

Report of the President
to the 25th Annual Meeting
of the
Wesleyan Theological Society

The activity of the society this year has been significant, in keeping with the 25th year of our existence. Beyond the routine work of the executive committee, there was the excitement of preparing for this annual meeting in conjunction with Asbury College's centennial year celebrations and the Wesleyan/Holiness Study Project of Asbury Theological Seminary.

The society continues to grow in membership and in professional stature. Increasingly we are being viewed as a recognized voice in the Wesleyan area. The larger Christian world is coming to know us and our perspectives on the issues concerning the global church.

At the same time we maintain our identity as the theological commission of the Christian Holiness Association. The executive committee schedules its mid-year meeting to coincide with the annual convention of the CHA, and the president of the society conducts the WTS seminars in the CHA program.

I believe it reflects good health for the society when we both confess our historic theological ties with the holiness movement and seek to dialogue with the larger Wesleyan heritage and the global Christian church. In the last few years we have attracted guest presenters of papers, attendants at our annual meeting, and members of the society from a larger range of scholars and churchmen than we did at the outset. This is the result of an intentional effort. We must be just as intentional, I believe, about doing the same with more traditional holiness constituencies, including the more conservative scholars and ministers in the holiness communities. Both the more specific holiness focus and the larger Wesleyan agenda are germane to our intention to be an authentic Wesleyan professional society.

We have received two more invitations from schools who wish to host future meetings of the society, namely, Southern Nazarene University and United Theological Seminary. Our schedule of future meetings is as follows: 1990 - Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Missouri; 1991 - Western Evangelical Seminary, Portland, Oregon; 1992 - Ashland Theological Seminary, Ashland, Ohio; 1993 - Southern Nazarene University, Bethany, Oklahoma; and 1994 - United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio.

Shortly after the 1988 meeting, Dr. William M. Arnett suffered a stroke which restricted his duties as Secretary-Treasurer of the society for some weeks. His wife has also experienced serious physical problems in recent months. At his request we have instructed the Nominating Committee to find a replacement for the job of Secretary-Treasurer. We wish to salute this brother who was a charter member of the society and one of its most ardent supporters. He likely holds the record for recruitment of new members and sales of the society's journals. I publicly express our thanks to Dr. Arnett for his years of hard work in carrying out the duties of his office.

Dr. Arnett's health made the executive committee realize that we needed to take steps discussed for some time about finding clerical help for this office in the society. We entered into discussions with Burnis Bushong, Executive Director of CHA, about using the Secretary of CHA to process much of the routine work of the office. Rev. Shirley Hoffmann has devoted many hours to getting our membership records, financial accounts, and mailing lists into the computer. Using the mailing permit of CHA will greatly reduce our costs in sending journals and letters to the society membership. While overall our costs will be somewhat higher, we believe this arrangement with the CHA office will enhance our efficiency of operation and make the office of the Secretary-Treasurer more realistic.

The report of the editor will address the matter of delinquency in journal publication. The executive committee has been notified of the difficulties that have been encountered, and we do not wish to rehearse them here. It is not our intention to point fingers of blame. However, it is most urgent that we get back on schedule as soon as possible. We cannot be a credible society if we are not current with our journal, to say nothing about our disservice to our members and libraries who subscribe to the journal.

I thank you for the opportunity to serve the society as your president. It has been a positive experience in spite of the work load. I remain a loyal supporter of the society and its future.

Respectfully submitted by
Luke L. Keefer, Jr., President