this area, as well as the ecumenical potential for such work. In response to this invitation, one issue which may be profitably explored is the relationship between Eucharist and time. Strikingly, the threefold temporal reference of the sacrament expressed by the Wesleys in their _Hymns on the Lord's Supper_ matches the teaching of Thomas Aquinas on the Eucharist as an efficaciously commemorative, demonstrative, and prognostic sign.\(^3\) In that respect, this is an area of common ground between Methodist and Roman Catholic eucharistic theologies. Perhaps a contribution could be made on the Methodist side through a critical account of this aspect of Wesleyan theology. The present study represents one attempt at providing such an account, and it seeks to show that the relationship between Eucharist and time has important implications for developing a eucharistic theology which is both authentically Wesleyan and constructively ecumenical.

Before turning to the _Hymns on the Lord's Supper_, it is important to consider—at least briefly, and in rather broad strokes—the context in which these hymns were written. While they had differences of emphasis, the shapers of the Anglican tradition, which the Wesleys inherited, were more or less committed to a _via media_ between Rome and the continental reformers. In terms of sacramental practice and theology, a particularly strong influence was exerted by the Anglican theologians of the seventeenth century who defined their faith and practice against those of the Puritan party. Given their “high church” leanings, figures like Lancelot Andrews, William Laud, and Jeremy Taylor helped to generate

\(^1\)“Drawing on both the Wesleyan and Catholic traditions, Methodists might usefully articulate a more developed theology of the Eucharist with special reference to its sacrificial nature, the sacramental memorial of Christ's saving death and resurrection, the real presence, the ministry of those who preside, and the link between eucharistic communion and ecclesial communion” (_The Grace Given You in Christ: Catholics and Methodists Reflect Further on the Church_, Report of the International Commission for Dialogue Between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Methodist Council [Lake Junaluska: The World Methodist Council, 2006], §155, p. 67).


\(^3\)_Summa Theologiae_, III q. 60 a. 3.
a renewed interest in the sacramental life as understood in nuanced Anglican fashion, somewhere in between Catholicism and classical Protestantism. One seventeenth-century Anglican divine whose work would go on to prove especially formative for the eucharistic theology and devotion of the Wesleys was Daniel Brevint (1616–1695). Brevint, who served as Dean of Lincoln College, Oxford under the restoration of King Charles II, retained certain Catholic eucharistic themes, such as the salutary effects of the sacrament and the sacrificial character of the rite, while, in Protestant fashion, repudiating others, most notably the doctrine of transubstantiation. In this way, Brevint typified the *Zeitgeist* in the Church of England concerning both Catholic continuities and Protestant divergences. And the Wesleys, whose interest in catholicity would take them back as far as the early church, largely followed suit.

In 1745, John and Charles Wesley published the first edition of *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper*, a collection of 166 eucharistic hymns along with a preface appropriated from Brevint’s treatise *The Christian Sacrament and Sacrifice* (1672). In this collection, the Wesleys take up Brevint’s teaching on the threefold temporal reference of the sacrament to past (especially hymns 1–27), present (28–92), and future (93–115). First, the Lord’s Supper represents the past sufferings of Christ, and indeed his death, and is in this sense a memorial; second, it conveys the first fruits of these sufferings to the church in the present, and is thus a means of grace; and third, the sacrament assures its faithful partakers of the glory to come, and in this way it is a pledge of the future consummation of God’s saving purposes.

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4 As is evident in Brevint’s work called *Missale Romanum, or the Depth and Mystery of the Roman Mass: Laid open and explained for the use of both Reformed and Unreformed Christians* (1672).


6 John and Charles Wesley, *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper* (Bristol: Felix Farley, 1745); facsimile edition (Madison, NJ: The Charles Wesley Society, 1995); henceforth cited as *HLS* followed by hymn, stanza, line (if appropriate), and page number. Quotations come from this facsimile reprint of the Wesleys’ first edition of 1745, the principal text of *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper* consulted for this study. Whenever possible, the Wesleys’ own stylistic choices are retained, with all of their idiosyncrasies of capitalization, italics, spelling, and punctuation. Occasionally the style has been somewhat modernized for ease of reading. The method of citation employed by Daniel Stevick is also taken up here: the hymn number is separated from the stanza number by a colon and the line(s) by a period. So, for example, the line “And live forever Thine” is cited as 3:4.6; i.e., hymn 3, stanza 4, line 6 (cf. Stevick, *The Altar’s Fire: Charles Wesley’s Hymns on the Lord’s Supper, 1745: Introduction and Exposition* [Peterborough: Epworth Press, 2004], p. xv).

7 “The Christian Sacrament and Sacrifice: Extracted from Dr. Brevint,” II.1, preface to *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper*. In Brevint’s complete words, “this great mystery shews three faces, looking directly towards three times, and offering to all worthy receivers three sorts of incomparable blessings,—that of representing the true efficacy of Christ’s sufferings, which are past, whereof it is a memorial; that of exhibiting the first fruits of these sufferings in real and present graces, whereof it is a moral conveyance and communication; and that of assuring men of all other graces and glories to come, whereof it is an infallible pledge” (Daniel Brevint, *The Christian Sacrament and Sacrifice*, II.1 [London: Hatchard and Son, 1847], transcribed by Irene C. Teas, 2006); see http://anglicanhistory.org/england/brevint/sacrament02.html, accessed on October 20, 2007.
The threefold reference to time—past, present, and future—constitutes one of the major themes of these hymns, and it is a theme which is capable of further elaboration in the secondary literature. Each mode of temporality finds ample expression in this collection, both individually and in relation to the other two. In some cases the focus is on the past, in others the present, and in others still the future; and yet many of the hymns incorporate all three temporal dimensions in creative ways. Here Charles Wesley, the principal author, weaves together threads which represent past, present, and future into a single, multihued fabric displaying the temporal fullness of the Lord's Supper, in which all modes of time intersect. Integrating past, present, and future, even while emphasizing one of the three, the *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* provides one way of understanding the relationship between Eucharist and time, and give poetic expression to the basic theological claim that the sacrament is at once a memorial, a means, and a pledge.

### The Lord's Supper as Past: A Memorial of Christ's Sufferings and Death

The headings of the *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* reflect the same general movement of Brevint's treatise in five sections. The Wesleys follow Brevint in the naming of their first section (though it is the second section in Brevint's treatise),
which concerns the sacrament "as it is a memorial of the sufferings and death of Christ."\textsuperscript{12} Insofar as it represents Christ's sufferings and death, the Lord's Supper is a memorial. The Wesleys, of course, were not mere memorialists in the Zwinglian sense,\textsuperscript{13} but they did have a keen appreciation of the anamnetic character of the Eucharist, in accordance with the plain words of Christ: "Do this in remembrance of me . . ." (Luke 22:19).\textsuperscript{14} These communion hymns vividly express the past reference of the sacrament, and that is especially true for the first twenty-seven, which together make up the first section of the \textit{Hymns on the Lord's Supper}.

As Wesley states most vigorously in section one, it is as a memorial that the sacrament calls to mind the sufferings and death of Christ. Wesley retells portions of the biblical story in a number of these hymns. He sets the tone for the entire section in Hymn 1, which recounts Christ's final meal with the disciples.

\begin{verbatim}
In that sad memorable Night,  
When Jesus was for Us betray'd,  
He left his Death-recording Rite,  
He took, and bless'd, and broke the Bread,  
And gave his Own their last Bequest,  
And thus his Love's Intent expressed.\textsuperscript{15}
\end{verbatim}

Taking, blessing, breaking, and giving the bread, and later passing the cup, Jesus instituted the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. In offering up his own life, he provided what would be his last, and greatest, gift:

\begin{verbatim}
Take eat, this is my Body given,  
To purchase Life and Peace for You,  
Pardon and Holiness and Heaven;  
Do this, my dying Love to show,  
Accept your precious Legacy,  
And thus, my Friends, remember me.

He took into his Hands the Cup,  
To crown the Sacramental Feast,  
And full of kind Concern look'd up,  
And gave what He to them had blessed,  
And drink ye all of this, He said,  
In solemn Memory of the Dead.\textsuperscript{16}
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{12} HLS, I. This heading is an abbreviated version of the one in Brevint: "Concerning the Sacrament, as it is a Memorial of the Suffering and Death of Christ" (II).

\textsuperscript{13} The Wesleys categorically rule out a Zwinglian view of bare memorialism, and nothing more, in phrases like "And eat thy flesh and drink thy blood" and "To every faithful Soul appear, / And show thy Real Presence here" (HLS, 3:4.5, p. 4; 116:5.5–6, p. 99).

\textsuperscript{14} Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations come from the New Revised Standard Version, copyright 1989, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

\textsuperscript{15} HLS, I:1, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{16} HLS, I:2–3, p. 2.
The Lord’s Supper, Wesley here suggests, is an act of remembering the self-giving of Jesus. To eat this bread and drink this cup is to proclaim his death until he comes again (1 Corinthians 11:26).

Of course, tortured and crucified as he was, Christ died a brutal and grotesque death, the details of which we might be inclined to pass over—but Wesley does not. For him, the fact that Christ died in a certain way is also a vital part of remembering. Keen to acknowledge the sheer enormity of Christ’s passion and cross, Wesley is at times quite graphic in his descriptions of the Savior’s suffering. For example, he calls to mind Christ’s “Agonizing Pain,” “Bloody Sweat,” and “Dying Love” to humankind. Giving words to how profoundly dreadful these sufferings must have been for Jesus to endure, Wesley invites the hearer to visualize them.

Expiring in the Sinner’s Place,
Crush’d with the Universal Load
He hangs!—adown His mournful face,
See trickling fast the Tears and Blood!
The Blood that purges all our Stains
It starts in Rivers from his Veins.

Wesley certainly does not provide a sanitized or sentimental account of the crucifixion. In these hymns, however, brutality for brutality’s sake is not the focus. Rather, Wesley understands Christ’s suffering fundamentally to be redemptive and life-giving. He often employs the theme of atonement as healing, as in stanza two of the hymn quoted above:

A Fountain gushes from his Side,
Open’d that All may enter in,
That All may feel the Death applied,
The Death of GOD, the Death of Sin,
The Death by which our Foes are kill’d,
The Death by which our Souls are heal’d.

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17 HLS, 20:2.1–3, p. 15.
18 HLS, 24:1, p. 19.
20 HLS, 24:2, p. 19. Other examples include “By thy precious Blood’s applying / Make our inmost Nature clean” (15:2.3–4, p. 19), “Apply to All thy healing Blood” (25:3.5, p. 20), and “Let thy Blood, by Faith applied / The Sinner’s Pardon seal, / Speak us freely Justified, / And all our Sickness heal” (20:3.1–4, p. 15). Of course, therapeutic imagery is not all that Wesley uses to describe the atonement. He also speaks, for example, of Christ paying his “Debt in Blood” (2.3:6, p. 3). For an excursus on Jesus’s blood in these communion hymns, see Stevick, pp. 175–179. Also, in light of the ensuing reference in the body of this paper to biblical allusions, it is worth noting that in stanza one of the above hymn the phrase “A Fountain gushes from his Side” is likely an allusion to John 19:34.
As these stanzas make explicit, Wesley is not one to downplay the significance of the cross. Yet the end is ultimately soteriological, for he locates divine healing power in Christ’s bloody death.\textsuperscript{21}

The language of these hymns is perhaps equally colorful in regard to the immediate effects of Christ’s death on the natural world, and Wesley regards these details as part of the task of remembering as well. He picks up on the biblical image of the earth shaking and the rocks splitting at the moment when Jesus dies (cf. Matthew 27:51).

Lo! the Powers of Heaven He shakes;  
Nature in Convulsions lies,  
Earth’s profoundest Centre quakes,  
The great Jehovah dies!\textsuperscript{22}

The implications of this event are truly cosmic, as Wesley elsewhere relates:

\textsuperscript{21} While for Wesley the image of the blood of Christ summarizes everything important for human beings about Christ’s atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world, as his frequent use of blood imagery in these hymns and others implies, it would be a mistake to conclude that he espouses a truncated view of Christ’s saving work, as if he thought it were somehow limited to the event of the cross. Wesley’s use of various christological titles, such as Prince of Peace (e.g., A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists [London: J. Paramore, 1780]; reprinted in The Works of John Wesley, vol. 7 [Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984], pp. 71–721), no. 435, stanza 1 [po 611]), Good Shepherd (e.g., ibid., no. 436, stanza 3 [po 613; here Wesley uses the phrase “Great Shepherd,” but the allusion to John 10 is clear]), and Light of the World (e.g., ibid., no. 432, stanza 2 [po 609]), with attention to their inherent soteriological import, suggests that for him Christ’s passion cannot be understood in theological isolation from either his life and teachings or his resurrection, the latter point being clearly established, for example, in his Hymns for Our Lord’s Resurrection (London: W. Strahan, 1746; facsimile edition, Madison, NJ: The Charles Wesley Society, 1985). (Though these resurrection hymns are not published specifically under Charles’s name, he is most likely their principal writer.) So it seems that for Wesley, Christ’s life, death, and resurrection are all intrinsically related as part and parcel of the message of redemption in Jesus. Cf. Hymn 7 of Hymns for Our Lord’s Resurrection, which is based on a litany from the Book of Common Prayer recalling a vast array of episodes in the life of Christ, covering virtually everything from his nativity to his resurrection. That Wesley finds saving significance at numerous points throughout this sweeping overview of Christ’s life suggests that he understands human salvation to depend on the whole work of Christ—his Incarnation, life, death, and resurrection—and that he understands them ultimately to cohere. The prayer reads: “By the mystery of thy holy Incarnation; by thy holy nativity and circumcision; by thy baptism, fasting, and temptation; by thine agony and bloody sweat; by thy cross and passion; by thy precious death and burial; by thy glorious resurrection and ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost, Good Lord, deliver us” (Hymns for Our Lord’s Resurrection, preface to 7, p. 10).

For more on Wesley’s use of blood imagery, see Teresa Berger, who describes Wesley’s common formula of “the blood applied” (of which Wesley speaks eleven times in the Hymns on the Lord’s Supper) as “a formula for salvation effected” (Theology in Hymns? A Study of the Relationship of Doxology and Theology According to A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists [1780], trans. Timothy E. Kimbrough, [Nashville: Abingdon/Kingswood, 1995], p. 121). Wesley speaks similarly of “the death applied,” as quoted above in 24:2.3 (p. 167). On the place of the cross in Wesley’s theology of atonement, see John Tyson, Charles Wesley’s Theology of the Cross: An Examination of the Theology and Method of Charles Wesley as Seen in His Doctrine of the Atonement (Ph.D. dissertation, Drew University, 1983).

\textsuperscript{22} HLS, 21:4.5–8, p. 16.
'Tis done! the Atoning Work is done:  
    JESUS the World's Redeemer dies!  
All Nature feels th'Important Groan  
    Loud-echoing through the Earth and Skies,  
The Earth doth to her Center quake,  
And Heaven as Hell's deep Gloom is black!23

For Wesley, through its groaning, echoing, and quaking, the entire created order is drastically affected by Christ's death. With a flair for both metaphor and paradox, Wesley limns one of the central mysteries of Christian faith: the claim that at Golgotha, the One who is the source of life has died (cf. John 19:17–18).24

Indeed, Wesley is quite vivid in his poetic accounts of Christ's suffering and death as well as their immediate effects on the natural world. Though some of the more gruesome imagery may offend modern sensibilities, it bears mentioning that this is Wesley's attempt at remembering well. He uses various resources at his disposal, including Scripture, the devotional tradition,25 and his particular knack for lucid, eloquent, and even emotionally arousing verse, so as to depict something of the depth of Christ's sufferings, and to bring to mind both the utter costliness and the cosmic implications of his death. In the context of these hymns, Wesley points back to the past in order to foster a deep appreciation of the sufferings and death of Christ. Ultimately, of course, his concern is to promote eucharistic devotion and practice, based in part on such an acknowledgment of what Christ has done.

While the past reference of the sacrament figures with particular prominence in this opening section, the present and future dimensions also come clearly into play. The Lord's Supper is certainly a call to remember the sufferings and death of Christ, but it is not only that: it is also a representation of Christ's sacrifice on Calvary, so that this very sacrifice, while not repeated, is made salvifically present again, for the partakers of the sacrament to encounter Christ in all his suffering glory. According to Wesley, this encounter is so real, so immediate and intense, that it is as if those who receive the Lord's Supper had been eyewitnesses of Christ's passion—

    As tho' we every one  
    Beneath his Cross had stood,  
    And seen him heave, and heard him groan,  
    And felt his gushing Blood.26

23 HLS, 26:1, p. 20.  
24 Cf. HLS, 24:2.4, p. 19; 21:5.8, p. 7.  
25 Noting that the New Testament tends not to emphasize the bloodiness of Jesus's death, Stevick surmises that on this theme Wesley follows the devotional tradition, especially as it developed during the Middle Ages (Stevick, p. 175).  
Pointing us to the cross, as mystically represented in the sacrament, Wesley recounts, in the present tense, the last moments of Christ's life: the cry of dere­lication, the bowing of the head, the final gasp of air.

O God! 'tis finish'd now!
The Mortal Pang is past!
By Faith his Head we see Him bow,
And hear Him breathe his last!27

In the Eucharist, Wesley here suggests, faith enables one to see Jesus bow his head, and to hear his final breath. Somehow these past events become real in the present—not through a re-crucifixion of Jesus but a re-presentation of his one-time sacrifice, now sacramentally visible and audible, so that the faithful in a certain sense encounter Christ crucified through their participation in the Lord's Supper.

At this point, death would appear to have won the victory. Jesus is dead, and in our sins so are we. Yet out of death comes the life of resurrection, both for Jesus and for those in him, and therein lies the future reference of the sacrament.

We too with Him are Dead,
And shall with Him arise,
The Cross on which He bows his Head,
Shall lift us to the Skies.28

It is through the power of Christ's resurrection that death is ultimately defeated, and the cross, a prototypical instrument of death, thereby becomes a means of life, raising Christ's faithful to eternal glory in and with him.

So for Wesley, the commemorative character of the Eucharist, while important in itself, cannot really be understood by itself in a kind of theological isolation from a consideration of the present and the future. That is because the sacrament has as its focus not just any past event, nor an event that is merely past. It is, rather, about a past event whose significance carries over into the present and, indeed, irreversibly shapes the future. There is thus a convergence and dynamic interplay of all modes of time in the sacrament, as expressed in these hymns by Wesley. It will take some time to establish this claim and to tease out a few of its implications,29 but thus far it is important to note that Wesley's treatment of the sacrament as a memorial indicates the temporal density of the Lord's Supper. As he focuses on Christ's sufferings and death, Wesley also considers the present and future consequences of Christ's past actions, which he finds to be soteriologically immense. Hymn twelve illustrates this point, in the movement from past to present to future, even while interweaving the three. As is typical for hymns in this opening section, it begins with the past reference of the sacrament:

27 HLS, 4:4.1–4, p. 5.
28 HLS, 4:4.5–8, p. 5.
29 That is the goal of the present study.
In the eucharistic feast, the church remembers the sufferings and death of Jesus. Wesley calls these events to mind not so much as past events, but as events which have great ongoing significance, applied sacramentally in the present. The memory of Jesus’s death, for Wesley, entails an understanding of not only the mere fact that Jesus died but also the meaning of this death, namely, the redemption of the human race. In the gifts of bread and wine, tokens of Christ’s love, the saving effects of this redemption are conveyed.

Thee Redeemer of Mankind,  
Gladly now we call to mind,  
Thankfully thy Grace approve,  
Take the Tokens of thy Love.³¹

So the faithful, recalling Christ’s redemptive work, acknowledge him at present as Savior, and receive the gifts which he entrusts to his church. In obedience to Christ’s command, they celebrate the Lord’s Supper, representing his death until the consummation of God’s saving purposes.

This for thy dear Sake we do,  
Here thy Bloody Passion show,  
Till Thou dost to Judgment come,  
Till thy Arms receive us home.³²

His passion sacramentally displayed in the eucharistic elements, Christ’s once-for-all sacrifice, offered to the Father in the Holy Spirit, is thus represented until he comes in judgment.³³ At that time, the need for sacraments will cease because the saints will be directly united with God through sight.

³⁰HLS, 12:1, p. 10.  
³¹HLS, 12:2, p. 10.  
³²HLS, 12:3, p. 10.  
³³The subject of sacrifice, which is also a central theme in the HLS, is worthy in itself of careful study. Geoffrey Wainwright offers this concise explanation of the teaching outlined in these hymns: “The all-sufficiency of the one sacrifice on Calvary is constantly affirmed, even while the Church’s rite ‘shows’ it to the Father as Christ himself now pleads it in heaven (hymns 116–127); by faith, our offering of praise and thanksgiving and our self-oblation are responsively ‘joined’ to Christ’s own sacrifice, who ‘bears’ us into the Father’s presence (hymns 128–157)” (Introduction, p. vii). For more on this subject, see Rattenbury, chapters five (“Priesthood and Sacrifice”), six (“Sacrifice and the Altar”), and seven (“Sacrifice of the Church”) in The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley (pp. 66–81, 82–101, and 102–120, respectively).
Then we walk in Means no more.
There their Sacred Use is o’er,
There we see Thee Face to Face,
Sav’d Eternally by Grace.\(^{34}\)

As Wesley shows in this hymn, with the movement from past (stanza 1) to present (stanzas 2 and 3) to future (stanza 4), attention to the past reference of the sacrament leads him quite naturally to address the present and future dimensions. To concentrate on the sense in which the Lord’s Supper is a memorial, as Wesley does in the opening section of this collection, is also to introduce and anticipate two other senses of the sacrament: that it is, first, a means of present grace and, second, a pledge of future glory.

### The Lord’s Supper as Present: A Means of Grace

Whereas the first section of the *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper* tends to emphasize the past reference of the sacrament, the second section shifts the focus to the present. Considering the Lord’s Supper “as it is a sign and means of grace,”\(^{35}\) this section conveys the Wesleys’ profound conviction that when they communicated they did not only remember Calvary, but also expected to encounter Christ in a special way.\(^{36}\) In these hymns, as elsewhere, the Wesleys are not terribly concerned about explaining the specific mode of Christ’s presence.\(^{37}\) In fact, they refuse to speculate on *how* the means transmit divine power.\(^{38}\) Yet they take it as a given *that* Christ is present here, and that somehow, in the mystery of grace, he

\(^{34}\) *HLS*, 12:4, p. 10.

\(^{35}\) Combining features of Brevint’s third and fourth headings (“Of the blessed Sacrament, as it stands for a sign of present Graces” and “Concerning the Communion, as it is not a Representation only, but a Means of Grace”), this is the title of section two of *HLS* (hymns 28–92).


\(^{37}\) They do, however, distance themselves from perceived Catholic teaching: “No Local Deity / We worship, Lord, in Thee” (63:2.1, p. 47). The phrase “real presence” appears twice in this collection of hymns (66:2.5, p. 48; 116:5.6, 99) as well as in Brevint (IV.5), and is often used as way of characterizing the Wesleys’ understanding of the eucharistic presence of Christ. For more on the teaching of these hymns in relation to the concept of real presence, see Rattenbury, pp. 45–48. The term “virtue,” while not quite as widely recognized in the secondary literature (as discussed later in the body of this paper, Stevick is one exception [pp. 10, 32–33, 99]), is used eleven times in these hymns (e.g., “The Virtue of thy Blood impart” [32:2.3, p. 25] and “The Virtue of this heavenly Food” [166:6.2, p. 139]). Found in Brevint as well (e.g., III.3), “virtue” expresses the present power of grace in a way which is reminiscent of Calvin, although the Wesleys might have implied a stronger meaning than Calvin would have intended. Presumably, the Wesleys find the term to be useful because it expresses the power of God which is conveyed in the sacrament, and that is a major concern of theirs, even if the precise mode of Christ’s presence is not. I am indebted to Prof. Ted Campbell for calling my attention to this term.

\(^{38}\) E.g., *HLS*, 57, p. 41; 59:2, p. 43.
makes himself accessible and feeds his people through this holy meal. In their
communion hymns, the Wesleys couch the present reference of the sacrament
particularly in terms of a dynamic encounter between Christ and the faithful, by
which the risen Lord imparts his grace to them and joins them to himself. So in
addition to being a memorial of the sufferings and death of Jesus, the Lord's
Supper is also a means of present grace,\(^{39}\) as the hymns in this section vigorously
express; and just as before, even with the stress on one temporal reference (in this
case, the present), Wesley often interweaves all three—past, present, and future—in
a way which suggests the richness of this sacrament as the intersection of all
modes of time.

The hymns reflect a firm belief that Christ presents himself to his disciples in
the Lord's Supper and conveys his grace to them. In obedience to Christ's "last
and kindest Word" on the night before his death, we thereby "come to meet our
Lord" in the appointed means:\(^{40}\)

The Way Thou hast Injoin'd
Thou wilt therein appear:
We come with Confidence to find
Thy special Presence here.\(^{41}\)

Again, while Wesley avoids speculation about the precise mode of Christ's pres-
ence, he affirms unequivocally that Christ is present, and uniquely so: it is his
presence that "makes the Feast."\(^{42}\) For Wesley, the sacrament truly is a feast, in
which Jesus "nourishes His own / With living Bread from Heaven."\(^{43}\)

With pure celestial Bliss
He doth our Spirits cheer,
His House of Banquetting is This,
And He hath brought us here:
He doth his Servants feed
With Manna from above,
His Banner over us is spread,
His everlasting Love.\(^{44}\)

The food sacramentally presented here is Christ's body and blood, constituting
the greatest possible gift, that of life divine:

\(^{39}\) Cf. John Wesley's identification of the Lord's Supper as one of the chief means of grace in his
sermon "The Means of Grace."

\(^{40}\) *HLS*, 81:1.2, 4, p. 69.

\(^{41}\) *HLS*, 81:1.5–8, p. 69.

\(^{42}\) *HLS*, 81:2.5, p. 69.

\(^{43}\) *HLS*, 60:2.2, p. 44.

\(^{44}\) *HLS*, 81:3, p. 70.
He bids us drink and eat
Imperishable Food,
He gives his Flesh to be our Meat,
And bids us drink his Blood:
Whate’er the Almighty Can
To pardon’d Sinners give,
The Fulness of our GOD made Man
We here with CHRIST receive.\(^45\)

By faith, communicants receive the very fulness of Christ, who makes himself available to sinners:

Sinner with Awe draw near,
And find thy Saviour here,
In his Ordinances still,
Touch his Sacramental Clothes,
Present in his Power to heal,
Virtue from his Body flows.\(^46\)

Wesley believed that Christ is indeed present in the Lord’s Supper, as he promised to be at his institution of it (Matthew 26:26). It is here that the he allows his “Sacramental Clothes” to be touched, and in the virtue flowing from his body all hemorrhaging is healed (cf. the story of the hemorrhaging woman in Mark 5:25–34). In this collection, Wesley uses the term “virtue” to describe the healing power of Christ which is conveyed in the sacrament. Based on the Latin \textit{virtus}, the term denotes strength, power, or excellence, and for Wesley—along with Brevint, who also uses it\(^47\)—it has a distinctly theological, and indeed christological, meaning. That is, it expresses what Stevick calls “the actuality, immediacy and potency” of Christ, whose presence and activity in this meal make possible the sacramental contact between human beings and God.\(^48\)

This contact is so direct that Wesley characterizes it as a matter of union. Christ instituted this sacrament so that his disciples could partake of his divine nature (cf. 2 Peter 1:4). 

Saviour, Thou didst the Mystery give
That I thy Nature might partake,
Thou bidst me outward signs receive,
One with Thyself my Soul to make,
My Body, Soul and Spirit to join
Inseparably one with Thine.\(^49\)

\(^{45}\) \textit{HLS}, 81:4, p. 70.
\(^{46}\) \textit{HLS}, 39:1, p. 29.
\(^{47}\) E.g., Brevint, II.5, IV.10.
\(^{49}\) \textit{HLS}, 54:3, p. 39.
In this holy mystery, given by Christ, the faithful are united with him in such a way that they share in his life and become one with him in body, soul, and spirit. While there are, as both Wesleys acknowledge, other means of grace besides the Eucharist, the eucharistic union with Christ is of a particular depth and intensity. It is a special union and, in that sense, a higher means of grace than any of the others:

The Prayer, the Fast, the Word conveys,
When mixed with Faith, thy Life to me,
In all the Channels of thy Grace,
I still have Fellowship with Thee,
But chiefly here my Soul is fed
With Fullness of Immortal Bread.\(^{50}\)

Of all the means of grace, it is in this one particularly that the faithful soul is maximally fed and receives as much of God as human nature allows.\(^{51}\) Through God's action, and specifically the influence of the Holy Spirit, God's life is infused "into the Bread," God's "Power into the Wine."\(^{52}\) The elements thus become conduits of God's grace, "Fit Channels to convey" the life-giving love of God.\(^{53}\)

The hymns in this second section—the largest of the collection\(^{54}\)—call special attention to the sacrament as a means of present grace, by which the faithful encounter Christ and receive nourishment for their souls. Even while focusing on the present, Wesley shows a lively awareness of the past and future references of the sacrament in this section as well. For instance, in hymn forty-two he appeals to all three modes of temporality in order to express once more the distinctiveness of this means of grace. An ascription of glory "to Him who freely spent / His Blood that we might live" leads to the sense in which the sacrament has a special place among all the means of grace:\(^{55}\)

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\(^{50}\) HLS, 54:4, p. 39.

\(^{51}\) Cf. HLS, 54:5, "Communion closer far I feel, / And deeper drink th' Atoning Blood, / The Joy is more unspeakable, / And yields me larger Draughts of GOD, / 'Till Nature faints beneath the Power, / And Faith filled up can hold no more," p. 173; 99:2, "Our Cup of Blessing from above / Delightfully runs o'er, / Till from these Bodies they remove / Our Souls can hold no more," p. 86; and 102:1.5-6, "Pledge of our Possession This, / This which Nature faints to bear," p. 88.

\(^{52}\) HLS, 72:1.3-4, p. 51.

\(^{53}\) HLS, 72:2.3, p. 51.

\(^{54}\) As Frank Baker observes, "[a]pproximately one-third of the whole collection (both in hymns and lines) is here focused on the devotional means of grace rather than on sacramental symbolism" (Baker, pp. 9-10). That the Wesleys would devote so much attention to this aspect of the Lord's Supper indicates a deep concern on their part for thinking about the sacrament as a means of grace—not at the expense of the past and future references, as argued above, but with the present reference of the sacrament often occupying a position of special importance even as it is integrated with themes representing the past and the future, such as memorial and pledge, respectively. Later it will be suggested that this balanced approach is essential for a truly Wesleyan eucharistic theology and, moreover, may hold promise for ecumenical dialogue.

\(^{55}\) HLS, 42:1.1-2, p. 31.
This is the richest Legacy
Thou hast on Man bestow'd,
Here chiefly, LORD, we feed on Thee,
And drink thy precious Blood.\textsuperscript{56}

It is in the Lord’s Supper, Wesley proceeds to say, that all the blessings of God are received, and “all thy Gifts are given,”\textsuperscript{57} including “Pardon, and Grace, and Heaven.”\textsuperscript{58} Wesley locates in the sacrament the life of true blessedness, now and unto the end.

Thus may we still in Thee be blest
'Till all from Earth remove,
And share with Thee the Marriage-feast,
And drink the Wine above.\textsuperscript{59}

For Wesley, the meal which God sets now before the church—the sacred offering in which Jesus Christ is both victim and priest—is the same meal to be shared by all the saints in glory.\textsuperscript{60} Thus, what is at present a means of grace is also a memorial of Christ’s passion and a foretaste of the feast in heaven.

Whereas in many hymns Wesley moves from one temporal dimension to another on a stanza-by-stanza basis, sometimes he interweaves past, present, and future more tightly, within the space of just a few lines. The integration of all three modes of temporality is exemplified concisely by hymn fifty-three, stanza two, again with special emphasis on the present:

\begin{quote}
o might the sacred Word
Set forth our dying LORD,
Point us to thy Sufferings past,
Present Grace and Strength impart,
Give our ravish’d Souls a Taste,
Pledge of Glory in our Heart.\textsuperscript{61}
\end{quote}

As Wesley’s appeal suggests, through God’s action—the work of “the sacred Word”—the Lord’s Supper encompasses past, present, and future. It points back to the sufferings of Jesus, conveys grace at present, and provides a foretaste of the heavenly banquet. To encounter Christ in the sacrament is to discern that this

\textsuperscript{56} HLS, 42:4, p. 31. On the special place given to the eucharist among all the means of grace, cf. Wesley’s reference to the Lord’s Supper as Christ’s “choicest Instrument” through which he gives “all his Blessings” (HLS, 42:1.3–4).
\textsuperscript{57} HLS, 42:5.2, p. 31.
\textsuperscript{58} HLS, 42:5.4, p. 31.
\textsuperscript{59} HLS, 42:6, p. 31.
\textsuperscript{60} On God setting this meal before the church, see Hymn 40: “Author of Life Divine, / Who hast a Table spread, / Furnished with Mystic Wine / And everlasting Bread” (HLS, 40:1.1–4, p. 30). On Jesus as both victim and priest, cf. 116, p. 98 and 117:2.6–12, p. 99.
\textsuperscript{61} HLS, 53:2, p. 38.
dying Lord," who once suffered, now sustains his hungry people with a "Pledge of Glory." With that last phrase, Wesley introduces a third perspective from which to view the sacrament.62

**The Lord’s Supper as Future: A Pledge of Heavenly Glory**

In *Eucharist and Eschatology*, Geoffrey Wainwright recognizes the eclipse of the eschatological aspect of the Eucharist, perhaps especially during the polemics of and following the Reformation, and claims: "It was not until the Wesleys’ *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper* (1745) that the Western church achieved again a rich appreciation of the eucharist as the sign of the future banquet of the heavenly kingdom."63 This striking assertion points to the prevalence of eschatological imagery in the Wesleys’ communion hymns. They use various terms in the *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper* to describe the future reference of the sacrament, including "token,"64 "title,"65 "type,"66 "earnest,"67 and above all, "pledge."68 As indicated most clearly in the hymns in section three, a third perspective from which the Wesleys view the sacrament is as a pledge of heavenly glory.69

The Eucharist is a pledge insofar as it anticipates the feast in heaven for which Christian hope longs. According to Wesley, the line between the Lord’s Supper and the Marriage Supper, the Lamb’s high feast, is a direct one, as secured by the future dimension of the eucharist.

To Heav’n the Mystic Banquet leads,
Let us to Heaven ascend,
And bear this Joy upon our Heads
Till it in Glory end:

Till all who truly join in This,
The Marriage-Supper share,
Enter into their Master’s Bliss
And feast forever there.70

Proleptically, the sacrament provides a foretaste of this feast and prepares all who partake of it here and now for that time when they will share it anew with Christ in glory (cf. Matthew 26:29):

62 HLS, 53:2, p. 38.
64 E.g., HLS, 111:3.1, p. 94.
65 E.g., HLS, 103:2.1, p. 89.
66 E.g., HLS, 107:1.5, p. 92.
68 E.g., HLS, 101:4.1, p. 87; 103:2.3, p. 89; 107:1.6, p. 92.
69 The title of the third section, adapted from Brevint, is “The Sacrament a Pledge of Heaven” (hymns 93–115).
70 HLS, 99:3–4, p. 86.
For all that Joy which now we taste
Our happy hallow'd Souls prepare,
O let us hold the Earnest fast,
This Pledge that we thy Heaven shall share,
Shall drink it New with Thee above
The Wine of thy Eternal Love.  

Something of the joy of that heavenly banquet is available already, through this “Title to Eternal Bliss,” in which Jesus “gives our Souls a Taste” and pours “Heaven into our Hearts.” Therefore, Wesley can emphatically declare that in the Lord’s Supper, “God and Christ and All is Ours!” Even as the consummation of God’s saving purposes lies ahead, there is a sense in which the future dimension of the sacrament has already broken into the present.

In identifying this sacrament as a pledge, Wesley discerns a kind of temporal and spatial pattern to the Lord’s Supper, a twofold movement with a sort of boomerang effect which will be eschatologically realized. That is, having come from Christ, this gift will eventually be recalled by him—returned to him, along with those who have enjoyed its benefits—when he reveals his glory. First, the pledge has been entrusted by Christ to his church, which makes it something of immense value, to be claimed, held fast, and used accordingly, until that time when sacraments shall cease:

His sacramental Pledge we take,
Nor will we let it go;
Till in the Clouds our Lord comes back
We thus his Death will show.  

Second, Wesley suggests that the time will come when this pledge, having served its purpose, will be taken back by Christ, so that what is now received in trust by the church will be recalled by its Giver: “And when thy Arms receive us home / Recall thy Pledge in Heaven.” At home with their Lord, those who belong to Christ will have no need for the pledge, for the promise of eternal feasting with him will by then be fulfilled. Wesley’s communion hymns reflect a deep trust that God will make good on this promise, and that in heaven the pledge will at last be restored.

71 HLS, 108:2, p. 92.
72 HLS, 103:2.1, 5, 6, p. 89.
73 HLS, 103:2, p. 89.
74 HLS, 100:3, p. 87.
75 Here Wesley echoes Brevint’s teaching that a pledge is “taken back” when it is no longer needed (v.2; http://anglicanhistory.org/england/brevint/sacrament05.html, accessed on October 27, 2007).
76 HLS, 100:5.3–4, p. 87.
77 On the down-up movement of this pledge, cf. HLS, 111:3 (p. 94): “This Token of thy Love / We thankfully receive, / And hence with Joy remove / With Thee in Heaven to live, / There Lord we shall thy Pledge restore, / And live to praise Thee evermore.” Wesley appears to take it as a given that with the restoring of the pledge comes the return of the faithful to God.
Memorial, Means, and Pledge

In these future-oriented hymns, Wesley incorporates past and present elements as well. Anticipating the heavenly banquet, of which the sacrament is a foretaste, he expresses once again the threefold temporal reference, this time with emphasis on the future dimension:

O what a Soul-transporting Feast
Doth this Communion yield!
Remembering here thy Passion past
We with thy Love are filled.

Sure Instrument of present Grace
Thy Sacrament we find,
Yet higher Blessings it displays,
And Raptures still behind. 78

As a pledge of heaven, the Eucharist provides a glimpse of what is to come. In that sense it is, in Wesley’s felicitous phrase, “a Soul-transporting Feast,” making tangible something of the glory of heaven as if to lift the faithful communicants there already. Through the remembrance of Christ’s passion, in obedience to his command, they are “filled” with God’s love and find the sacrament to be a “Sure Instrument of present Grace.” Even so, it exhibits still “higher Blessings”: this feast, through the power of God, raises those who partake as if on the wings of eagles (cf. Isaiah 40:31) and thus anticipates their everlasting communion with the Trinity.

It bears us now on Eagle’s Wings,
If Thou the Power impart,
And Thee our glorious Earnest brings
Into our Faithful Heart.

O let us still the Earnest feel,
Th’ unutterable Peace,
This Loving Spirit be the Seal,
Of our Eternal Bliss! 79

Here the threefold temporal reference is expressed in a decidedly forward-looking movement, beginning with the future, then looking back to the past, proceeding to the present, and finally concluding with the future.

Similarly, Hymn 95 interweaves past, present, and future, with particular emphasis on the latter. In this case, the movement is somewhat more chronological in nature. Stanzas one and two deal chiefly with the past and the present, and then in the third of four stanzas the future emphasis becomes clear. Wesley begins by recalling Christ’s passion, which he identifies as the source of the church’s happiness.

78 HLS, 94:1–2, p. 83.
79 HLS, 94:3–4, p. 83.
In JESUS we live, In JESUS we rest,
And thankful receive His dying Bequest;
The Cup of Salvation His Mercy bestows,
And all from his Passion Our Happiness flows.\(^{80}\)

In stanza two, the focus remains on the sacrament as a means of present grace, to be used as such until the appearance of Jesus.

With mystical Wine He comforts us here,
And gladly we join, Till JESUS appear,
With hearty Thanksgiving His Death to record;
The Living, the Living should Sing of their LORD.\(^{81}\)

Then, in the third stanza, Wesley describes the sacrament as a pledge, indicating the future reference, which is understood here to have a vital connection with the past and the present:

He hallow’d the Cup Which now we receive,
The Pledge of our Hope With JESUS to live,
(Where Sorrow and Sadness shall never be found)
With Glory and Gladness Eternally crown’d.\(^{82}\)

The cup now received by the church is the cup which Jesus blessed, and it is this same cup which represents, for Wesley, the Christian hope of ultimately feasting and drinking with Christ in glory. Appealing once more to Matthew 26:29, Wesley ends this hymn with a look ahead to the fulfillment of that hope:

The Fruit of the Vine (The Joy it implies)
Again we shall join To drink in the Skies,
Exult in his Favour, Our Triumph renew;
And I, saith the Saviour, Will drink it with YoU.\(^{83}\)

So even when he does not begin explicitly with eschatology, Wesley still finds a way to make that the focus in this section of the hymns. He shows here that an understanding of the past and present aspects of the eucharist can lead into a rich account of the sacrament’s future orientation, which then becomes the main concern.

Therefore, while in the third section of the *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper*, as its heading implies, the theological accent is clearly on “the sacrament as a pledge of heaven,” the past and present dimensions have an important place here as well. Indeed, they contribute to a robust appreciation of the eschatological character of the Eucharist. In describing the sacrament as a pledge of heavenly glory, Wesley also integrates themes related to the two other senses which he has already fea-

\(^{80}\) HLS, 95:1, p. 83.
\(^{81}\) HLS, 95:2, p. 83.
\(^{82}\) HLS, 95:3, p. 83.
\(^{83}\) HLS, 95:4, p. 83.
tured, namely, the sacrament (1) as it is a memorial of the sufferings and death of Christ and (2) as it is a means of present grace.

The way in which Wesley interweaves elements of the past, the present, and the future in this collection of hymns, even with a particular emphasis on one of the three, indicates something important about the relationship between Eucharist and time. Given the temporal breadth and depth which Wesley’s hymns reflect, there is a sense in which all three modes of time mysteriously converge in the sacrament, so that past, present, and future are understood fundamentally to cohere in this liturgical act. It is, in other words, a point of intersection for all modes of time. Viewing the Lord’s Supper from one perspective—say, the past—necessarily entails, as in these hymns, acknowledging the present and future dimensions as well. The Lord’s Supper is a memorial of the sufferings and death of Christ, and yet it is also a means of present grace, and a pledge of future glory. Hence, the meaning of the sacrament cannot be reduced to a single mode of temporality, but rather encompasses past, present, and future, which can all be knit together in creative ways as they are repeatedly in the *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper*.

**Balance and Convergence: Some Implications**

At the beginning of this study, the claim was made that the relationship between Eucharist and time as described in these hymns has important implications for developing a eucharistic theology which is both authentically Wesleyan and constructively ecumenical. Following the survey of the *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper*, it is now possible to identify and briefly discuss two such implications, which deal with balance and convergence, respectively. First, the idea of temporal balance is crucial to Wesley’s communion hymns. These hymns strike a healthy balance in their integration of past, present, and future perspectives. Even with special attention given to one of these perspectives, the other two also come regularly into play. That is a necessary qualification for achieving a holistic balance concerning the relationship between Eucharist and time, for there would be serious problems with elevating one temporal dimension at the expense of the other two. Too much emphasis on the past, for example, tends toward bare memorialism, which in its strict sense reduces the sacrament to an exercise in human memory and thus robs it of (or at best severely limits) its divinely-instituted power both as a means of grace in the present and as a pledge of future glory. Likewise, excessive focus on the present, if gone unchecked, could serve to trivialize the sufferings of Christ and to truncate the promise of future consummation. Finally, to exaggerate the sense in which the sacrament is a pledge of heaven is to run the risk of an otherworldly understanding of Christian faith and practice which may overlook not only the grace offered at present but also the cost of Christ’s sacrifice in the flesh and his demand that those who wish to follow him also take up the cross (e.g., Mark 8:34). The balanced approach taken by the Wesleys, however, avoids these pitfalls. It does so by integrating elements of the past, the present, and the future into a synthetic whole, so that the Lord’s Supper is understood to be at once a memorial, a
means, and a pledge, and never simply one of the three at the expense of the other two. Thus, essential to Wesleyan eucharistic theology is a balanced approach which maintains the properly threefold temporal reference of the sacrament.

Second, on the relationship between Eucharist and time, it is noteworthy to observe the convergence between the Wesleys and Thomas Aquinas. In both cases, this relationship is said to be characterized by a threefold temporal reference of the Eucharist to the past, the present, and the future. As explicated above, the Wesleys’ understanding makes much use of the concepts of memorial, means, and pledge. Aquinas, for his part, describes the sacrament as a *signum rememorativum*, a *signum demonstrativum*, and a *signum prognosticum*. Given this parallel, it is possible for Catholics and Methodists to address in depth this subject to which they may not have given much consideration before. The threefold temporal reference of the Eucharist has never been a disputed issue between these two groups, so it is not as though anything needs to be resolved concerning this matter. Yet for that precise reason, further attention to this point could prove ecumenically useful as a sort of counterweight to continuing differences. Instead of conducting the discussion in mostly ontological terms about Christ’s mode of presence, concerning which Catholics and Methodists do not at present totally agree, a greater emphasis on what is mutually affirmed may help to drive the discussion forward. Since the relationship between Eucharist and time is an area of common ground for Catholics and Methodists, perhaps there is something here on which they can build. A study of this issue could lead, for example, into the shared concern about the promotion of holiness and the nuanced ways in which Catholics and Methodists understand the sacrament to be a means of grace for holy living. Therefore, it may be that the sacrament would come to figure more prominently in devotional perspective than vis-à-vis questions of the specific mode of Christ’s presence—perhaps somewhat like in the *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper*. Of course, the purpose of this concluding suggestion is not in any way to denigrate ontology, but rather to affirm what is held in common, in this case particularly by Methodists and Catholics, and to work from there toward a eucharistic theology which is constructively ecumenical. Careful consideration of the relationship between Eucharist and time may be a good place to start, at the very least to develop this theme on the Methodist side (and in that way to respond to the call issued by the Seoul report for Methodists to devote additional attention to a theology of the Eucharist). Moreover, the complementary teaching of Aquinas and the Wesleys on this topic may serve to shed new light on other issues, possibly including the relationship between Eucharist and holiness in Christian life as well as the habitually divisive questions surrounding the mode of Christ’s eucharistic presence, for those issues could then be addressed from a shared perspective on the threefold temporal reference of the sacrament.

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84 *Summa Theologiae*, III q. 60 a. 3.

85 Once again, Baker’s observation proves instructive, as there is a thematic preeminence of “devotional means of grace rather than . . . sacramental symbolism” when it comes to the Wesleys’ understanding of the Eucharist as reflected in the *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper* (Baker, p. 10).
Reviews


The 300th birthday of Charles Wesley in 2007 was an occasion to focus on his inestimable contributions to Methodism and the wider Christian community. While his hymn texts are sung every Sunday in churches around the world, during this special year fresh attention was given in many congregations to voicing his hymn-poems. Furthermore, special events commemorated his birth and three major biographies of Charles appeared celebrating his life and ministry: Gary Best, Charles Wesley: A Biography (Epworth, 2006), Gareth Lloyd, Charles Wesley and the Struggle for Methodist Identity (Oxford, 2007), and John R. Tyson, Assist Me to Proclaim: The Life and Hymns of Charles Wesley (Eerdmans, 2007).

The book edited by Newport and Campbell is a major contribution to Charles Wesley studies. Strictly speaking, it is not a biography, although it is filled with insightful biographical information. It contains twenty-eight excellent essays by writers whose names are synonymous with careful and creative Wesley scholarship.

The purpose of the book is clearly stated—while Charles Wesley contributed to the rich treasury of the church’s hymnody, he was much more than the “Sweet Singer of Methodism.” Overshadowed by older brother John, at least in Methodist circles, he effectively occupied an important place as Methodist preacher, theologian, and organizer, as well as the movement’s poet laureate. Charles must be appreciated in this wider context.

The book’s essays are relatively brief, averaging approximately twenty pages each. Each addresses a different topic, although there are necessary interconnections among some. The essays place Wesley in his eighteenth-century English setting, recognize his debt to his Epworth upbringing, explore relationships with his brother, examine his role in early Methodism, analyze his views on Anglicanism, Roman Catholicism, and Calvinism, and assess his spirituality. Appropriate attention is given to the importance of his cherished marriage and family life. The concluding essay attempts to determine the relevance of Charles for contemporary theology and worship, a question with which many of us are engaged. Notable among the essays are treatments of Charles Wesley and John Fletcher, Wesley’s shorthand, and his hymns considered in the poetic tradition. Quotations of Wesley’s hymn-poems throughout richly illustrate the volume’s essays.

There are hints in almost every essay regarding opportunities for further research by those who wish to dig more deeply into the sizable and growing body of accessible primary and secondary Wesley literature. The recently published two-volume work, The Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Charles Wesley,
Gary Best gives three major reasons for publishing a biography of Charles Wesley at this time. First, it has been “a century and a half” since the last “comprehensive new biography” of Charles Wesley.\(^1\) Second, the 300th anniversary of Charles Wesley’s birth was a good time for “a fuller account of his contribution.”\(^2\) Finally, three of the most important founders of Methodism are John Wesley, George Whitefield, and Charles Wesley, and studies so far have undervalued Charles’s role.\(^3\) In the light of these comments, Best has chosen to tell the story of early Methodism and three of its main founders with Charles in the center. He has laid out the story chronologically. The overall account is well structured and written in a way that is both interesting and easy to follow.

For the most part Best accomplished one of his goals, to focus on Charles in the center, but there are instances when the stories shared about John Wesley or George Whitefield seem irrelevant to Charles’s role. One instance is the rehashing of John’s relationship with Sophey Hopkey. It is an interesting story, but it is about a relationship that climaxes after Charles had left Georgia.

Another strength of this volume is the way Best has used Charles’s hymns to illustrate or support his approach. For instance when defending the way Susanna disciplined her children, Best blended Susanna’s own description of discipline in a letter to John, dated July 24, 1732, two hymns by Charles which described par-
enting, and a reference to John’s treatise on education. Unfortunately, this section also highlights one of the weaknesses of the work. Best quoted Susanna’s instructions in the letter without even noting it was taken from a letter to John, and in the footnote he referenced the 1823 edition of Clarke’s *Memoirs of the Wesley Family*, when he could have quoted this letter from a much more recent work by Charles Wallace, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*. Wallace’s work includes the quotation and indicates that it was a from a letter to John and gives the context of this letter. This is a work with which Best was familiar because he quotes from it at other times, and provides the date and recipient of the letter in the footnote. It is this reliance on secondary works and the unevenness of citation that makes this work less useful for the scholar.

It is not only this unevenness that tarnishes the work; it is also the inaccuracies. Some may result from relying on older works and some may just be oversights or misunderstandings that have gone uncorrected. A couple of examples suffice. Best refers to Susanna reading the stories of the German missionaries to India, without giving any source. In fact, they were Danish missionaries. He also refers to James Murray as the boy whom Charles defended, the friend who would later become Lord Chief Justice. In fact, it was James Murray’s younger brother William Murray who attended Westminster with Charles and who would later become the Lord Chief Justice. James Murray could not be the boy Charles defended, as he was about seventeen years older than Charles.

What this book does well is repackage the old stories; therefore it is difficult to classify it as a “new” biography. It retells them well, but its unevenness and some misinformation make it useful only as a general introduction to Charles Wesley and definitely not as a scholarly study of his life.

Patrick A. Eby

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The tercentenary of Charles Wesley’s birth in 2007 provided the occasion for a number of authors to produce biographies of Charles, known best as the Methodist hymn writer *par excellence*. Gareth Lloyd’s valuable study, while...
scanning his whole lifetime, is not a biography, but looks more carefully at his role in the development of the Methodist movement.

Many authors have called Charles “the Church Methodist,” but Dr. Lloyd’s close examination of him as “the paradoxical Anglican” is a useful angle. As Methodist Collections Archivist in the John Rylands University Library of Manchester, he has had valuable access to the Wesleyan manuscripts there, including a large collection of Charles Wesley letters. His work demonstrates a familiarity with the primary materials in the collection, which he sets in a broader context of social and political developments of the eighteenth century.

The main point of the book is to show that the developing shape of Methodism in eighteenth-century Britain was the result of a compromise between the Wesley brothers. That is a useful point to make within an enterprise that frequently downplays or ignores the younger brother Charles’s role. The author does seem to exaggerate this role at times to improve Charles’s reputation, but in the revisionist historical enterprise, that might be necessary occasionally. However, to call John “Machiavellian” is probably a stretch (p. 56), and to claim that Charles encouraged lay preaching more than John is difficult to support (p. 77). The vocabulary regarding the Wesleys, especially John, tends at times toward the sensational side of pop psychology: “ruthless,” “shattered,” “acute depression,” “credulous,” “instability,” “emotional insecurities.”

A more important point, perhaps, is that the contextual material into which the primary research is set is frequently based on secondary materials that represent more popular writing rather than the best of recent careful scholarship. Granted, there has been a dearth of good material available on Charles, but the broader setting could be discerned from better studies than those by Frederick Gill, Mabel Brailsford, Maldwyn Edwards, Luke Tyerman, and Fred Maser. And to cite Wesley quotations to these secondary authors (e.g., p. 95) does not represent the best research methodology.

The point is well considered, however, that Charles should receive due consideration for his role in the shaping of Methodist identity, especially on the crucial matter of maintaining good relations with the Church of England. During the middle period of the Wesleys’ lives, Charles was especially influential in keeping his brother John from taking steps that might increase tensions with the Church and might even lead to separation from the Church. Charles’s influence was drastically diminished during the last three decades of his life, however, illustrated by the fact that the book covers about one-fourth of Charles’s life, during this later period, in about one-tenth of the text. At that point, even John recognized that Charles’s continued active involvement with the Methodists would have strengthened the movement. Charles had stopped coming to the annual conference of preachers long before 1785, when John wrote to him, “Perhaps if you had kept close to me, I might have done better. However, with or without help, I creep on.”
The exorbitant price of this book is not surprising, given the publisher. Hopefully that will not deter people from reading the book and benefiting from the insights of the author. This study of Charles is indeed an important addition to a growing body of significant literature on Charles that will help scholars re-evaluate his role in the shaping of Methodist identity.

Richard P. Heitzenrater
William Kellon Quick Professor of Church History and Wesley Studies
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Any expectation that Charles Wesley’s Journal is comparable to his brother John’s will be swiftly dispelled by even a cursory glance at these two volumes. Whereas John Wesley’s published Journal was arrived at by stages from his detailed, coded diary and aimed to defend or explain his work, that of Charles is more in the way of a manuscript “blog,” a personal memoir of his activities, not untypical of eighteenth-century practice. Although Charles occasionally threatened to publish, how it might have appeared is not straightforward to visualize.

Its publication now provides a primary source text mostly for historians and literary scholars—its appeal should be significantly wider than Wesley students or Methodists. As the editors state in the useful Introduction, the manuscript had a checkered history, and previous published editions are seriously unreliable. This has always been compounded by the difficulty of decoding and understanding the shorthand sections, (which are indicated in the text). The provision at last of a “complete accurate and accessible” edition (as the editors put it) is more than welcome.

Charles Wesley’s Journal spans less than twenty of the poet’s eighty years (1736–1751, 1756), although they were probably the most significant, including his brief time in America, his religious experience, early evangelical career, and marriage, up to his withdrawal from itinerant ministry. The publication of his “journal letters,” which include subsequent years (characterized by a rearguard action against separation from the Church of England) will follow in due course.

A key challenge of presenting such a text is determining the audience. The editors have assumed, it seems to me, a basic knowledge of the Wesleys and early Methodism. The lack of a biographical synopsis—or a bibliography—will not help the more general reader. Further challenges are whether to present the text in its raw originality, and how extensive explanatory notes should be. Here, the
text has been adjusted in terms of modernizing spelling, punctuation, and so on. This editorial policy is clearly set out in the Introduction, although this reviewer’s preference would have been to have the text in an uncompromised form with explanatory footnotes. I would also have welcomed more extensive and detailed notes. The editorial policy of the “Wesley works” series, to which these are, in effect, companion volumes has shaped these decisions. Is Charles doomed to dwell forever in his brother’s shadow?

The multiple indexes are useful, though not infallible—later references to “Susanna Wesley,” for instance, seem simply to catch the word “mother” in the text. However, such minor carpings should not detract from what is a huge achievement, and a significant landmark on the way towards comprehensive publication of reliable Charles Wesley sources, which has been a major objective of The Charles Wesley Society. On this S T Kimbrough, Jr., and Kenneth Newport have labored long and hard, as did the late Rev. Drs. Frank Baker and Oliver A. Beckerlegge, as well as others whose contribution is acknowledged.

The personality who emerges from these pages is in contrast to his brother, with whom he was so often at odds. Sometimes impetuous and volatile, an implacable foe but inordinately loving, often ill, full of contradictions but single minded. Society members need little reminder of this, but should buy, read, understand and disseminate these texts as we work towards a wider understanding of the significance of Charles Wesley.

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This volume is the enduring evidence of a scholarly, imaginative, and engaging exhibit mounted under the guidance of Carlton R. Young by the Bridwell Library, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University. It was on view at Perkins from February through April 2007, after which it traveled first to the Divinity School Library at Duke University and then to the United Methodist Archives at Drew University, where it closed in November 2007.
The preface by Page A. Thomas lists the individuals and institutions involved in this project. After noting the extensive collection developed at Bridwell over the last century upon which this impressive exhibition was built, it reports the festivities that surrounded the opening. These included a lecture by Nicholas Temperley and a performance by Larry Palmer of Charles Wesley, Jr.'s, "Sonata per il Cembalo in F minor," from an autographed manuscript that Bridwell had recently acquired.

The book, attractively designed by Jace Graf, includes twenty-seven illustrations drawn from the seventy-four catalogued items, all of which are described in detail. Not evident in the book are two elements of the exhibition: two keyboard instruments, a late-eighteenth-century fortepiano built in London and a harpsichord of a few years later from the Netherlands; and examples of tools used by printers of the period.

Presentation and publication both reached beyond Charles and John, to four generations of Wesleys: (1) Samuel, Sr., and Susanna; (2) John, Charles, and Sally; (3) Charles, Jr., and Samuel; and (4) Samuel Sebastian. Perhaps its greatest addition to the knowledge of most Wesley admirers is its considerable insight into the lives and musical ventures of Charles and Sally's sons, Charles and Samuel, both of whom were significant in London concert life. Their story reflects the complexity of their parents' attitudes toward the art, as well as toward their children. Young, whose narrative is generally confined to carefully-crafted historical reporting, offers this assessment of the brilliant but troubled younger son: "Samuel remains the most talented, sophisticated, multi-faceted, articulate and knowledgeable British musician of his time" (p. 38).

Extending from John Merbecke's *The Booke of Common Praier Noted* (1550) to a manuscript from S. S. Wesley (1873–74), the exhibition and catalog situate Methodist song and the musical lives of the Wesleys within the broad and variegated scene of English music, churchly and worldly. The Wesleys' involvement with this wider world is shown through their interchange with leading musicians, ranging from personal acquaintance with Handel to advocacy of the revival of Bach's music in the nineteenth century. Parallel to the experiences of members of the four generations, the viewer/reader is introduced to varieties of metrical psalmody, the Hanoverian court, religious societies such as the SPCK, public and private concerts, Covent Garden, Catholic chapels, Anglican cathedrals, and the Royal Academy of Music.

Young's interpretation is knowledgeable and articulate, interweaving primary sources, citations from other authorities in the field, and his own broad scholarship. All this is carefully documented in the catalog. To the expected rare hymnals, Young added texture from the amusing (a charming creamware piece, "The Vicar and Moses," shown in the catalog) and the technical (tools of the printer's trade). Drawings and portraits reveal not only the persons and places in the story, but also the changing circumstances in which succeeding generations lived.
Recorded examples brought to life the words and music on the pages. (I understand that these were available only in Dallas, which is unfortunate.)

Like the work of the Wesleys, the celebrative display was intellectually enriching and spiritually challenging: a feast for the eyes and ears, the mind and heart. We are fortunate that much of it is preserved in this catalog.

Paul A. Richardson
Professor of Music
Samford University


Martin E. Brose holds the Master of Sacred Music degree from Union School of Sacred Music in New York City, is a distinguished church musician in the United Methodist Church of Germany, and for a number of years was a school director in Berlin.

For many years he has devoted study to the life and works of Charles Wesley. Among his previously published works are: Charles Wesley (1707–1788): Tagebuch 1738 (1992), Zum Lob befreit: Charles Wesley und das Kirchenlied (1997), Charles Wesley Tagebuch 1736–1738 (2007). He has spearheaded in German-speaking countries a renewed interest in studies related to this poet-priest of the early Methodist movement.

The newest volume turns to the sermons of Charles Wesley. This is the first time that a collection of Charles’s sermons appears in the German language. The Foreword is by Bishop Walter Klaiber, a retired bishop of The United Methodist Church (Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche) in Germany, and excellent Wesley scholar.


Brose’s long engagement with the works of Charles Wesley affords him great familiarity with Wesley’s language and modes of expression. He is thus able to find excellent middle ground in achieving a German translation, which captures
the spirit and message of Wesley’s rhetoric and is appropriate to the period, while being friendly to the eyes and ears of contemporary German readers.

He has made the connection between Wesley’s language and biblical language very easy by providing extensive marginal notations of biblical references. These are most helpful for biblical citations and allusions in Wesley’s text, and they punctuate Charles’s intimate association with the Bible in his preaching. There are also interesting illustrations throughout the book: images of Wesley, his handwriting, preaching houses and other buildings, which help create the atmosphere of the eighteenth century.

The editor/author has availed himself of current scholarship, as his critical notes and a selected bibliography indicate. Brose concludes the volume with a helpful essay on “Charles Wesley, the Theologian and Preacher.”

How delightful that in addition to the twenty-two translations of Wesley hymns (some of them are new) that are included in the hymn book of The United Methodist Church in Germany, Gesangbuch der evangelisch-methodistischen Kirche published in 2002, now one has the opportunity to read some of Charles’s powerful evangelical sermons in an excellent edition.

S T Kimbrough, Jr.
Director of Publications
The Charles Wesley Society
Charles Wesley’s Tercentenary Celebration at the Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies

The Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies meets approximately every five years in Oxford, England, gathering a diverse group of pastors, scholars, and church leaders from around the globe. On August 14, 2007, The Charles Wesley Society joined with the Institute to focus on Charles Wesley, in honor of the 300th anniversary of his birth. Timothy S. A-Macquiban, then Principal at Sarum College, British Co-Chair of the Institute and Vice President of The Charles Wesley Society, was the plenary speaker for the day, engaging us wisely and delightfully on “‘Work on Earth and Rest in Heaven’: A Theology of Vocation in the Writings of Charles Wesley.” Many of the working groups throughout the Institute included papers either based on Charles Wesley’s work or referring to it, as listed below; though not all were presented on this day.

After the plenary session, the Society joined the working group on Eighteenth-century Methodist studies to hear Richard P. Heitzenrater speak and then start at Christ Church on a guided walk of “Charles Wesley’s Oxford.” Paul Chilcote, President of The Charles Wesley Society, moderated a discussion forum, with a distinguished panel of Gareth Lloyd, Connexional Archivist for the Methodist Church of Great Britain; Peter Forsaith, Co-ordinator of the Methodist Studies Unit at Oxford Brookes University and British Secretary of The Charles Wesley Society; and Timothy S. A-Macquiban.

The day ended with a musical celebration (the full program is included below), organized by S T Kimbrough, Jr., involving an Oxford Institute choir, soloists, instrumentalists, and congregation in singing the words of Charles Wesley in musical settings from 1746 to 2007. The prelude consisted of opening voluntaries by Samuel Wesley, Samuel Sebastian Wesley, and John Frederick Lampe played by Mary K. Jackson. The opening hymn, “Rejoice, the Lord is King” was sung to G. F. Handel’s magnificent tune, GOPSAL. Four texts from *Hymns on the Great Festivals* set by Lampe were sung by soloists, with the congregation joining on “Head of the church triumphant.” Four settings of Charles’s hymns from Europe included the energetic setting and paraphrase of “Depth of mercy, can there be” sung by its author/composer, Tomas Boström from Sweden. Three “Songs for Children,” solo settings based on *MS Nursery* 1770s, set by Mary K. Jackson, brought levity to the celebration.

The congregation then joined in settings from Brazil, Sweden (led by Boström), Russia, Trinidad and Tobago (*à la reggae*, led by composer George Mulrain), and Singapore. A haunting anthem setting of “Our earth we now lament to see” by Carlton R. Young involved the congregation in reading lines from Charles’s powerful anti-war text. Young conducted the Oxford Institute choir comprised of twenty-seven members of the Institute in that anthem and in the European premiere of the cantata, “The Good Samaritan: Through the Eyes
of the Victim,” set by Mary K. Jackson for tenor and baritone soloists, SATB choir, instruments, and organ. The texts for the cantata were part of the previously unpublished work of Charles Wesley, and demonstrate his style of citing the gospel narrative and responding deeply to it through poetry.

Many thanks to all who made this day possible, especially Timothy and Angela Macquiban, Paul W. Chilcote, Peter S. Forsaith, Carlton R. Young, and S T Kimbrough, Jr., and to the University of Pennsylvania for making two of its voice faculty, Richard Kennedy and Jennifer Trost, available to perform on the program.

Papers at the Oxford Institute Related to Charles Wesley


Chilcote, Paul W., “‘Claim Me, for Thy Service’: Charles Wesley’s Vision of Servant Vocation”

Chung-Kim, Esther, “The Lord’s Supper: Banquet for All”


Eby, Patrick, “Charles Wesley and the Lay Preachers: Reformation without Schism”

Heitzenrater, Richard, “The Brothers Wesley on Music and Poetry”

Kimbrough, S T, Jr., “Wesleyan Ecclesiology: Charles Wesley’s Understanding of the Nature of the Church”

Loyer, Kenneth, “Participating in the Saving Purposes of God: Theological Reflections on Charles Wesley’s Hymns of Intercession”

Tucker, Karen Westerfield, “‘Show Us Thy Salvation’: Charles Wesley and the Liturgical Year”

Wallace, Robin Knowles, “The Church of Christ in Every Age: Following ‘A Charge to Keep I Have,’ Wesleyan Hymnwriters on God’s Mission and our Vocation”

Warner, Laceye, “Spreading Scriptural Holiness: Theology and Practices of Early Methodism for the Contemporary Church”

Robin Knowles Wallace

*Professor of Worship and Music in the Taylor Chair*

*Methodist Theological School in Ohio*
A Celebration of the 300th Anniversary of the Birth of Charles Wesley

Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies
Wesley Memorial Methodist Church
Oxford, England
August 14, 2007
A Celebration of the 300th Anniversary of the Birth of Charles Wesley
Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies
Wesley Memorial Methodist Church

Opening Voluntaries

"Air" (Samuel Wesley, 1766–1837)
"Solomon’s Prayer" (Samuel Sebastian Wesley, 1810–1876)
"Gavotte" (Samuel Wesley)
"Angel’s Hymn" (Samuel Sebastian Wesley)
"Largo" (Samuel Wesley)
"Choral Song" (Samuel Wesley)
"Head of the Church Triumphant"
  (John Frederick Lampe, 1703–1751), arr. Carlton R. Young

Invocation M. Douglas Meeks

Opening hymn (sung by all)

"Rejoice, the Lord is King" (1746) GOPSAL, G. F. Handel (1752),
Hymns and Psalms, Nr. 343

Charles Wesley Hymn settings
from Hymns on the Great Festivals (1746) by John F. Lampe

"O love divine, how sweet thou art" (1746), tenor
"Hearts of stone, relent, relent" (1745), baritone
"Sinners, obey the Gospel-word" (1746), soprano
"Head of the church triumphant" (1745), soloists and congregation joins on 4th stanza,
Hymns and Psalms, Nr. 888

Charles Wesley Hymn settings from Europe

"Love divine, all loves excelling" (1746), baritone
  BLAENWERN by W. P. Rowlands (1860–1937),
  arr. by Mary K. Jackson

"Breathe in praise of your creator" (1762), soprano
  by August Rückert, arr. by Timothy E. Kimbrough
"O for a heart to praise my God" (1742), tenor
**RICHMOND** by T. Haweis (1792) and S. Webb (1808),
arr. by Mary K. Jackson

"Depth of mercy, can there be"
based on "Depth of mercy, can there be" (1745), paraphrase,
music, and solo: Tomas Boström

**Charles Wesley “Songs for Children”**
from **MS Nursery** (1770s), music by Mary K. Jackson

"Derdham Downs,” tenor

"On a Battle of Cats,” soprano

"To Dr. Boyce,” baritone

**Charles Wesley hymn settings from around the world** (sung by all)

"Come, thou long-expected Jesus” (1745),
music by Marcilio de Oliveira (Brazil)

"Well of all mercy, hear my prayer” (1741), music and para.,
based on “Father of mercy, hear my prayer,”
by Tomas Boström (Sweden)

“And can it be that I should gain” (1739),
music by Ludmila Garbuzova (Russia)

“Even now the Kingdom’s near” *(Unpublished Poetry [1990]),*
music by George Mulrain (Trinidad & Tobago)

“Come to the Supper” *(Unpublished Poetry [1990]),*
music by Patrick Matsikenyiri (Zimbabwe)

“Ye servants of God” (1744), music by Swee Hong Lim (Singapore)

**Anthem:** “Our earth we now lament to see” (1758),
music by Carlton R. Young

**Evening Prayers**

**Cantata:** “The Good Samaritan: Through the Eyes of the Victim”
*(Unpublished Poetry [1990]),* music by Mary K. Jackson

Note: The congregation joins in stanza 4 of the Wesley hymn, “Jesus, united by thy grace,” which concludes the cantata.

**Benediction**
Timothy S. A-Macquiban
Vocal Soloists
Richard Kennedy, Tenor
S T Kimbrough, Jr., Baritone
Jennifer Trost, Soprano

Vocal Soloists and Guitarists
Tomas Boström
George Mulrain

Instrumental Ensemble
Christopher Fletcher-Campbell, Timpani
Felicity Fletcher-Campbell, Cello
Mark Porter, Flute
Christopher Redgate, Oboe
Mary K. Jackson, Organist and Pianist

Narrator
Angela Macquiban

Conductor
Carlton R. Young

Oxford Institute Chorale 2007

Sopranos
Esther Chung-Kim
Mary Dickerson
Esther Handschin
Mary Ann Moman
Dana Sirkovska
Lynne Wall
Robin Knowles Wallace
Lisa Withrow

Altos
Sarah Lancaster
Angela Macquiban
Sarah Mount
Priscilla Pope-Levison
Claire Taylor
Karen Westerfield Tucker

Tenors
Paul Chilcote
Ron Dalton
Holger Eschmann
Timothy S. A-Macquiban
Steve McCormick
George Mulrain

Basses
Ted Campbell
Edgardo Colon-Emeric
Patrick Eby
Richard P. Heitzenrater
Ken Loyer
Neville Richardson
Mike Wilson
Program Notes

Charles Wesley (1707–1788) is unquestionably one of the most significant sacred poets in English-language history. He understood that the wedding of music, word, and rhythm provide a unique entry into the souls of human beings and a unique way to build and solidify community. Hence, his texts combine intellect and emotion, frequently using verbs such as “know,” “think,” and “feel.” They are a unique blending of head and heart and filled with passion. This is no doubt why his hymns have been translated into scores of languages and are sung today from the far reaches of Russian Siberia and Asia, to Africa, Europe, North and South America, the Caribbean region, and the Pacific islands.

Wesley’s texts have a central theme: love. Love is the sole purpose of human existence and in God’s Incarnation in Christ he sees the supreme pattern of how people should live: selflessly for others. This he finds exemplified in the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Christ for all humankind. This is how one is to live: embody self-giving love. Hence, Wesley’s message is timeless and is desperately needed in a world torn by violence and war.

This program brings together musical settings of Wesley’s hymns from the 16th to the 21st centuries. The distinguished composer George F. Handel (1685–1759) wrote three musical settings specifically for hymn texts of Charles Wesley. After the Opening Volunatries, the program continues with one of them, Gopsal, which survives in many hymnals today. It is followed by four John F. Lampe (1703–1751) melodies from Hymns on the Great Festivals (1746). Lampe, a composer and bassoonist, played in the Covent Garden orchestra in London under Handel as a conductor and became a part of the Methodist movement, hence his strong interest in the sacred poetry of Charles Wesley. On the occasion of Lampe’s death Charles Wesley wrote a moving poem about him. Lampe’s settings were realized and arranged by Carlton R. Young.

The first three musical settings in the section “Hymns Settings from Europe” have appeared in hymnals in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Blaenwern by W. P. Rowlands (1860–1937) is the familiar Welsh tune often associated with “Love divine all loves excelling.” The setting by August Rückert (1871–1952) appears in the 1969 hymnal of the Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche of Germany with a German translation of “Jesus, Lover of my soul.” The cento text of Wesley “Breathe in praise of your Creator” was put into the current constellation of stanzas by S T Kimbrough, Jr. The tune Richmond by Thomas Haweis (1792) and Samuel Webb, Jr. (1808), is used in many hymnals for “O for a heart to praise my God.” The setting and paraphrase for “Well of mercy, pure and
clear,” based on Wesley’s “Father of mercy, hear our prayer,” are by Tomas Boström, a United Methodist minister from Sweden, who has just completed a series of new Swedish translations of Charles Wesley hymns on the CD titled *o populum*.

The three “Songs for Children” are from a song cycle of five songs by Mary K. Jackson. The poems are from a small manuscript with the title “Nursery,” which includes poems Wesley wrote to entertain his children. They were not published, however, until the twentieth century. Mary K. Jackson has set each poem in an appropriate and eloquently playful manner. The complete song cycle appears on a new CD released just recently by VMS Records (Austria/Germany) recorded by S T Kimbrough, Jr., and distinguished pianist, Dalton Baldwin.

The group of “Charles Wesley hymn settings from around the world,” to be sung by the entire congregation, consists of new musical compositions for Wesley texts. As Methodism has spread around the world, indigenous composers have created the sounds, rhythms, and colors of their own musical language and cultures which best express for them appropriate ways to integrate the spirituality and theology of the Wesleys into the lives of their own people. They bring new dimensions of understanding and inspiration to both familiar and unfamiliar texts of Charles Wesley.

The anthem “Our earth we now lament to see” (1758) was composed by Carlton R. Young for Charles Wesley’s most powerful anti-war poem. It was originally written for the conference “Celebrating and Revisioning the Wesleyan Movements” at Candler School of Theology in 2003.


The poems tell the story from a unique perspective, namely, that of the man who is attacked and left for dead by the side of the road. Charles Wesley internalizes the experience of the biblical characters and thus their emotions and thoughts become his own. The poems have been slightly reconfigured in the setting of the cantata so that the sections in the third person form a chorus of observers who see the story unfolding before them, as told by the Evangelist. This is in keeping with Charles Wesley’s own style of citing the gospel narrative and responding to it with poetical interpretation.
Wesley's telling of the story remains timely, for he reminds us that victims of violence in every age deserve our care, love, and justice. Only in this way can violence be overcome.

Mary K. Jackson was commissioned in 1995 to compose *The Good Samaritan* cantata for the 110th anniversary of Wesley Methodist Church in Singapore, where the first performance took place at Victoria Concert Hall and subsequently at Wesley Methodist Church. It has been partially revised for this edition.

The songbook and double CD recording, *Charles Wesley at 300: A Poet with a Mission*, include many of the hymns sung on this program. The CD also includes the recording of the cantata, *The Good Samaritan*. You may order online at www.globalpraise.org.
On July 21, 2007, Dr. S T Kimbrough, Jr., was presented the Distinguished Service Award of the Commission on Archives and History of The United Methodist Church for leadership in Charles Wesley Studies. Dr. Paul Chilcote, president of The Charles Wesley Society, introduced and reviewed Dr. Kimbrough's contributions to Charles Wesley studies, and Dr. Robert Williams, General Secretary of the Commission, made the presentation. Kimbrough was invited by the Commission on this occasion to respond with a presentation to the joint meeting of the Commission and The Charles Wesley Society. Therefore, he presented a recital of Charles Wesley texts set to music by various composers, which he recorded for the Tercentenary year of Charles Wesley's birth for the VMS label of Zappel Music Company of Austria and Germany, which it released as a CD titled Charles Wesley: Sacred and Secular Songs / Geistliche und weltliche Lieder. The program presented by Kimbrough on July 21, 2007, is printed below.

"Music of the Heart"
Celebrating the 300th Anniversary of Charles Wesley's Birth

S T Kimbrough, Jr., baritone
Mary K. Jackson, pianist
The Sixteenth Annual Meeting of The Charles Wesley Society
The Sixth Historical Convocation of the United Methodist Church
Chevy Chase, Maryland
July 21, 2007

I
Questions and Affirmation
And can it be that I should gain . . . ? (1739)
SAGINA, Thomas Campbell (1825), arr. by Timothy E. Kimbrough
Where shall my wondering soul begin? (1739)
CAREY’S SURREY, Henry Carey (ca. 1687–1743), arr. by Timothy E. Kimbrough
What shall I do my God to love? (1749)
ST. PETER, Alexander R. Reinagle (1799–1877), arr. by Timothy E. Kimbrough
O for a heart to praise my God (1742)
RICHMOND, Thomas Haweis (1792/Samuel Webb, Jr., 1808),
arr. by Mary K. Jackson
O for a thousand tongues to sing (1740)
LYDIA, Thomas Phillips (1735–1807), arr. by Mary K. Jackson

127
II
Commitment and Discipleship

*Spirit of faith, come down* (1746)
ICH HALTE TREULICH STILL, J. S. Bach (Schemelli’s *Gesang-Buch*, 1736),
arr. by Mary K. Jackson

*Love divine, all loves excelling* (1747)
BLAENWERN, W. P. Rowlands (1860–1937), arr. by Mary K. Jackson

*O God, who know’st the things we need* (1767)
MARTYRDOM, attr. Hugh Wilson (1827), arr. by Mary K. Jackson

*Give me the faith* (1749)
MT. ZION, adapt. from I. J. Pleyel (before 1831/London 1877),
arr. by Mary K. Jackson

*Breathe in praise of your Creator* (1762)
August Rückert (1871–1952), arr. by Timothy E. Kimbrough

III
“Songs for Children”
texts by Charles Wesley; music by Mary K. Jackson

*Glee*

Another

*Derdham Downs*

*On a Battle of Cats*

*Dr. Boyce*

IV
The Quest for Holiness

“A Wesleyan Trilogy” (1984)
texts by Charles Wesley; music by Carlton R. Young

*Faith, Love, and Power*

*Faith, Hope, and Power*

*Holiness*

V
Come, let us with the Lord arise (1763)
MADRID, William Matthews (before 1796), arr. by Mary K. Jackson

Program Notes

Charles Wesley (1707–1788) is unquestionably one of the most significant sacred poets in English-language history. He and his brother, John, both priests of the Church of England, gave a completely new direction to hymn singing in the eighteenth century. During his lifetime he wrote over 9,000 sacred poems and hymns, many of which still survive in hymnbooks used today. Some of his best loved hymns are those written for the great festivals of the church year: “Come, thou long-expected Jesus” (Advent), “Hark! The herald angels sing” (Christmas), “Christ the Lord is risen today” (Easter).
While hymn singing was prohibited in the Church of England until 1821, Charles and John led a reform movement within the Church which emphasized praising God in song, sound preaching of the Word, the witness of the Spirit, faithfulness to the prayers and sacraments of the church, and service to the poor. Both went in 1735 to the Colony of Georgia in the New World as missionaries and became adamant opponents of slavery. John published the first hymnbook to be printed in America, A Collection of Psalms and Hymns (Charles-Town, 1737).

Charles Wesley understood that the wedding of music, word, and rhythm provides a unique entry into the souls of human beings and a unique way to build and solidify community. Hence, his texts combine intellect and emotion, frequently using verbs such as “know,” “think,” and “feel.” They are a unique blending of head and heart filled with passion. This is no doubt why his hymns have been translated into scores of languages and are sung today from the far reaches of Russian Siberia and Asia, to Africa, Europe, North and South America, the Caribbean region, and the Pacific islands.

Wesley’s texts have a central theme: love. Love is the sole purpose of human existence and in God’s Incarnation in Christ he sees the supreme pattern of how people should live: selflessly for others. This he sees exemplified in the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Christ for all humankind. This is how one is to live: embody self-giving love. Hence, Wesley’s message is timeless and is desperately needed in a world torn by violence and war.

I. Questions and Affirmation

The first three hymns raise some of the most serious and soul-searching questions of Christian life, commitment, and discipleship.

“And can it be” is set to the familiar tune SAGINA (which means “nourishment” in Latin) of Thomas Campbell. It first appeared in his book of tunes entitled Bouquet (1825). Wesley’s text asks some of the most thought-provoking questions of all followers of Christ.

“Where shall my wondering soul begin” is believed to be the hymn Charles Wesley wrote on May 23, 1738, reflecting on his conversion experience of May 21, just two days before. The tune CAREY’S SURREY was first written for solo voice and continuo and appeared in John Church’s Introduction to Psalmody, ca. 1723. John Wesley included the melody in two of his tune collections (1761 and 1780).

“What shall I do my God to love” is set to the tune, ST. PETER, by Alexander R. Reinagle (1799–1877), which first appeared in his Psalm Tunes for the Voice and Pianoforte published ca. 1830. In this hymn, published in Hymns and Sacred Poems (1749), Wesley responds to the question he is ever asking himself—What shall I do to give my life meaning as a follower of Christ?
The last two hymns in this group—"O for a heart to praise my God" and "O for a thousand tongues to sing"—are filled with some of Wesley's answers to the questions he has raised in the first three hymns of the group. "O for a heart to praise my God" is a powerful response to Psalm 51—a plea for a heart completely dedicated to God. The tune RICHMOND was composed by Haweis for Carmina Christi (1792) and edited by Samuel Webb, Jr., who reduced it by four measures in A Collection of Psalm-Tunes for Four Voices (1808).

II. Commitment and Discipleship

In "Spirit of faith, come down" Wesley pleads for the eyes of the Spirit to be the ones through which he always sees life and through which he finds its meaning. The tune, ICH HALTE TREULICH STILL (I remain ever faithful), is attributed to Johann Sebastian Bach and was first published in Georg Christian Schemelli's Musikalisches Gesang-Buch (1736) of which Bach was the editor.

"Love divine, all loves excelling," first published in Wesley's Redemption Hymns (1747), is one of his most loved hymns and eloquently expresses his confidence that the word "Love" best describes God's nature. The tune, BLAENWERN, was composed by W. P. Rowlands ca. 1904–1905 at the time of the Welsh revival and published in Henry Haydn Jones’s Cân a Moliant (1916) and other Welsh hymnals. It first appeared in print with "Love divine, all loves excelling" in the Salvation Army Tune Book Supplement (1953). The tune is named for a farm near Tufton, Dyfed, where Rowlands recovered from an illness during his childhood.

All of the stanzas, except the last, of "O God, who know'st the things we need" come from Wesley's Hymns for the Use of Families and on Various Occasions (1767). The last stanza was left unpublished at his death and first appeared in The Unpublished Poetry of Charles Wesley, vol. 2 (1990). This is one of Wesley's hymns about a family's full dependence on God for all its needs and for life and ministry with and among the poor. The tune MARTYRDOM, which has often had other names, was probably arranged in the eighteenth century from a Scottish traditional melody by Hugh Wilson, who printed it in leaflets for music classes in his village. It is one of the most celebrated of all psalm tunes.

No hymn of Wesley better expresses the mission of the church and commitment to Christian ministry than "Give me the faith . . . ," first published in Hymns and Sacred Poems (1749)—"to spend and to be spent for them / who have not yet my Savior known." That is how one tests whether or not one is in mission. The tune MT. ZION by I. J. Pleyel was apparently adapted from the andante movement of an instrumental quartet and appeared in Wesley's Hymns (1877).
“Breathe in praise of your Creator” is a new constellation of stanzas by S T Kimbrough, Jr., from Charles Wesley’s Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures (1762). Kimbrough has set the text to a tune of German composer, August Rückert, which was used in the German United Methodist Hymnal (1969) as a setting for the German translation of “Jesus, Lover of my soul” (“Jesus Heiland meiner Seele”).

III. The cycle “Songs for Children” illustrates a part of Wesley’s poetry, which few know about, namely his secular poetry. Among his unpublished poems, which first appeared in print in 1988, 1990, 1992, in the three-volume work The Unpublished Poetry of Charles Wesley, was a manuscript of poems with the title “Nursery.” These are poems he wrote to entertain his three surviving children (eight were born to Charles and his wife Sarah but only three lived past their first year), Samuel, Sarah, and Charles, Jr.

Charles and John Wesley were great horsemen, and Charles was concerned that his wife make certain, especially when he was away from home, that the boys would get their riding lessons. He was aware that his wife might have preferred that they spend their time practicing the keyboard. “Glee” and “Another” are cautions about excuses “Mamma” might give for the boys not having their riding lessons. “Derdham Downs” was a familiar meadow-like area in Bristol where the Wesleys lived, and from the Downs on a clear day one could see across the River Severn to Wales. Charles’s wife, Sarah, was from Wales. Here Charles combines a playful attitude toward his children and Sarah as he imagines riding Pegasus, the poetical beast, all the way over the Severn into Wales.

“On a Battle of Cats” is sheer entertainment for his children, a combination of poetical skill, imagination, playful inner rhyme, and familial intimacy.

“To Dr. Boyce” is a poem with a dual purpose. Dr. William Boyce was the author of a three-volume work on Cathedral music, which apparently Charles could not afford to purchase for his son Samuel, a promising young musician and composer. Charles hoped that Dr. Boyce might be persuaded to take Samuel into his Cathedral choir and to give him the collection of his three volumes. No doubt he also hoped that the light and frivolous nature of his lyrics would humor and persuade Dr. Boyce to respond affirmatively to both matters.

Mary K. Jackson has set each poem in an appropriate and eloquently playful manner. She underscores the gleam that is in the poet’s eye as he writes for his children. You can sense the galloping horse in “Derdham Downs,” which leaps over the Severn, and the scampering of the cats in “On a Battle of Cats.” She has set “To Dr. Boyce” in a pseudo Gilbert and Sullivan style, which is perfect for Wesley’s humor and desired goal.
IV. The Quest for Holiness: "A Wesleyan Trilogy" consists of three Wesley texts set to music by composer Carlton R. Young for baritone, Steven Kimbrough, for a performance at the combined conference of World Methodist History Society and the Order of Benedictines in Rome, Italy, in 1984. The composer has selected three texts of Wesley, which portray his marked sense of humility and his distinct suspicion of anyone who claims to have achieved perfection in this life. While a strong emphasis of the Wesleys was on holiness and perfection, Charles Wesley believed that the quest for perfection is a lifelong pilgrimage. Young first sets two texts, which emphasize Wesley's understanding that he must draw on strength beyond himself, i.e. a Wiser Will than his own, to be his teacher. He prays that his words will always be filled with faith, love, and power. Young moves from this lifelong posture of Wesley to a poem which mocks those who claim to be perfect. He eloquently cites the familiar tune WALY WALY first in a minor key emphasizing that pious words about perfection are nature's futile pride, and then in a major key he underscores Wesley's acknowledgment that Jesus is the "perfect good unknown" and his sole desire is to learn to love with all his heart.

V. "Come, let us with our Lord arise"—The program concludes with a great resurrection hymn of Charles Wesley published in Hymns for Children (1763). Each day we are to rise with Christ! Each day is a day of resurrection! It illustrates how well Wesley could sometimes write in the simplest of language for children but which adults could also sing with confidence. Stanza one is an eloquent compression of the main ideas of the Apostles' Creed. Of course, there are many biblical subtexts, if not citations, in line after line. The tune by William Matthews appeared with the name MADRID in Wesley's Hymns (1877).

Honorary Life Memberships

On July 22, 2007, at the annual meeting Honorary Life Memberships in The Charles Wesley Society were presented to S T Kimbrough, Jr., and Charles A. Green. Kimbrough was the Founding President of the Society and served two quadrennia as its president. He continues to serve as Director of Publications for the Society and editor of its journal, Proceedings of The Charles Wesley Society. Green for a number of years was the Society's treasurer and is the Assistant Editor of the journal.
Charles Wesley Tercentenary Events

Many events were held around the world to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the birth of Charles Wesley. The following list is in no sense exhaustive, but it provides a record of some of the significant ones organized by churches, conferences, institutions, and individuals. For an extensive list of events for the United Kingdom see the website www.methodistanniversaries2007.org.uk/charlesservice.htm.

Feb. 1–7
Bridwell Library, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, “Sacred Harmony: The Musical Wesley Family,” an exhibition Curated by Carlton R. Young, celebrating the contributions of church music by the Wesley family. (See below the dates of the exhibition showings at the Duke Divinity School Library and the United Methodist Archives at Drew University.)

1 Organ recital, Larry Palmer, including Charles Wesley, Jr.’s keyboard “Sonata in F Minor”; Nicholas Temperley, lecture “Music and Charity in 18th-Century England”

4 8 p.m., Charles Wesley: The Sweet Singer, a musical dramatic presentation by S T Kimbrough, Jr., at Perkins Chapel

5 4:45 p.m., Richard P. Hetizenrater, lecture “The Wesleys and Money”

7:30 p.m. “A Wesley Festival: An Evening of Hymns, Choral Music and Organ Works by the Wesley Family” in Perkins Chapel, led by Carlton R. Young and C. Michael Hawn.

Feb.–June
Hugh Price Hughes Lecture Series (5 monthly lectures):
Hinde Street Methodist Church, London

Feb. 15–19
8:00 p.m., 2007 Wesley Choral Festival, Avery Fisher Hall, New York, NY, Charles Wesley Tercentenary Festival Chorus and New Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra, conductors: Eph Ehly, James Ramsey, Tim Koch; New York premiere of choral works by Carlton R. Young (“Our Earth We Now Lament to See”) and Andrew Fowler (“Directors for Singing” [John Wesley])

Apr. 3–5
Charles Wesley Tercentenary Celebration Conference jointly organized by the Wesley Fellowship and The Flame Trust, Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire

Apr. 16
The Manchester Wesley Research Centre annual lecture, Kenneth G. C. Newport

Apr. 21
2 p.m., Lecture on Charles Wesley’s Music, Ashby Methodist Church, Scunthorpe

133
May 11–26  Maddy Prior and the Carnival Band, “Music for Tavern and Chapel” Concert national tour, performing a variety of Charles Wesley’s hymns

May 6    A service for Methodists in Berlin, Germany celebrating the Charles Wesley Tercentenary with hymn singing, organ works, and an exhibition, led by Martin E. Brose

May 9    “‘The Gift Unspeakable’ in Song,” a lecture by Paul W. Chilcote, Wesley Study Centre, St. John's College, Durham

May 19    “Wonder, Love and Praise”: A day of celebration and exploration of Charles Wesley’s unique contribution to the Church, Hinde Street Methodist Church, London

May 19–27 Festival week, John Wesley’s Chapel, the “New Room,” Bristol

May 20–25 “Charles Wesley: Theology and Poetry,” Study course, Sarum College, Salisbury

May 24–30 Charles Wesley celebrations at Epworth, including Wesley Day Rally, lecture, Flower Festival, United Songs of Praise, choir concerts, Street Market & Carnival and Summer Birthday Party

May 24    Wesley Day celebrations, London and opening of the Charles Wesley exhibition, Museum of Methodism, Wesley’s Chapel, City Road

May 24    Wesley Day lecture, Gary Best, Headmaster of Kingswood School, Lincoln College, Oxford.

May 26    A Celebration of Methodist Praise, The British Methodist Youth Choir and Brass Band, The Queen’s Theatre, Burslem, Stoke on Trent

May 27    Live BBC1 broadcast of the morning service from Wesley’s Chapel, London

June 15–18 “Sacred Harmony: The Musical Wesley Family,” an exhibition curated by Carlton R. Young, celebrating the contributions of church music by the Wesley family; The Divinity School Library, Duke University, Durham, NC

June 22–24 “A Charge to Keep: Charles Wesley at 300”: examination of Charles Wesley as evangelist, theologian, spiritual mentor, hymn writer, brother, husband, and father sponsored by The Divinity School, Duke University, Durham, NC; lecturers and leaders: Tomas Boström, Paul W. Chilcote, Amy Laura Hall, Richard P. Heitzenrater, Randy Maddox, Laceye Warner, Karen Westerfield Tucker

June 24    North American premiere of the cantata, The Good Samaritan (text: Charles Wesley, music: Mary K. Jackson) California/Nevada Annual Conference, Sacramento, CA
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 30</td>
<td>Wesley Historical Society annual lecture, Kenneth G. C. Newport</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 9–11</td>
<td>“Music, Cultural History and the Wesley,” conference, Bristol, UK</td>
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<td>July 18</td>
<td>The Hymn Society of North America, Ottawa, Canada, presentation of the musical drama Sweet Singer by S T Kimbrough, Jr. “Singing Charles Wesley at 300,” a festival of hymns celebrating the Tercentenary of the birth of Charles Wesley, Carlton R. Young (director), Robin Knowles Wallace (cantor), Chris Anderson (accompanist), Andrew Donaldson (guitarist); Presenters: James Abbington, C. Michael Hawn, S T Kimbrough, Jr.</td>
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<td>July 20–22</td>
<td>Annual Meeting of The Charles Wesley Society in conjunction with the Sixth Historical Convocation of the General Commission on Archives and History of The United Methodist Church in Chevy Chase, Maryland; lectures by Karen Westerfield Tucker, Thomas R. Albin, and Timothy S. A-Macquiban</td>
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<td>Aug. 1–5</td>
<td>European Methodist Festival held in Bratislava, Slovak Republic celebrating the 300th anniversary of Charles Wesley’s birth; presentation by Martin Brose of a copy of the first German translation of seven Charles Wesley sermons to Bishop Annemarie Wenner</td>
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<td>Aug. 5</td>
<td>2:30 p.m., Axholme Connexion Choir at Epworth Old Rectory (Picnic in the garden)</td>
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<td>Aug. 14</td>
<td>“Charles Wesley: To Serve the Present Age,” Special Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies Study Day program to celebrate the Tercentenary of Charles Wesley’s birth, Wesley Memorial Methodist Church, Oxford, UK. Lecture by Timothy S. A-Macquiban; special evening music celebration with musical settings of Wesley hymns from around the world and the European premiere of the cantata, The Good Samaritan (text: Charles Wesley, music: Mary K. Jackson)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 24–25</td>
<td>Presentation of the musical drama Sweet Singer by S T Kimbrough, Jr., Kampong Kapor Methodist Church, Singapore</td>
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<td>Aug. 26</td>
<td>Charles Wesley Hymn Festival, Kampong Kapor Methodist Church, Singapore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 11–13</td>
<td>“An Eighteenth-century Evangelical for Today: A Tercentenary Celebration of the life and ministry of Charles Wesley” at Hope Park, Liverpool Hope University, Liverpool</td>
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10 a.m. to 5 p.m., West Gallery Music Workshop and Concert, Wesley Memorial Church, Epworth

"Sacred Harmony: The Musical Wesley Family," an exhibition curated by Carlton R. Young, celebrating the contributions of church music by the Wesley family, Library of the United Methodist Archives, Drew University, Madison, NJ

Samford University, Birmingham, AL, presentation of the musical drama *Sweet Singer* by S T Kimbrough, Jr., and Charles Wesley hymn festival led by Paul Richardson

Charles Wesley Tercentenary Celebration, Epworth-by-the-Sea, GA; lecturers, Richard P. Heitzenrater, S T Kimbrough, Jr.; presentation of the musical drama *Sweet Singer* by S T Kimbrough, Jr.

Two television broadcasts by BBC of “Songs of Praise” dedicated to the Tercentenary of Charles Wesley’s birth

The Wesley Society, Virginia Annual Conference, Charles Wesley Tercentenary Celebration

Celebration of the Tercentenary of Charles Wesley’s birth, Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City, MO; lecture and presentation of the musical drama *Sweet Singer* by S T Kimbrough, Jr.

Charles Wesley Day, United Methodist Church, Budapest, Hungary, lecturer, S T Kimbrough, Jr.

Radio Berlin/Brandenburg, Germany: Interview with Martin E. Brose, “Charles Wesley, Methodist Hymn-writer”

6 p.m. Charles’s Birthday Concert, “Sing Wesley” led by Paul Leddington Wright of BBC “Songs of Praise,” Wesley Memorial Church

10 a.m. to 12 noon, 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Charles’s Birthday Party Open House at Epworth Old Rectory

Choral Evensong, York Minster

Charles Wesley’s 300th Birthday Carol Service, The New Room, John Wesley’s Chapel, Bristol

“Praising in Songs Divine: A Eucharist on the Tercentenary of the birth of Charles Wesley,” St. Marylebone Parish Church, London (a national celebration with the Archbishop of Canterbury as presiding minister and the President of the Methodist Conference as preacher)

6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., “Charles Wesley’s 300th Birthday Celebration,” Christ Episcopal (“Old North”) Church, Boston, MA