

The Class of 2010
Baccalaureate Service
Gray Chapel
Ohio Wesleyan University
Delaware, Ohio
May 8, 2010

“Ambition, Innovation, Change”

Christopher Meadows, Artist Statement:

My performing career on organ, and more importantly my career in music, has been transformed by Ohio Wesleyan. The formal training I have received here is nothing but the best, and I could not have asked for better faculty and students to work with me. Their guidance has shown me numerous paths I can take for my career, and they have also shown me how to be a better individual in the process. There are many thanks I could hand out, but the biggest thanks of all goes to Ohio Wesleyan itself, for showing me how to better myself, but most importantly, how to better others.

Creating a new arrangement for a hymn, as I did for the prelude, is something I really enjoy doing. It is fun to see what happens as it always leads to something new. I start with a general idea in my head of what I want to play and how it will sound, but as much as I rehearse it, the music always takes me in a different direction. I wanted to do something special for Baccalaureate that corresponds with the senior class theme, “Ambition, Innovation, Change”.

Jaime Fuentes, Artist Statement:

I'm not really sure how to describe this piece, in part because I'm not really sure how to describe my spiritual journey. At the least I would say it has been a bit turbulent. The song has lyrics like "you're gone, come back, stay gone" which I think tie in with the fine line I sometimes walk in my faith between a love that's so passionate and a doubt that's so pure. That's just it...it's confusing, there's tension, it's passionate, it's real.

A Special Note of Thanks:

Thank you to **Kyle Herman** and **Guanyi Yang** for their hard work, time, and talent in compiling the *Senior Class Slideshow*.

Thank you to **Nancy Tumeo** in the Card Office.

BACCALAUREATE SERVICE
Ohio Wesleyan University
The Class of 2010

—Ambition, Innovation, Change—

8:00 p.m.
Saturday, May 8, 2010

Gray Chapel
Ohio Wesleyan University

Prelude in Pictures

The Senior Class Slideshow

University Greeting

The Reverend Dr. Rock Jones
University President

President's Commission Awards

Ms. Terree Stevenson
Director of Multicultural Student Affairs
Dr. Paula White
Associate Professor for Education

Religious Life Awards

The Reverend Dr. Blake Michael
Chair, Religion Department
The Reverend Jon Powers
University Chaplain

Student Leader Greeting

Sam Chesser and Claire Everhart
Baccalaureate 2010 Co-Chairs

Organ Prelude

Chris Meadows, Organist

"A Mighty Fortress is Our God" adaption of *Ein' feste Burg*
Original by *Martin Luther*, arrangement by *Christopher Meadows*

Sacred Reflection

"Dear Mother"

Farooq Busari

Holy Scripture

Romans 12:1-12

Erica Wehner

Musical Reflection

"My Life is in Your Hands"
Kirk Franklin

Gospel Lyres

Danielle Beauford
Tonisha Lee
Carleton Levert
Patrice Murphy
Kaisha Oliver
Gene Sludge
Kim St. Louis
Simone Vessel

Sacred Reflection

"Channeling Peace"

Usman Javaid
David Gatz

Holy Scripture

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Claudia Foulk

Dance Reflection

“Endless Love”

Shan Song
Kaleigh Felisberto
Eunice Golloh
Oumie Joof
Dianne Macasu

Sacred Reflection

“The Power of Knowledge”

Rafaya Sufi
Usman Javaid

Sacred Reflection

“Rebirth at OWU”

Hasani Wheat

Musical Reflection

“Hallelujah”
Lenoard Cohen

Pitch Black
Ashley Antle
Becky Brinkman
Alex Clapp
Marie Krulewich
Betsy Lewis
Rachel Roman
Annie Root
Maggie Smith
Rachel Spetrino
Joanna Vansickle

Sacred Reflection

“Love Through Service”

Kate Kriegel
Kayla Mravec
Stacey Venzel

Sacred Reflection

"Thank you! Gracias! Merci! Jerreje!"

Oumie Joof

Musical Reflection

"Both Sides Now"
Judy Collins

Claire Everhart

Sacred Reflection

"Growth Comes with Perseverance"

Eunice Golloh

Holy Scripture

"Oh the Places You'll Go"
Dr. Seuss

Shannon Sedgwick

Dance Reflection

"Love Until We Bleed"

Jaime Fuentes

Sacred Reflection

"Amber Alert"

Amber Cole

Sacred Reflection

"Reflected Blessings"

Shade Fakunle

The Senior Class Comes Forward

Chris Meadows, Organist

“Alma Mater”

1. Ohio Wesleyan, Sweetly and strong
Rises our hymn of praise for thee alone;
Heaven re-echoes it, loud let it ring,
Ohio Wesleyan! Loyal hearts sing.

2. Ohio Wesleyan! Proud is thy crown.
Rarest of laurels e'er Vict'ry has known;
Noblest achievements have hallowed thy name,
Ohio Wesleyan! Deathless thy fame.

Benediction

Rev. Tim Chesser
Sam Chesser

Postlude

–Carillon”
Louis Vierne

Chris Meadows, Organist

THE BACCALAUREATE SEMINAR 2010

The word liturgy means ~~the~~ "the work of the people." Tonight's liturgy illustrates that original meaning. This service is a prayerful, earnest, and semester-long effort of the Class of 2010. Their goal has been consistent and conscientious: to bring together all the mysterious and kaleidoscopic ways in which God has touched their lives, informed their faith, and molded their character over the past four years at Ohio Wesleyan University. This service is by intent patterned and chaotic, personal and corporate, sorrowful and exultant. It is not intended to be comprehensive or complete, but rather allusive and illustrative. All the sights and sounds of this evening are a collage of praise to God, a tapestry of thanksgiving, if you will, to acknowledge that ~~we~~ we have not come this far by our own power."

Baccalaureate Committee: Sam Chesser and Claire Everhart (Co-Chairs), Patricia Troy (Secretary), Jessica Black (Graphics), Greg Lewis (Reception Chair), and Kayla Mravec (Chancel Chair).

Committee Members at Large: Farooq Busari, Betsy Chapman, and Stacey Venzel,

Ex-Officio: Kyle Herman and Christina Yost, Class of 2011; Maren Oehl, Class of 2012; Guanyi Yang, Kami Goldin and Gene Sludge, Class of 2013; Associate Chaplains Chad Johns, Kelly Adamson, and William Hayes; Assistant Chaplains Lisa Ho and Tim Gebhart; University Chaplain Jon Powers, and Administrative Assistant Sarah DuBois.

Honoring Our National Flags

The flags surrounding us in Gray Chapel this evening represent all the nations of our Class of 2010. In alphabetical order, these flags represent:

Burkina Faso
Brazil
Colombia
Ecuador
India
Indonesia
Japan
Kazakhstan
Latvia
Malaysia
Mongolia
Nepal
Nigeria
Pakistan
People's Republic of China
Philippines
Russia
Singapore
Sri Lanka
Taiwan
United States of America
Venezuela
Vietnam

Special thanks to Darrell Albon, Tonda Lazofson, and Geri Spurlock of the International Student Services Office for providing the flags for us tonight.

Gray Chapel and the Rexford Keller Memorial Organ

Gray Chapel has long been Ohio Wesleyan's major chapel, concert hall, lecture hall, and place of gathering for the campus community. For over a century, some of the world's leading performers and preachers, speakers and scholars, have held forth in this sacred space. Among the more recent: the world renowned gospel choir Lady Smith Black Mombaza of South Africa, Sweet Honey in the Rock, and the Oomoto (Shinto) World Prayer Service for Peace. The chapel is named in honor of Brother David F. Gray, President of the Board of Trustees in the 1880's. In 1888, Acting President and Professor McCabe made a plea for a chapel to be built somewhere between University and Monnett Halls. Brother David F. Gray pledged \$10,000 toward such a building. When University Hall was built, the construction of the chapel was named in Brother Gray's honor.

The glorious Rexford Keller Memorial Organ, installed in 1980, was designed for Gray Chapel and was constructed by Johannes Klais Orgelbau of Bonn, Germany, one of the world's most prestigious organ builders. This splendid instrument is one of only eight built for America by the Klais firm. (The organ at Asbury United Methodist in Delaware, Ohio, is the most recent.) It has mechanical linkage to the valves that admit air to pipes. This permits the musician infinite control over the shadings of the music.

The organ, in a case of European white oak, contains 4,522 pipes arranged in 82 ranks and ranging from more than 20 feet in length to one-quarter of an inch. The pipes are composed of special alloys of tin, or of mahogany, pear wood or redwood. The pipe shades, which are both decorative and functional, are covered with 22-carat gold leaf.

The Klais instrument is the third organ to be housed in Gray Chapel since the chapel was constructed in 1893. It is one of the largest and finest modern mechanical action pipe organs to be found in an educational institution in the United States.

We are grateful to those who came before us for these dedicated resources which make this chapel and organ available to us for the worship of God. It is a solemn blessing, in the midst of an academic institution, to have such glorious facilities in which to praise the source of all knowledge and truth.

**President's Commission on Racial and Cultural Diversity
2010 Student Award**

Shade Fakunle

Throughout her entire four years as a student at Ohio Wesleyan University, Shade Fakunle has used every opportunity she encountered to build bridges in the OWU community between disparate constituencies of culture, race, ethnicity, class, socio-economic strata, religion, gender, and nationality. Shade has tirelessly worked to help create a campus culture of deep understanding and trust between people who do not naturally “fit” together. In short, Shade has helped create a conversation among varied groups on this campus who historically have held each other in suspicious, if not hostile, contempt. Shade has offered herself as a vulnerable but trustworthy mediator in the midst of such stark disparities. In the midst of this crucible, and with Gandhi-like grit and grace, Shade has exhibited a leadership, a vision, and a maturity far beyond her actual years of age.

Shade is the epitome of what we desire of an OWU student. She has been active and engaged in every aspect of Ohio Wesleyan University life. She has served as President of both SUBA and Sisters United. Shade has lived in the International House, is a founding member of the Student Development Committee, served as a liaison for the Alliance for Black Student Leadership, is a Peer Mentor for OMSA, served as a reporter and editor of *The Transcript*, is an intern for the OWU Office of Communications, a member of the OWU academic Journalism Department Board, and numerous other student organizations as well as the spearhead of countless campus wide programs and events over the course of her time at Ohio Wesleyan.

**President's Commission on Racial and Cultural Diversity
2010 Faculty/Staff Award**

Dr. Eric Johnson

Dr. Eric Johnson serves as the gentle and brilliant Assistant Director of Counseling Services, in which he provides a substantive role of providing extensive and profound mental health care for a wide swath of our students at OWU, from learning disabilities to severe psychic disorders, from normative stresses and strains of being a college students in today's culture and climate, to walking students through the traumas of family divorce, death, and economic displacement. Eric also works closely with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and questioning (LGBTIQ) students in his role as advisor for the LGBTIQ Resource Center, a role he has held for nearly ten years. In that time he has routinely given his time, energy, and compassion to ensure that all LGBTIQ students feel safe and respected within the community.

Eric has worked tirelessly with students, staff, and faculty of Ohio Wesleyan University to form the University LGBTIQ Advisory committee, which is working to ensure that LGBTIQ students feel heard on the OWU campus. The development of this board has involved a multi-year commitment, and Eric has been a primary leader in making sure that this process moves forward. Within a related capacity, Eric serves on the OWU President's Commission on Racial and Cultural Diversity, where he provides a substantive role in providing professional insight into the creation of University-wide awareness of, commitment to, and implementation of institutional policies and procedures that include appropriate care and support for all University students.

**President's Commission on Racial and Cultural Diversity
2010 Organization Award**

Black Men of the Future

Ohio Wesleyan University's Black Men of the Future is committed to providing the OWU community with a strong, positive image of black men. Such a positive influence had permeated the campus of OWU this past year, because OWU's Black Men of the Future has had such a positive community outreach, positive campus programming, positive educational programs, and positive motivational initiatives. Membership in OWU BMF is extended to any male students of Ohio Wesleyan University regardless of race, creed, ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability, provided that there is a sincere interest in the positive uplifting of black males socially, culturally, academically and politically.

Within the past decade, and especially with the past year, OWU's Black Men of the Future have contributed to the OWU campus, the City of Delaware, and the Greater Columbus communities in ways that have been profound. These are but a small illustrative list of their contributions: OWU BMF has collected substantive amounts of food for Delaware families; volunteered in profound and substantive ways at a Columbus homeless shelter; initiated a mentor program with high school males from the OWU Upward Bound program, who themselves will soon be going on to college careers under the inspiration of our OWU Black Men of the Future.

Perhaps most of all, our OWU Black Men of the Future, even as they proudly and boldly stand on the shoulders of great black men who have stood at OWU before them, these young men also stand shoulder to shoulder with each other, proudly proclaiming the power and possibility of their own story and their own vision.

UNIVERSITY TRUSTEE RELIGIOUS LIFE AWARDS

Each of the Trustee Religious Life Awards honors an individual who exemplifies a faithful witness to the ethical, spiritual, and missional values of Ohio Wesleyan University, as delineated in the University's Charter of 1842 and the University's current Statement of Aims, as demonstrated in leadership both on campus and in the community, including church or other faith community affiliation.

These institutional honors, presented each year at the Baccalaureate Service, are cited by the John Templeton Foundation as one of the primary reasons for honoring Ohio Wesleyan University for its "Spiritual Growth program" in *The Templeton Guide: Colleges That Encourage Character Development – A Resource for Parents, Students, and Educators* (1999). The John Templeton Foundation declares such programs vital for college life.

"Students searching for meaning, connectedness, and significance present both a challenge and an opportunity for colleges and universities. Programs that foster spiritual growth provide a means to develop a vision of moral integrity that coheres and connects belief to behavior. Exemplary programs (such as Ohio Wesleyan's) affirm the integral role that spirituality and religion often play in shaping character."

This distinction has been reaffirmed by way of the Lilly Endowment, Inc. which has awarded University Chaplaincy at Ohio Wesleyan a \$2 million grant to support the further development of these programs. Such distinction is further affirmed by the Ohio Wesleyan Board of Trustee capital campaign for The Lilly

**The Bliss and Mildred Wiant Award for Leadership in
Interfaith and Intercultural Relations**

Kim Davis

Kim's involvement in both community service and campus organizations knows no cultural or religious boundaries. She is literally "everywhere" working with "everyone". From helping to lead VIVA, to her work with the homeless, to organizing long overdue recognition for our devoted buildings and grounds staff, Kim sees no color or creed, only brothers and sisters in need of a home, a hug, or a simple "thank you".

Throughout her four years as a student, Kim has exemplified the best attributes of leadership and service, both on campus and in the community. When Kim arrived on campus, she came to us from Malaysia where she and her family had lived for ten years. Since then, her family has moved to Scotland, which has certainly contributed to her global nomad perspective. Kim's service story is equally diversified. She has been active on campus as a Residential Advisor; a sophomore participant in the Leadership Across Boundaries program; a member of the OWU President's Commission on Race and Cultural Diversity; the campus coordinator for two Delaware Crop Walks; and one of the key organizers for the student response to the earthquake in Haiti.

Off campus, Kim has been affiliated with the Lance Armstrong Foundation and interned for a semester in Texas with that organization. Perhaps most profound though, has been Kim's work with the community's newest non-profit organization, Family Promise of Delaware County. Kim's ground-breaking work has literally laid the foundation for our 2010 VISTA host site application. Clearly, her efforts to address the issues of poverty and homelessness in Delaware will have lasting impact for years to come.

The Chaplain James Leslie Award for Leadership in Peace and Justice

Mery Kanashiro

Mery Kanashiro is a gentle giant. Behind her diminutive smile and soft spoken grace is a Gandhi-esque grit. She simply is not afraid to stand up for anything she believes to be right! When the whole campus community was faced earlier this semester with the highly publicized threat of picketing from a nationally known hate group, Mery helped spearhead a powerful response – “Love Day on the Jay,” which brought our campus community together like few other events ever have. This highly successful community-building event was only one of many illustrations of Mery as a natural leader with a gift for organization and collaboration. She is creative, energetic, and a tireless worker.

Not only does Mery care deeply about her OWU community, she also cares deeply about people throughout the world who are recipients of injustice and abuse. Mery has been integral to the Peace and Justice House, Amnesty International, and Progress OWU. She was also an organizer of the "Not for Sale" campaign on campus to raise awareness about human trafficking and a member of the OWU Faith and Justice group. Beyond deep care for humanity, Mery also cares deeply about all of creation. Through the Coalition for Christian Outreach (CCO) Leadership, Discipleship in the Wilderness (LDW) summer program, the Outdoor Ministry Team, and as the student leader for the Service and Mountaineering for spring break wilderness trek in Ecuador, Mery has sought to honor all of God's creation.

Love your neighbor. Resist injustice and oppression. Care for the world. These are the legacies Mery leaves the OWU community.

The Bishop Gerald Ensley Award for leadership in Christian Mission

Kaleigh Felisberto

Have you seen the bright colors? Have you experienced the bubbling, bursting, dare we say, explosive joy—not a naïve contentment, or a superficial happiness, but rather a deep joy, welling from the fountain of the Holy Spirit. These are the obvious gifts that Kaleigh Felisberto has brought to the Christian community at OWU.

Since visiting OWU as a perspective, Kaleigh sought out opportunities for Christian fellowship and involvement. Once arriving on campus fall of her freshman year she became actively involved with Young Life, Kappa Phi, Spring Break Mission Week, and Chapel. She has served for over two years as a representative on the Christian Student Leadership Council. Her Christian mission extends beyond campus with her time volunteering as a spiritual mentor to high school students with Young Life and as a board member for Global Village. Kaleigh has also attended the Jubilee conference all four years at OWU.

What really stands out about Kaleigh's Christian faith is her passion and enthusiasm for God, life, and humanity. Whether giving up all chocolate besides fair-trade chocolate, or spending one on one time with a local high school student at the Mean Bean, to serving as a reflection leader on a Spring Break Mission team, to her academic studies, Kaleigh understands that her Christian faith impacts every action and aspect of her life.

**The Cheryl McGinniss Award
For Roman Catholic Leadership**

Kate Kriegel and Kayla Mravec

Kate Kriegel

What makes Kate Kriegel especially distinct is that at first blush one might not identify her as a prominent leader, but it is her quiet leadership style that is so remarkable, surprising, and impressive. A very quiet and introspective individual by nature, Kate has never been one to seek recognition for her efforts. She is often content to simply find intrinsic rewards and personal satisfaction in the lives she touches through service and leadership. She is often the one behind the scenes, encouraging others to shine as she leads by a humble example.

Kate embodies the integrity and values of a strong leader by living and breathing the Catholic faith. She has been an active member of the Newman Catholic community and she served in the role of co-president from spring 2008 to spring 2010. She has also shown tremendous leadership to the Spring Break mission program, particularly for those teams rooted in Catholic faith traditions. Out of these experiences emerged her deep passion for Catholic service and social justice. In addition, Kate has been a member of the St. John Neumann youth group core team, providing leadership and role modeling to local youth and eagerly sharing her love of Jesus Christ through her involvement there.

Kate's selflessness and humility are refreshing reminders that OWU student leaders need not be outwardly persuasive or powerful; rather, Kate's ability to be an influential leader in the Catholic community comes from her pervasive positive attitude, commitment to serving others, and her deep abiding love for Christ.

Kayla Mravec

Stillness, dedication, perseverance—such are the foundations upon which the faith of Kayla Mravec is built. From the beginning of her tenure here at OWU, Kayla has been active in her Catholic faith. She has served on several mission teams, as both a participant and a leader. She has been active in the Newman Catholic community and sought out ways to grow in faith. Kayla also played an active role in the visioning process to create a comprehensive vision for the future of Catholic Campus Ministry at Ohio Wesleyan University. She served on the Catholic Campus Ministry Leadership Institute team, whose task it was to build the spiritual component of the program. Not one to sit back and watch, Kayla was one of the first students to enroll the newly formed Catholic Leadership Development Program at OWU, CALLED, where she committed to growing in Catholic faith through intellectual study of the faith, spiritual practice, vocational discernment, and faith-based leadership.

Kayla continually seeks out ways to be a faithful servant leader within the Catholic community and within the broader OWU faith community. She is a member of the Interfaith House and is eager to explore ecumenical and interfaith dialogue. The enthusiasm and joy that springs from her faith are evident in everything she does. Kayla's quietly joyful and unassuming leadership stands as a humble inspiration to her peers.

The Taban Blake Servant Leadership Award

Shade Fakunle

Throughout her entire four years as a student at Ohio Wesleyan University, Shade Fakunle has used every opportunity she encountered to build bridges in the OWU community between disparate constituencies of culture, race, ethnicity, class, socio-economic strata, religion, gender, and nationality. Shade has tirelessly worked to help create a campus culture of deep understanding and trust between people who do not naturally “fit” together. In short, Shade has helped create a conversation among varied groups on this campus who historically have held each other in suspicious, if not hostile, contempt. Shade has offered herself as a vulnerable but trustworthy mediator in the midst of such stark disparities. In the midst of this crucible, and with Gandhi-like grit and grace, Shade has exhibited a leadership, a vision, and a maturity far beyond her actual years of age.

Shade is the epitome of what we desire of an OWU student. She has been active and engaged in every aspect of Ohio Wesleyan University life. She has served as President of both SUBA and Sisters United. Shade has lived in the International House, is a founding member of the Student Development Committee, served as a liaison for the Alliance for Black Student Leadership, is a Peer Mentor for OMSA, served as a reporter and editor of *The Transcript*, is an intern for the OWU Office of Communications, a member of the OWU academic Journalism Department Board, and numerous other student organizations as well as the spearhead of countless campus wide programs and events over the course of her time at Ohio Wesleyan.

The Arthur S. Flemming Award for Leadership in the Civic Arts

Lara Kobelt

Lara Kobelt is a quiet, humble, selfless spirit who never promotes herself or seeks the limelight. Yet she is an excellent scholar and a highly influential activist. Lara is the one student who has arguably made the most impact on the environmental well-being of our OWU community – not just for the moment, but for years, perhaps even generations, to come. Indeed, Lara has been the “Voice of Green” at Ohio Wesleyan. Her strong, persistent leadership has markedly raised the level of awareness about environmental issues within the OWU community.

Lara has served on the WCSA Environmental Committee and on OWU’s Sustainability Task Force, providing crucial student input to this university-wide committee. She is a member of the Environment and Wildlife Club, and she has been the main organizer of the Campus Bike Initiative. She also assisted Professor Stone-Mediatore organize a presentation by an animal rights activist this semester in conjunction with the Environment and Wildlife Club.

Lara’s service has extended beyond her activist work concerning the environment. As a member of Amnesty International at OWU, Lara helped to organize a viewing of a documentary film about the Iraq war, and she helped to host a local veteran who spoke after the film. She also was a member of the Senior Class Advisory Council, which helps to plan senior class events.

In coming years, as OWU continues to move toward environmental sustainability, we will be able to look back on Lara’s leadership and say, “That is when we turned to corner and began to make a real difference.” Lara, we thank you, and so does Mother Earth.

**The Robert and Bette Meyer Award for faithful witness
to the ethical, spiritual and missional values of Ohio Wesleyan University
as delineated in the University's Charter and Statement of Aims**

Don Sherman

Many may not know him by name, but Don Sherman is a vital part of this campus community. Don is the person shoveling the snow off the sidewalks at 6 a.m. so students can easily get to class, setting up the Benes room hours before an event starts, cleaning the windows until they sparkle, and the list goes on. Don performs his job with a smile on his face and consistently goes above and beyond. At lunchtime, he stands in the Atrium, ready to clean up a spill or change the overflowing garbage. He is known to stop by the offices in HWCC and pick up the recycling—even though he isn't required to do this—usually saying, "I figured I might as well bring yours down too, since I'm going down there anyway." It is this humble and meek manner that makes Don who he is.

As a member of the Delaware Christian Church Don is a faithful servant of his spiritual community, and he is also a dedicated member of his greater community in Cardington, Ohio. Well beyond his daily duties at OWU, Don is known well in his community as one who can always be counted on to help a neighbor in need, to mow a neighbor's yard, to help with a neighbor's planting or harvest, to lend a hand in whatever way is needed. Don's humble, hard-working spirit is an inspiration to us all.

We cannot imagine what it would be like to be an OWU community without the likes of Don in our midst, as a constant reminder of humble hard-work representing the most basic of Ohio Wesleyan's historic dictums – learning and service are inseparable.

**The Bishop Francis Enmer Kearns Award for faithful witness
to the ethical, spiritual and missional values of Ohio Wesleyan University
as delineated in the University's Charter and Statement of Aims**

Dr. Karen Poremski

Dr. Karen Poremski exemplifies the historic educational core value of Ohio Wesleyan – providing a quality of scholarship, leadership and service that has enriched both Church (faith community) and society. Her publications include a vital resource on conflict resolution, *Roads to Reconciliation: Conflict and Dialogue in the Twenty-First Century*, for which she was co-editor with Amy Benson Brown. This book celebrates the work of such world leaders as Bishop Desmond Tutu and Jimmy Carter. It provides many different perspectives and contexts – international political conflict, inter-racial and inter-faith struggles.

Karen has been a faithful adviser for the mission program, in particular the Lakota Nation team to South Dakota, has served as the Humanities representative on the Assessment Committee, and as a member of the President's Commission on Racial and Cultural Diversity. In addition to her many official duties, she participates in many related co-curricular activities, such as the recent Love Day on the Jay and the "Anatomy of Hate" film.

Karen's faith journey is grounded heavily in Native American spirituality, which she presents very profoundly in conjunction with her study of (and affinity for) the Lakota Nation's people and culture. She consistently demonstrates a thoughtful, sensitive, and balanced integration of her own faith background with that of Lakota spirituality and Christianity. Karen would, and often does, describe herself in the context of the traditional Lakota blessing, "Mitakuye oyas'in!" This means, "All my relations," or "all my relatives." Indeed, with Karen Poremski, we are all related.

The Rollin Walker Special Award

Dr. Rollin Kearns

The son of Ohio Wesleyan's own Bishop Francis Emner Kearns, (OWU '27) and Alice Thompson Kearns (OWU '30), the Reverend Dr. Rollin Thompson Kearns was named after Dr. Rollin Walker, famed Professor of Religion at Ohio Wesleyan University. Dr. Kearns is the Chrisman-Jeffers and William R. Walker Professor of Religion at Ohio Wesleyan University. He has taught religion at OWU since 1966 – that's 44 years! When he receives the Adam Poe Award tomorrow at Commencement, marking his transition into retirement, Ohio Wesleyan will be celebrating his powerful legacy of scholarship and mentoring that has impacted thousands of students, including laity, clergy, bishops, and even rabbis, as well as decades of dedicated scholars in all liberal arts disciplines.

It is not without note that the famed German theologian Paul Tillich was the one who most influenced Dr. Kearns' academic career by persuading him, at a young age, to venture into the vast thicket of theological studies in Germany. Students have remarked, over the years, that Dr. Kearns is ~~a~~ walking encyclopedia...no, wait, he's a human concordance!" One student said, ~~When~~ "When I am in Dr. Kearns' classroom, I feel like I have been transported back into history, sitting with an ancient sage, soaking up his knowledge like Jesus with the elders of the Temple."

Rarely does a week go by within the Disciple Bible Study group at Chaplain's House that someone doesn't say, ~~Well~~, "Well, that's all well and good, but Dr. Kearns says..."

Dr. Kearns will be missed greatly, but his profound influence, academically and theologically, will live on forever in the global OWU community.

How is Ohio Wesleyan University related to the United Methodist Church?

1842 Official Charter and Current Statement of Aims

Since its founding, Ohio Wesleyan University has maintained its connection with the Methodist (now United Methodist) Church, offering a quality of scholarship, leadership, and service that has enriched both Church (faith community) and society. Its charter provided that “the University is forever to be conducted on the most liberal principles, accessible to all religious denominations (faith communities), and designed for the benefit of our citizens in general.” In spirit and heritage, the University defines itself as a community of teachers and students devoted to the free pursuit of truth. It attempts to develop in its students qualities of intellect and character which will be useful no matter what they choose to do in later life.

One of the three primary objectives of the University is to place education in the context of values. Liberal education seeks to develop in students understanding of themselves, appreciation of others, and willingness to meet the responsibilities of citizenship in a free society. It recognizes that trained sensitivity to private and public value issues, grounded in a sound grasp of various cultural heritages, is important for maturation and for living a good life. It accords high honor to intellectual honesty. Consistent with our Methodist tradition, Ohio Wesleyan University encourages concern for all religious and ethical issues and stimulates its students to examine their own views in light of these issues.

Official Affiliation with the United Methodist Church

In keeping with these sacred and social commitments, and based upon a regular review of its academic program, religious life, student life, and financial standing, Ohio Wesleyan University is officially affiliated with The United Methodist Church as a United Methodist institution of higher education.

A Word About the Baccalaureate Co-Chairs:

A personal statement from Chaplain Powers:

Over the past 22 years as University Chaplain at OWU, I have experienced a number of individually superb students who have served as chairs of the OWU Baccalaureate Committee, but rarely any as dedicated, thoughtful, hard-working, and faithful as Sam Chesser and Claire Everhart.

Samuel Chesser: Brilliant! Solid! Faithful! Witty! Wise! Sam has been the quiet stalwart of the team.

Claire Everhart: Faith seeking understanding! Unafraid of questions...or answers! Spirit of joy! Claire has been the feisty St. Francis of the team.

Tonight's Baccalaureate Service would not have been possible without the hard work, relational skill, and loving spirit of these two amazing Servant Leaders.

Sam and Claire: I love you. I honor you. I thank God for you!