

VISION AND PERSISTENCE: THE GENESIS OF THE FIRST WESLEY FOUNDATION

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During the 1820s, American Methodists were charged with the task of establishing schools and colleges across the country, and many such denominationally supported educational institutions were flourishing by the middle of the nineteenth century.¹ This same period was also characterized by a broader “Methodist ascendancy” and rapid denominational growth as a result of renewed holiness movements and the ongoing evangelization of the American frontier. But after the passage of Lincoln’s Morrill Act in 1862 and throughout the latter half of the 1800s, many new state (tax) funded land-grant universities also began springing up across the United States.² Although originally small institutions, student enrollments at these state schools were rapidly expanding by the turn of the century. However, most Methodist leaders in the first decade of the 1900s cared little about such institutions.³ Tax funded state institutions were not financially supported by churches and were legally barred from providing religious education. Therefore, it was not unusual for pastors to perceive them as “heathen” and wayward institutions which were unworthy of the Church’s time or money. Others feared that the siphoning of church funds to non-church entities would lead to the demise of established denominational colleges.⁴ One such institution in Illinois was Northwestern University which had been founded by a group of Methodists in 1851 to serve young men and women in the former Northwest Territory and which had opened its doors for students in 1855.⁵

Despite pervasive negative attitudes and denominational resistance, there

¹ Russell Ritchey, “For the Good of the World: Methodism’s Ministry to the Campus,” *Occasional Papers* 102 (April, 2010), 5.

² University of Illinois Board of Trustees, “Facts 2013-14: Illinois by the Numbers: History,” University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, <http://illinois.edu/about/overview/facts.html>. See also Rex Matthew’s *Timetables of History for Students of Methodism* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007), 105.

³ Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Department of Schools and Colleges, General Board of Christian Education, *The Wesley Foundation Manual* (Nashville: Methodist Episcopal Church, South, n.d.), 3.

⁴ James Baker spent two chapters of his book writing about the negative attitudes he (and Tobie) had to overcome in trying to gain support for their efforts to establish ministry for and with state university students. See “The Stimulus of a Hostile Environment,” and “A Godless University—or Was It?” in James Baker, *The First Wesley Foundation: An Adventure in Christian Education* (Nashville: Parthenon, 1960), 18-36.

⁵ Northwestern University, “Visual Timeline,” <http://www.northwestern.edu/about/history/visual-timeline.html>.

were a few visionaries who understood the great need and “opportunity” for Methodist presence at these state universities.⁶ One such person was the Rev. Willard Nathan Tobie whose Parks Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church was located near the University of Illinois-Urbana. The University of Illinois-Urbana, which opened for classes in 1868, was among the original 37 land-grant universities supported by the Morrill Act.⁷ By the early 1900s, the university enrollment had grown from about 400 students to over 2,200 students, around 300 of whom declared Methodist affiliation.⁸ Tobie feared the disengagement and potential loss of these vital young members and future church leaders. So, he sought to incorporate the university students into his local congregation.⁹ Rev. Tobie’s vision for a “university church,” which was supported by key church and university leaders, paved the way for the establishment of the first “Wesley Foundation” by his successor, Rev. James Chamberlain Baker.

According to Rev. Dr. Paul Burt, a later director and minister to the Wesley Foundation, the “real beginning” of the congregation that is today Wesley UMC occurred in 1891, and consisted of “a few people . . . gathered under a tree by a retired Methodist minister from Virginia, holding a prayer meeting or ‘class.’”¹⁰ In 1892 “the Second [Methodist] Church of Urbana” became “the first church of any denomination established near the University.”¹¹ A few years later the church was renamed Parks Chapel after

⁶ Clarence Shedd, in his 1938 book, *The Church Follows Its Students*, indicated that Abram Harris (President of the University of Maine 1893-1901) may have been among the first Methodists to anticipate “the closer relationship between the church and tax supported colleges and universities.” Shedd also notes that in 1903, Ohio Wesleyan President J. W. Bashford said it was “wrong to describe state institutions as ‘godless,’” and noted that “teachers . . . can do much to advance the moral and religious life of the young.” Clarence P. Shedd, *The Church Follows Its Students* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1938), 19-20.

⁷ University of Illinois Board of Trustees, “Facts 2013-14: Illinois by the numbers.”

⁸ W. G. Piersel, “The Wesley Foundation in Urbana: The Origin of an Idea,” *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* (1908-1984) 38.3 (September, 1945): 321; and “The Social Center Building of The Wesley Foundation at the University of Illinois,” Wesley Foundations University of Illinois Collection, Illinois Great Rivers Conference of The United Methodist Church, MacMurray College, Jacksonville, IL, [n.d.], 1.

⁹ It should be noted that in 1889 the Methodist Episcopal Church established the Epworth League as a local ministry program for youth ages 10-34. Although the Epworth League offered religious education and practical training for church members with the purpose “to get young Methodists involved in good works, and to train Christian soldiers for the ministry,” its ministry was in no way directed to the specific needs of college students, (New York Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, *The Epworth Herald*, December, 2009, <http://www.nyac.com/theepworthheralddec2009>). Illinois Annual Conference reports show that Trinity ME church maintained an active Epworth League program while also reaching out to students at the University. This seems to indicate that Tobie’s ministry to university students was intended as a supplement to, rather than a replacement of, Epworth League activities. Both the Epworth League (incorporated into the Methodist Youth Fellowship from 1939-2010) and Wesley Foundation movements continue to the present day.

¹⁰ “Homecoming Reunion Dinner,” Introductory Remarks, October 25, 1931, pg. 15 (Wesley Foundation, University of Illinois Collection, Archives, Illinois Great Rivers Conference of The United Methodist Church, MacMurray College, Jacksonville, IL).

¹¹ “Homecoming Reunion Dinner,” Introductory Remarks, 15. Similar statements were also made by James Baker in *The First Wesley Foundation*, 77.

Milton S. Parks, a prominent local real estate and home loan financier who donated the property near the far north end of campus for the church's use.

¹² At the time, Parks Chapel was a small, two-room wooden structure located next to the University of Illinois comprised of both an auditorium and Sunday school room and which held approximately 250 people.¹³ In 1900, the Rev. Willard Tobie was assigned as the congregation's pastor.¹⁴

Rev. Tobie, who himself had attended a state university, understood the needs of students and believed that the church had an obligation to tend to its members on the nearby University campus.¹⁵ He was concerned that leaving students at public schools without religious education and grounding in congregational life would be detrimental to our nation's well-being and to the future leadership of the Methodist church. As Wallace Stearns (fellow Methodist and University official) later recalled:

[Tobie] had formulated a plan, then still a dream, which included the cardinal features of the present foundation. 1) Instruction on subjects then outside the scope of the University 2) An opportunity to bring to the University leaders of the denomination that all might know what the denomination stands for 3) An opportunity for young Methodists to become better informed in the principles of their church 4) An added agency for the religious work of the University and 5) He even hinted at denominational co-operation.¹⁶

So Tobie began reaching out to the Methodist students at the University and incorporated them into his congregation. He also built strong friendships with several faculty members and campus leaders who were devout Methodists, among them Charles M. Moss and Thomas Burrill, both of whom soon rose to prominent and influential positions within the University.¹⁷

With the support and encouragement of these university leaders and his Presiding Elder W. H. Wilder, Rev. Tobie made a proposal to the 1902 Illinois Annual Conference to build a larger "university church" structure that could better accommodate the hundreds of students he served each week. Not only that, but he uniquely conceived and argued that such a church should be funded by *all* the Methodists of Illinois.¹⁸ Tobie's little congregation (primarily comprised of non-wage-earning students) was incapable of ever af-

¹² Baker, *The First Wesley Foundation*, 77. See also: Joseph Cunningham, ed., "Milton S. Parks," *History of Champaign County*, 1000-1 (Chicago: Munsell Publishing, 1905).

¹³ From comments made by Roy Wilson (one of Tobie's former parishioners) in "Homecoming Reunion Dinner," 19.

¹⁴ "Homecoming Reunion Dinner," 15.

¹⁵ Baker, *The First Wesley Foundation*, 9; and Piersel, "The Wesley Foundation in Urbana," 321.

¹⁶ Comments made by Wallace Stearns in a 1931 note titled "An Appreciation of a Pioneer," which was included in "Homecoming Reunion Dinner," 20.

¹⁷ Piersel, "The Wesley Foundation in Urbana," 321, 324.

¹⁸ Piersel, "The Wesley Foundation in Urbana," 324. These facts are corroborated by reports made by W. H. Wilder (Tobie's Presiding Elder) at the 1902 and 1903 Illinois Annual Conferences. See "Methodism's Opportunity" in the *Journal and Records of the 79th Session Illinois Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, October, 1902* (Springfield, IL: T. B. Wright, 1902), 37; and "Champaign District Presiding Elder's report" in *Journal and Records of the 80th Illinois Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, September, 1903* (Springfield, IL: T. B. Wright, 1903), 33-34.

fording such an endeavor, and he reasoned that, since students came to his church from across the state, it was the responsibility of Methodists from across the state of Illinois to send funds to help build such a “University church.” But “to think that that church congregation would undertake to build and dedicate a church plant for a University program was preposterous to many.”¹⁹

Tobie’s plan was formally approved in 1904 by the Illinois Annual Conference and funds from the Home Missions Board were committed towards the project, but the idea did not gain broad acceptance by the rest of the state’s Methodists and repeated requests for funding had to be made at ensuing annual conferences.²⁰ That same year, a letter was sent from Tobie’s students and supporters from across the state to the *Northwestern Christian Advocate* highlighting the fact that the university’s growing Methodist student population had reached almost 700, or about “thirty percent of the student body.” The letter states: “We are convinced that the spiritual interests of the students are suffering largely, because of the lack of convenient church facilities” and also notes the limited seating and lack of “attractiveness” of the current Parks Chapel building. This same letter indicates that “the congregation of this church and their friends are now engaged in an effort to build a church in harmony with the university buildings and in every way creditable to our great denomination. This will furnish a church home for hundreds of young people from all over the state.”²¹

The project finally gained momentum in 1905 when newly appointed University President Dr. Edmund J. James and his Secretary, Dr. Wallace Stearns, joined the church along with other prominent faculty and staff members. Their “tremendous influence at that time with the Methodists of the state” played a significant role in the building of a new church facility for the college students.²² On May 28, 1905, Rev. Tobie helped lay the cornerstone of the new building which would be named Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church on the far north edge of the University of Illinois campus. The building was completed debt-free and dedicated in November, 1906.²³

Just one year later in 1907, Rev. Tobie asked to be reassigned due to

¹⁹ Comments from Roy Wilson (one of Rev. Tobie’s former students), in “Homecoming Reunion Dinner,” 19.

²⁰ *Journal of the 81st Session of the Illinois Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, September 1904* (Springfield, IL: T. B. Wright, 1904), 66.

²¹ “An Appeal from the Methodist Students of the University of Illinois,” *The Northwestern Christian Advocate* 52 (July 27, 1904): 22. A 1904 ad in *The American Architect and Building News*, Vol. 85, which sought architectural bids for a new “stone and brick church” in Urbana, “cost not to exceed \$25,000” confirms this effort.

²² Comments from Roy Wilson, in “Homecoming Reunion Dinner,” 19. Dr. James’s presence was recorded by the Illinois Annual Conference minutes from the 1904, 1905, and 1906 annual conferences. Wallace Stearns confirmed President James as a “valuable ally and friend of Rev. Tobie” in a letter titled “An Appreciation of a Pioneer,” which was included in the items from “Homecoming Reunion Dinner,” 20.

²³ *Journal and Records of the 84th Session of the Illinois Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, September 1907* (Springfield, IL: T. B. Wright, 1907), 35. See also “New Trinity M. E. Church,” *Urbana Daily Courier* (May 23, 1905): 5.



Postcard picture of Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, Urbana, Illinois. Photographer and date unknown, postcard in personal possession of the author.

failing health. A young, recent graduate of Boston University, Rev. James Chamberlain Baker (the son of respected Illinois pastor Benjamin Webb Baker) was hand-picked by University President James and Bishop William Fraser McDowell to continue Tobie's work.²⁴ Baker later wrote that he had initially been reluctant to take on the task of university work, but bolstered by the strong support of his bishop and the University faculty, he soon embraced the idea wholeheartedly.²⁵ Rev. Baker picked up where Tobie left off and again called for statewide Methodist support. In 1908, he approached all four Illinois Annual Conferences requesting that they form a united "Commission on Work Among Methodist Students at the University of Illinois" to study the best way to provide ministry to the students at the University of Illinois-Urbana.²⁶ The commission was approved in 1909, and Baker's bishop, William Fraser McDowell, sent a letter of congratulations which expressed his agreement that the responsibility belonged to the "whole state" and his high hopes "that the commission may devise large and liberal things . . . for the sake of our common Church in Illinois."²⁷ The Commission commenced a four year "experiment" with programs out of the

²⁴ Baker, *The First Wesley Foundation*, 10, and "James Chamberlain Baker: Family Records of Methodist Bishops" (a personal biographical statement written by James Baker), F. D. Leete Collection on Methodist Bishops, Bridwell Library Special Collections, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University.

²⁵ Baker, *The First Wesley Foundation*, 10. It is likely that Bishop McDowell's strong support of a program geared to university students was the result of his previous tenure as Chancellor for the University of Denver. See "Letter from William McDowell, University of Denver Chancellor, to Bishop Cranstan August 31, 1898," F. D. Leete Collection on Methodist Bishops, Bridwell Library Special Collections, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University.

²⁶ Baker, *The First Wesley Foundation*, 12.

²⁷ Baker, *The First Wesley Foundation*, 12. Also, a letter dated January 5, 1910 to "Brother Baker" from William Fraser McDowell (in Baker's private possession), which is transcribed on page 13 of Baker's book.

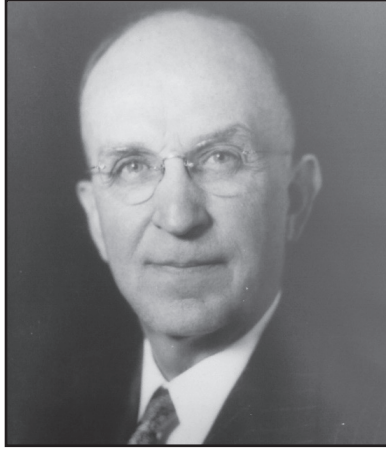


Photo of Bishop James Chamberlain Baker (1879-1969), Founder and Director of the first Wesley Foundation, photographer and date unknown.

Trinity ME Church.

While Rev. James Baker affirmed Tobie's vision that campus ministry must remain vitally connected to the local church, he also discerned the potential benefit of creating a separate "organization" for his outreach to university students. He perceived this might increase the likelihood that other congregations would more willingly support and contribute to his efforts. Thus, after four years of research, and on "instructions from the four Annual Conferences," the commission incorporated the first "Wesley Foundation" on October 13, 1913.²⁸ The organization was, of course, named after Methodism's founder, John Wesley, while the term "foundation" was chosen because they wanted to allow the campus ministry to evolve organically and "wished a name with no limiting restrictions."²⁹ Baker repeatedly stated his vision for a ministry "of, by, and for the student" that would have "the Church as its center." Students would therefore be in control of developing, organizing and planning educational, social, and service programs to specifically meet the unique needs of college students while remaining an active and integral part of a local congregation.³⁰ Rev. Baker became the Wesley Foundation's first Director, a job he held in addition to his responsibilities as pastor of the Trinity ME Church. This dual leadership role likely strengthened the integration of campus ministry with regular church life.

Rev. Baker channeled Tobie's original dream for a ministry that reached far beyond the walls of Trinity Church. The *Wesley Foundation Manual* articulates the broad mission of the Wesley Foundation as "a shrine of the

²⁸ Baker, *The First Wesley Foundation*, 14. Just one year earlier, the 1912 General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church finally gave its first official approval to student work at state schools, but failed to provide funding for this effort, instead stipulating that denominational funds could only be used for church schools (Baker, *The First Wesley Foundation*, 21).

²⁹ Baker, *The First Wesley Foundation*, 15.

³⁰ Baker, *The First Wesley Foundation*, 37, 41.

spirit, a home away from home, a Church laboratory developing Christian laymen, a school of religion, a bridge over international chasms, [and] a recruiting station” for the Church.³¹ To this end, Baker conducted worship services, “Sunday morning classes,” “Sunday evening young people’s meeting,” and “extensive social activities” at Trinity ME Church. The local Board of Education helped fund a parsonage, from which Baker and his wife also hosted numerous small group gatherings and meetings of international students from campus.³² In addition, Baker followed Tobie’s footsteps in maintaining strong relationships with University officials and faculty members, and he expanded the campus ministry to include Bible classes which could be taken by university students for college credit. He also helped establish numerous international Christian student organizations. These clubs not only provided foreign students a safe haven on campus, but also served to expand the horizons of American students.³³ Many later went on to missionary work in their home countries and around the world. Last but not least, Rev. Baker fostered strong co-operative relationships with other existing Christian organizations on campus, especially the Y.M.C.A, of which Baker himself remained an active member and leader for many years.³⁴

It is no surprise that with all of Baker’s extensive ministry programs, the Wesley Foundation and Trinity church quickly outgrew their space. Therefore, another significant contribution Rev. Baker made to the organization was his vision for a large, centrally located “Student Social Center” on the University of Illinois Urbana campus. The Student Social Center was envisioned as the first piece of an entire “Methodist community” (similar in concept to John Wesley’s Lincoln College at Oxford) that would be built in the heart of the campus and which was hoped would one day include new church, a library, a religious school, and two dormitories.³⁵ In 1915, with over 1200 Methodist students enrolled at the University, Baker returned to all four Illinois Conferences and requested funds for a student “Social Center Building” that would better meet their growing needs.³⁶ But there was continued concern over the use of denominational funds for programs at a public school, and the church was slow to respond. Minutes of the Central Illinois Conference of the MEC from 1918 state that “The Wesley Foundation [was still] in a state-wide campaign approved by all the conferences of the State,

³¹ Methodist Episcopal Church, South, *The Wesley Foundation Manual*, 5.

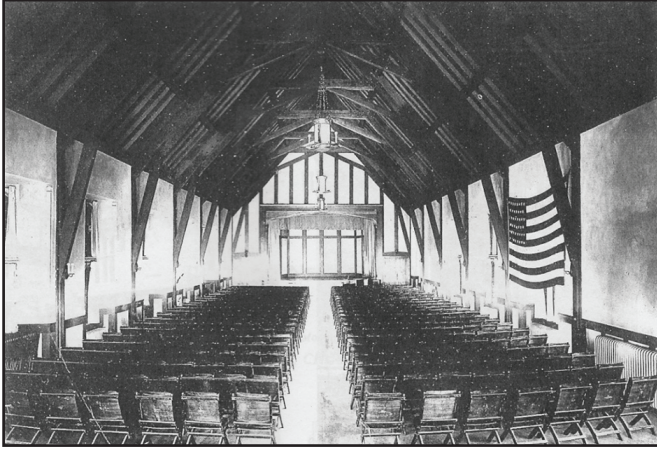
³² Baker, *The First Wesley Foundation*, 38.

³³ As if affirming this international dimension, Bishop McDowell commented in 1921 (just after WWI) that Wesley Foundation was the kind of institution that could help “to create that world where men will dwell as brothers and war will appear no more,” quoted in an article by Ralph Keeler, “A \$350,000 Investment in Student Life,” *The Christian Advocate* (February 24, 1921): 248.

³⁴ Baker, *The First Wesley Foundation*, 75-76.

³⁵ “The Social Center Building of the Wesley Foundation,” 2.

³⁶ *Minutes of the 60th Annual Session of the Central Illinois Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, September 1915* (Galesburg, IL: N. T. Allen, 1915), 74.



“Photo of the Great Hall, Wesley Foundation Student Social Center, University of Illinois, Urbana.” Photograph by Duncan, Champaign, Illinois.

for \$500,000.”³⁷ Fundraising was further complicated by America’s involvement in World War I and the church’s growing concern over how the war would affect its own financial situation. Fortunately, numerous prominent church and civic leaders wrote to the Wesley Foundation Board in support of continuing the fundraising campaign despite the war. These letters argued the necessity and importance of continuing the Wesley Foundation’s work to build character, strengthen morale, and prepare ethically sound leaders who could then capably serve America’s civic and religious institutions both during and after the war.³⁸

Architectural firm Holabird and Roche of Chicago were contracted to design the new building. They carefully researched the project ensuring that it would reflect “a bit of old Oxford” and the heritage of John Wesley while also serving as an inviting and welcoming space for students seven days a week.³⁹ On April 22, 1920, the cornerstone for the Wesley Foundation Student Center was placed by Bishops Nicholson and McDowell at the University of Illinois-Urbana.⁴⁰ The completed building, dedicated February 15, 1921, featured a student lounge complete with library, international student rooms, and classrooms. On the second floor, there was a large auditorium with a stage which could be used for social events, guest speakers and worship.⁴¹ Not only was Baker visionary in his work with the Wesley

³⁷ *Minutes of the 63rd Annual Session of the Central Illinois Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, September, 1918* (Galesburg, IL: N. T. Allen, 1918), 340.

³⁸ “Letters Supporting Wesley Foundation during the War” (various authors, December 1917-April 1918), Wesley Foundation, University of Illinois Collection, Archives, Illinois Great Rivers Conference of The United Methodist Church.

³⁹ “The Social Center Building of The Wesley Foundation,” [n.d.] and Rexford Newcomb “A Bit of Old Oxford at the University of Illinois,” reprinted from *The Western Architect* (Chicago: May, 1923).

⁴⁰ Baker, *The First Wesley Foundation*, 52.

⁴¹ “The Social Center Building of The Wesley Foundation.”

Foundation, but he was ahead of the University itself: upon the dedication of the student center, students commented that “we have long felt the need of a union building on the campus and the students will find pleasure that many of these needs are met in the Wesley Foundation Social Center building. It points the way towards a future Union center.”⁴² In its June, 1922, *Bulletin*, the Wesley Foundation reported that the new social center hosted over 66,000 attendees at over 1,000 “regularly scheduled meetings” in just the first year. This included 1,100 student members of Trinity Church, with 543 students involved with Wesley Foundation, and almost 1,500 college students “enrolled in some department” of the church’s work. International students representing 32 different countries also frequently used the Student Center space—the largest numbers of these were from China, Japan and the Philippines.⁴³

After 21 years of ministry at Trinity Church and 15 years as the first Wesley Foundation’s director, Rev. James Baker was elected Bishop with jurisdiction over Japan and Korea by the 1928 Methodist Episcopal Church General Conference in Kansas City.⁴⁴ Paul Burt was selected as the second Director of the Wesley Foundation and Pastor of Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, a position which he retained for the next 32 years.⁴⁵ In the 1940s, when the Trinity church building became structurally unusable the congregation began holding their worship services in the auditorium of the Wesley Foundation Student Social Center. During this time, the congregation came to identify itself so strongly with the Wesley Foundation that they eventually changed their name to Wesley Methodist Church. On May 12, 1958, the Wesley Foundation and Wesley Methodist Church (formerly Trinity) entered into a formal agreement to share the new Wesley Foundation sanctuary/church building which was near completion adjacent to the Wesley Student Center.⁴⁶ In 1981, “the Wesley Foundation [at Urbana] was designated a National Methodist Historic Site by the United Methodist Church.”⁴⁷

The influence of Tobie, Baker, and the Wesley Foundation has had tremendous impact on campus ministry at home and abroad. Interestingly, A. L. Sachar credited the organization with inspiring similar work among

⁴² Keeler, “A \$350,000 Investment in Student Life,” *The Christian Advocate* (Feb 24, 1921): 248.

⁴³ *Bulletin of the Wesley Foundation* 1.1 (June, 1922), Wesley Foundation, University of Illinois Collection, Archives, Illinois Great Rivers Conference of The United Methodist Church, MacMurray College, Jacksonville, IL.

⁴⁴ “A Golden Attainment in Church, World, and Home,” (Pamphlet commemorating the retirement of Rev. James C. Baker), 1952, F. D. Leete Collection on Methodist Bishops, Bridwell Library Special Collections, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University.

⁴⁵ Baker, *The First Wesley Foundation*, 65, 83; See also “A Golden Attainment in Church, World, and Home.”

⁴⁶ Baker, *The First Wesley Foundation*, 57

⁴⁷ “A Heritage to Uphold” (Booklet promoting “The 75th Diamond Jubilee” a \$400,000 fundraising campaign in celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of Wesley Foundation in 1988), Wesley Foundation, University of Illinois Collection, Archives, Illinois Great Rivers Conference of The United Methodist Church, MacMurray College, Jacksonville, IL.

Jewish students: in 1923, the first Hillel Foundation for Jewish Campus Life was started at the same University of Illinois-Urbana campus.⁴⁸ In March, 1931, a “conference of pastors, college professors, workers among students, and General Board staff members” met in Nashville to discuss and plan how the Methodist Church would more broadly shape its support of college students, and “with impressive unanimity it was decided that the Wesley Foundation should be developed in a given situation as an integral part of the local church” nationwide.⁴⁹ By 1960, there were 181 “fully acknowledged Wesley Foundations which met the standard set up by the order of the General Conference.”⁵⁰ After 100 years, the Wesley Foundation today remains not only a vital presence in its original home in Urbana, but has spread to campuses across the United States and around the world, where it continues to inspire and train young men and women for effective Christian leadership in the church and community.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Personal letter from A. L. Sachar, President of Hillel Foundation, to James Baker dated June 16, 1959, quoted by James Baker in *The First Wesley Foundation*, 30n; and Hillel International “History of Hillel,” <http://www.hillel.org/about/hillel-story>.

⁴⁹ Methodist Episcopal Church, South, *The Wesley Foundation Manual*, 7.

⁵⁰ Baker, *The First Wesley Foundation*, 89.

⁵¹ The first Wesley Foundation provided a model for what would later occur in my own home congregation: Methodists from across the state of Missouri contributed funds to build a “university church” next to the University of Missouri-Columbia campus in the early 1920s. The Missouri United Methodist Church now serves students from three nearby colleges and had an active Wesley Foundation for many years. As a young university student in the 1990s, I benefitted from the programs provided by our local Wesley Foundation, an experience that was foundational in my own call to ministry. Sadly, our bishop eliminated this program statewide shortly after I graduated, and the burden for campus ministry has been back on the local churches in university communities.