

The Wesley Heritage Foundation

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Bringing the Thought and Spirituality of the Wesleyan Revival to Latin Americans

PO Box 76 Henrico NC 27842 USA

SUMMER 2009

NEWSLETTER

A Word from the President:

Mark W. Wethington, Ph.D.

“Wesley & Health Care”

John and Charles Wesley were church reformers who understood that redemption is inclusive of all of God's good creation. God's saving grace is not limited to the human spirit or soul, but embraces all that God created, the fullness of nature. In the human realm this also means that God desires the healing of the physical body as well as the spirit. For John Wesley the fullness of healing in this earthly world includes physical health, mental health and spiritual health. Jesus' ministry on this earth embraced this full concern.

For this reason, and for very practical reasons, John Wesley wrote a medical manual entitled *Primitive Physic* (1747). In this volume Wesley offers very practical guidance for treating illnesses. In part, Wesley developed this medical guide because of his vast knowledge and interests in many areas of academics as well as practical living. He also did so because he clearly understood that healing was an essential part of the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. In addition, many of the rural areas of England lacked health care providers, and, therefore, Wesley encouraged pastors to fulfill some of this role.

Wesley practiced his own medicine and enjoyed a little over 87 years of healthy life in 18th century England, where such long life was far from the norm. Interestingly, the treatments which some physicians were quick to term “Wesleyan quackery” are considered by modern medical professionals to be both sound and worthy of consideration and use. Wesley was a pragmatic thinker who, as he drew from worldly experience, clearly saw the integral relationship between spiritual health and physical and mental health.

Out of his daily perceptions, academic studies, and commitment to social justice, Wesley was moved by the Holy Spirit to establish medical clinics to serve the poor, who otherwise had little or no access to good, quality health care without paying a high price. Sound familiar? If we transition our thoughts to America in 2009 we are aware of a broken health care system where the wealthier tend to enjoy higher quality health care, and, along with it, higher quality of physical life than those who can afford little or no access to health care. In these days we can only hope that some kind of universal health care system can be put in place which treats all persons with equality of quality health care.

Five years ago, when pastor of a United Methodist Church in North Carolina, a retired physician in my congregation and I worked together to establish a free medical clinic for those who are uninsured and who live at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level. During these past five years I have had the privilege of staying affiliated with that ministry from time to time. The clinic (Moore Free Care Clinic) has grown to a patient registry of over 2000 patients with about 300 people wanting to get in as new patients. The present economy has accelerated the need, and some days we have as many as 12 people who call the clinic seeking to be new patients. The stories are heart-wrenching; often tears pour out at the other end of the phone when they are told that we simply don't have sufficient providers at the present time to take in new patients (we are dependent upon volunteer physicians). One would have to

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Students who were part of a seminar which Dr. Mark Wethington taught in Cuzco in March 2009

Dr. Wethington presents sermons of John Wesley translated into Quechua.

Dr. Mark W. Wethington, in March 2009, taught this group of about 50 students at SEBITEM in Cuzco, Peru. SEBITEM is one of two seminary annex programs of the Methodist Church of Peru. Dr. Wethington presented for the first time 5 sermons of John Wesley which the Foundation translated into Quechua. Twenty-nine sermons of Wesley in Quechua are nearing completion, presently in the editing stage, and will be published by the Foundation in late 2009.

Update on the new seminary in Peru

The Foundation is continuing its consultative and financial support of the new seminary program in Lima, Peru (Seminario Teologico Wesleyano). Four courses will be offered for the semester beginning in August. The Foundation continues to solicit support for student scholarships and your contribution to the WHF can be designated for this purpose.

The WHF's involvement in the formation of the new Methodist seminary in Peru has been highlighted recently in the United Methodist New Service Daily Digest (June 5, 2009) and will also be featured in the July issue of Interpreter magazine.

As part of its ongoing consultation work with the Methodist Church of Peru in the development of a new seminary in Lima, the WHF has been organizing work teams to assist in the renovation of a church in Lima into the seminary dormitory for students. If you are interested in contributing to this project or would like to be part of a team, or organize a team, please contact Beth Jager at jagerb@live.com or at 252-

“Charles and Sarah Wesley” visit Huancayo

We are very grateful to the WHF for the opportunity for Thelma, my wife, and I to teach this Spring at PROBITEM, Huancayo, Peru (PROBITEM is an annex of Seminario Teologico Wesleyano, the seminary program in Lima, and is located in the highlands of Peru). As we began the long, winding coach ride high up into the Andes, we discussed how eager we were to meet these distant members of the global family of Methodists. We have been overseas before, but never in Latin America. We were more familiar with the colonial and cultural history of Mexico. We were surprised to learn that Peru parallels and shares much of this history, including the Castellano dialect.

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multiply this reality thousands of times over to see clearly the realities of health care deficiencies in Latin America and other 2/3rds world countries around this earth!

The church's mission, theological education, and healing ministries have an essential interconnection. In this context, there are two ways the Wesley Heritage Foundation is seeking to draw together the Wesleyan emphasis upon piety and mercy:

First, we are grateful to Bishop Francisco Mendoza, a physician and Bishop of the Methodist Church of Venezuela, who is translating Wesley's *Primitive Physic* into Spanish. In a recent email exchange I had with him he said, "In the midst of my translation work I am amazed to realize how advanced was the medical knowledge of John Wesley." The Foundation hopes to have this translation available by late 2009.

Secondly, among the possibilities of how the newly established Mercy Endowment of the WHF could be used is by assisting Wesleyan churches, including Methodist churches in Latin America, to establish health care programs out of their churches. We have already been engaged in some of these initiatives by taking the Moore Free Care Clinic (begun out of a United Methodist Church in North Carolina) "on the road" to Peru. Three such medical teams have gone. Last year's team took care of approximately 650 persons in three days in a Methodist Church located in a shanty area on the outskirts of Lima.

Here is just one example of how "ties bind"; in this case there is the bind between a 1747 volume on medical cures (*Primitive Physic*) developed and written by John Wesley, the translation of this "academic" and "practical" volume into Spanish, and the formation of medical teams out of North American Wesleyan churches which can channel the "mercy" of healing to our Latin American brothers and sisters.

The mission of WHF is to "bring the thought and spirituality of the Wesleyan Revival to Latin America." The Foundation's commitment to uniting theological education and mercy ministry is essential to our remaining faithful to our heritage and to the core of our reason for being. I encourage you to consider ways in which you can share in this mission with us. Grace and peace to all of you.



The Peruvian Methodists have developed their own traditions under North American and British influences. In the absence of seminary training, pan-evangelical and Pentecostal threads have also permeated Methodist thought. This context was the impetus for holding a special training for congregational leaders, clergy and lay included. Rev. Edilberto Huanami, the District Superintendent, invited leaders from all over the expansive sierra to attend the three day event. Rev. Javier Ochoa, a pastor from Lima, taught on evangelism and worship.

We were asked to present a workshop on the sacraments of baptism and holy communion from a distinctively Wesleyan perspective. We utilized a modified quadrilateral approach to study utilizing scripture, tradition, reason, and a classroom practicum to gain real experience. Some of the pastors favored "believer's baptism" and were reticent to practice infant baptism. We practiced sprinkling on the only infant available, a 32" doll named Alicia. Likewise, we used actual elements to practice hand gestures for the Great Thanksgiving, Sanctus, and epiclesis in Holy Communion. Of course, we referred constantly to Obras de Wesley, Wesley's sermons in Spanish, translated and published by the WHF. We were quite impressed with their ability to converse on the Obras from memory. Thelma salted our devotions with readings from Bishop Reuben Job's *Tres Reglas Sencillas*. That call to simplicity of life is understood and realized daily by these Methodists who sing joyous praises for their simple meals and unregimented worship.

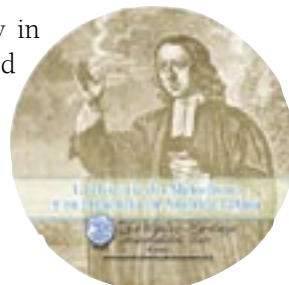
The Wesleyan idiom of primitive Christianity has found a natural environment in the Peruvians. Every person attending the workshop received printed materials, including handouts on the sacraments and Albert Outler's *Theology in the Wesleyan Spirit* (in Spanish). We decided to conclude the workshop with *Love Divine*, a musical dramatization of the lives of Sarah and Charles Wesley. We have been performing this dramatic hymn-sing since living in England in 2001, but this was the first time in Spanish. A fuller production was held the following Monday evening at Colegio Maria Alvarado, Lima.

We left Huancayo with a deep appreciation for the people committed to holiness of heart and life in the Wesleyan tradition. We think often of Huancayo and hope to offer more support for Seminario Teologico Wesleyano in the years to come.

The Reverend Daniel F. Flores, Ph.D.

Dr. Flores is an Ordained Elder in the Rio Grande Conference of the United Methodist Church; pastor of the Trinidad United Methodist Church in Forth Worth, Texas; and a member of the Board of the Directors of the Wesley Heritage Foundation. He received his M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary and his Ph.D. from Drew University. Dr. Flores is President of Sociedad Wesleyana.

Please Remember: Obras de Wesley in all 14 volumes is available on CD at a reduced price in quantity through the Foundation; or at regular price through the website. The DVD "La Historia del Metodismo y su Presencia en American Latina" is also available through the same means.



I wish to help the work of The Wesley Heritage Foundation. Enclosed is my contribution of:

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The Wesley Heritage Foundation is a non-profit 501c3 organization. All contributions are tax-deductible.

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If so, please give us your e-mail address: _____

Mail contributions to L. Elbert Wethington, Ph.D., Treasurer, 4309 Sunny Court, Durham, NC 27705 USA



North Raleigh United Methodist Church travels to Peru to work on new seminary dormitory

In January of 2009, a group of 6 people dedicated to missions from North Raleigh United Methodist Church traveled to Lima, Peru to be the first group to work on a new mission project. The project, a new seminary dormitory at the Miramar Church in Lima, is being organized by the Wesley Heritage Foundation and has been recognized by the Bishop of the Methodist Church in Peru as a priority project for the Lima district.

When we arrived at the site, we could see the need for much work but also so much potential for dormitories, a refurbished kitchen and dining hall, refurbished bathrooms and a parsonage that was in need of much repair. The first half day was spent deciding which areas were most in need and it was determined we would work on the dormitory space.



For the next 5 days, the members of our group scoured rust off, sanded, primed and painted metal frames for windows and then replaced 110 panes of glass. The two rooms received 1200 sq ft of new ceramic tile, laid and grouted. New doors for the rooms were commissioned and were to be installed when finished. And the process of preparing the walls and ceilings for painting was begun. All this we did side by side with our Peruvian Methodist brothers and sisters, who helped us work, but most importantly, kept us encouraged and well fed!

The project at hand is very ambitious but a badly needed void will be filled when it is done. The need for new clergy for the Methodist Church in Peru is great and the seminary is planned to help meet the need. There is still much to do and more groups are needed to go and help make it possible. I hope yours may be one of them!

NEEDED: Work teams for renovation of a church in Lima into the Peru Seminary dormitory.



Contact jagerb@live.com

We encourage everyone to attend "Ride, Ride," a part of the annual Wesley Celebration to be held at Methodist University, Fayetteville, NC, on November 19, 20, 21 & 22. This musical drama, being presented by the combined musical and theatrical talents of Jarvis Memorial UMC (Greenville, NC) and Methodist University, passionately depicts the beginnings of the Methodist movement under the leadership of John and Charles Wesley.

We express deep gratitude to the Asbury United Methodist Church, Durham, North Carolina, for the printing and mailing of this edition of the WHF newsletter. Asbury has taken this on as part of their global missions. The Foundation is extremely grateful for their generosity.

