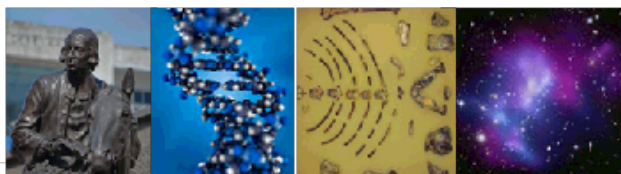


WesleyNexus

Science and Religion within the Wesleyan Tradition



Home

Back

Links

Contact Us

June 18, 2014

Dear WesleyNexus Colleague:

As we close out this year's spring activities and look back on the accomplishments of the past year, there are a number of high points of note. In the fall, WesleyNexus sponsored a seminar/discussion with Dr. Thomas Jay Oord, Professor of Theology at Northwestern Nazarene University, Craig A. Boyd, Assistant Professor of Philosophy at St. Louis University, and Mark A. Mann, Associate Professor of Theology at Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego last November. More recently, we promoted the "Jesus in the First and Twenty-First Centuries" program at Metropolitan United Methodist Church featuring Drew University professor Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre, Th.D. and Robert J. Miller, Ph.D. of Juniata College. The most ambitious project was the Evolution Weekend panel discussion at the United Methodist Church, Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference Mission Center with Dr. Steve Freeland of UMBC, Dr. Richard Restak of George Washington University and Dr. Ilia Delio of Georgetown University. Over sixty persons braved a late evening snowstorm to attend in person and nearly 80 sites from around the world logged in to view the program online. Since the program was professionally recorded, we are able to invite those who missed the original presentation to view it on Youtube [here](#). Not a bad year all-in-all.

Last month, the Wesley Nexus Board of Directors met to set priorities for the coming year. We agreed that we will sponsor another Evolution Weekend program, applying the lessons learned from last year's program and make next February's program even better. We will continue to take advantage of the rich network of scientific and theological professionals in the Washington, DC and Baltimore areas and sponsor events that are of the highest caliber and meet the interest of our participants. In addition, and in this we are stretching and taking a faith based risk, we are planning a Science and Religion Development Retreat where individual pastors, lay leaders and lay persons interested in promoting science and religion can come together and learn, share ideas and provide support. More details on the program can be found below.

WesleyNexus wishes you and yours a wonderful summer and thank you for your interest in support. As you unwind and spend time on vacation or just relaxing at home, we hope you will consider contributing to WesleyNexus. We are dependent on you, our participants, for donations to cover expenses for these activities. WesleyNexus is a certified 501(c)(3) charitable organization, so please consider supporting this initiative with a contribution either through the PayPal DONATE link below, or, by sending a check to:

WesleyNexus, Inc.
24500 Fossen Road
Damascus, MD 20872



We will use these funds to further our efforts to promote the dissemination of resource material promoting the dialogue between sound science and religion across the country.

God Bless,

Rick Barr, Secretary,
WesleyNexus, Board of Directors

Report from the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference

In 1784, the Methodist Church in America held its first annual conference of preachers in the city of Baltimore. After many stages of merger and reorganization, the 230th Session of the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church convened in Baltimore May 29-31, 2014, under the leadership of Bishop Marcus Matthews. One could say that perhaps 90 percent of the discussions and actions of this Conference were routine business. But on the evening of May 30, when Conference rules were suspended, all of the clergy and lay delegates joined in a two-and-a-half hour discernment session focused in small groups to discuss and vote on five resolutions having to do with human sexuality. The resolutions under consideration included one to suspend all trials of clergy who might be reported for blessing same sex unions; another proposed that this Annual Conference end all restrictions and discriminations against persons because of sexual orientation in all proceedings of the church; another called on the Church to remove all provisions and language in the Book of Discipline and Social Principles that discriminate against or restrict the participation of laity or clergy on the basis of their sexual identity. There were two others, including one to “agree to disagree” that recommended that we proceed together in our common life. All five resolutions passed by a clear majority. Although many present had concerns about the process and called for rulings on law and other judicial appeals are now in process, it was hailed by most of those present as a historic moment in the life of this Annual Conference.

WesleyNexus Retreat/Discussion, September 19-20, 2014

During the Conference, WesleyNexus convened a small group of interested persons over breakfast on Friday morning, and the persons present supported the idea that WesleyNexus proceed with a plan to convene an overnight 24-hour discussion on matters of science and religion at one of our retreat sites, the West River Conference Center in Eastern Maryland.



Interested persons from the Virginia Annual Conference will be invited and all interested persons in the Wesleyan tradition anywhere will be welcome. The focus will be practical: how to expand the network of persons in the Wesleyan tradition who want to engage in this dialogue, with the intention of convening continuing dialogue groups in local churches, addressing the issue of retaining young people in the church when they confront science methodologies in their education, and how better to support pastors who want to preach effectively with modern concepts and language, both as a means to educate laity and to expand tools for evangelism. More information will be forthcoming in the newsletters this summer as we define the objectives more exactly and refine the logistics. The dates: September 19-20, 2014.

Science, Religion and Evolving Faith in Minneapolis

Hennepin Church, a United Methodist Church in Minneapolis, is offering a seven-week program during the summer beginning on July 13 and going through August 24 at 11:00 AM. The program features over a dozen leading theologians and progressive thinkers. Of particular note are Philip Clayton, Dean of Claremont School of

Theology and Catherine Keller, professor of Constructive Theology at Drew University. Both Clayton and Keller are professors at theological schools with strong ties to Methodism. This program has been created by two United Methodist ministers, Jeff Procter-Murphy and David Felten for Livingthequestions.com LLC. While materials for group study are available on the website, there is also a DVD available for individual study which can be found [here](#). More information on the Hennepin Church program can be found [here](#). <http://hennepinchurch.org/2014/06/painting-stars/>



Faith Communities Across the United States

The Huffington Post had an interesting article depicting the buildings of arbitrarily selected faith communities across the United States. One structure was selected for each state and reflects the diversity of religion in this, the most religious country in the industrial world. I hope you enjoy this journey, though not specifically related to science and religion, that depict the variety of faiths in our country. You can find the article [here](#).



Boston Avenue Methodist Church
Tulsa, Oklahoma

