

# THE STORY OF THE ORDER OF SAINT LUKE

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## Prelude

World War II and its immediate aftermath were turbulent times, but Methodists were optimistic in the 1940s. They had been through the culture shocks of the 1920s and the ordeal of the Great Depression, and now there was talk on all hands of a return to religion. The growing Methodist Church, formed by the union of three denominations in 1939, was the largest Protestant denomination in America. Debts had been paid off during the War, congregations were relocating from the city to the suburbs, new congregations were being started, and ambitious building programs were the order of the day. Visitation evangelism, couples' classes, and vigorous Sunday schools were attracting young families; and for the first time in living memory men and women were joining in approximately equal numbers. The old Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy had calmed down. Liberal and conservative pastors alike tended to avoid controversial issues, develop family-centered programs, and reap the harvest of church growth.

But some could see that all was not well. Behind the outward success, some saw a denomination neglecting its Wesleyan heritage and proclaiming much less than the full gospel. In the mid-1940s several of them—especially R. P. Marshall, William E. Slocum, and David L. Taylor—found a forum for their concerns in *The Pastor*, a journal sent out by the Methodist Publishing House to all Methodist clergy. Who were these three?

Romey Pitt Marshall (1901-1985) had started out in the Florida Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South as a boy evangelist and then from 1932 to 1936 a pastor. In later years he recalled how during the Depression he had lost his faith. He discovered another man who had lost his faith, and as they poured out their hearts to each other and struggled together they recovered their faith step by step. But it was a more mature faith than the one they had lost, and for Marshall it was a strongly Wesleyan faith. In his subsequent experience as Editor of *The Florida Christian Advocate* (1936-1941) and Associate Editor of *The Christian Advocate* in Chicago (1941-1943), he developed as a writer and journalist whose skills in these areas would be a priceless asset in the founding and early years of the Order. Returning to pastorates in Florida (1943-1949) and Central Pennsylvania Conference (1949-1955), he was a forceful advocate whose beliefs were being tested and proved daily in a local congregation.

William Esler Slocum (1894-1983) was a former Episcopalian who was deeply concerned that worship be done right. He joined the Methodist Episcopal Church and served pastorates in the Genesee (now Western New York) Conference from 1924 until his retirement in 1961. He studied mental hygiene at the University of Buffalo in 1938 and was a pioneer among Methodists in the liturgical ministry of healing.

David Lyman Taylor (1915- ), a recent graduate of Drew Theological Seminary, was a pastor in the Erie (now Western Pennsylvania) Conference 1942-1945, News Editor of *The Christian Advocate* in Chicago 1945-1951, and a pastor in the Rock River (now Northern Illinois) Conference 1951-1962.

What these men had to say was epitomized in an article by R. P. Marshall in the July 1945 issue of *The Pastor*, provocatively entitled "Wesley Versus Methodism," reprinted in its entirety in this volume [the fall 2006 issue of *Sacramental Life*]. He describes in detail how modern Methodism bore little resemblance to the disciplined and fervent society Wesley began and showed many of the conditions in the Church of England against which Wesley rebelled. It is no longer a society but is not yet fully Church. It is, instead, "a church-like sect," exhibiting the weaknesses of both Church and sect and little of the strengths of either.

He makes a two-fold proposal: 1) Let the Methodist Church enter fully into the heritage and character of the universal Church, with the fullness of its doctrines and means of grace. Let it become fully Church. 2) "It cannot, as a Church of eight million members, return to the simplicity of a Society, but it can bring to being within its fold a Society, which, accepting all of the heritage of the Church, with its ritual and its organization, would set this ritual and organization on fire with the old-time Methodist zeal and Christian character."<sup>1</sup>

These men discovered one another in the pages of *The Pastor* and were soon corresponding among themselves. They were influenced by the *Bulletin* of the (British) Methodist Sacramental Fellowship and by correspondence with some of its leaders. Woodrow Geier, editor of *The Pastor*, encouraged them. A number of readers wrote to express support and interest in joining the proposed society.

### **First Period: 1946-1962**

A number of these correspondents were invited to meet September 12, 1946 in the offices of the Board of Missions at the Methodist Building, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York City. Marshall, Slocum, A. J. MacRoberts, and Robert J. McClosky came to the meeting and founded the Brotherhood of Saint Luke. Marshall was named Director, Slocum Secretary, and the other two also "directors." Taylor missed the meeting but joined in November. MacRoberts and McClosky eventually became Episcopalians.

About 1948, Marshall wrote: "The name was selected after much discussion among the original organizers, and was suggested by the Rev. William Esler Slocum in order to put the emphasis where it seemed to belong—upon service, instead of upon ceremonial. St. Luke was the 'Beloved Physician' and followers of him will need to emphasize the whole Gospel: Salvation from sin, healing of the body and soul, service to the needy, and cultivation of the spiritual life through prayer and the sacraments. Mr. Slocum spoke with some authority, having made his ministry center around these things for many years."<sup>2</sup>

Marshall further commented: "We believe that prayer can heal the sick, and, if asked to do so, will pray specifically for the sick; and follow the Apostolic method of anointing with oil in the name of the Lord. This is in accord with the practice of the Church since early days. We will, however, guard against fanaticism or over-emphasis of this phase of our work."<sup>3</sup>

Information in *The Pastor* about the newly-formed Brotherhood brought responses. The Brotherhood had a leaflet printed and sent out to respondents, setting forth its aims and the "Sevenfold Rule of Life and Service" it had adopted. 1) Magnify the place of the Sacraments. 2) Vitalize our worship and ritual. 3) Make meaningful the reception of Members. 4) Minister to souls through evangelism and pastoral counseling. 5) Observe private devotions daily. 6) Objectify our ministry through the wearing of clerical garb. 7) Promote loyalty to the Methodist Church and to the ecumenical ideal.

In 1960 Marshall wrote: "It soon became necessary to relax the rule requiring the wearing of clerical garb, because of the very great prejudice in some quarters against anything that seemed in the least 'Catholic.' I would, however, suggest that whenever practical, this rule be kept."<sup>4</sup>

It was two years before the first national convocation could be held. By that time 59 members were listed. At this first convocation "Brotherhood" was changed to "Order." At or about this time, "Director" was changed to "President."

At first there were only occasional publications, plus Marshall's "liturgical Question Box" column in *The Pastor*, which lasted until that journal's demise in 1956. These were the years when many Methodist churches that had previously prided themselves on being non-

liturgical were building divided chancels, buying altarware and pulpit robes for the first time, and trying to learn liturgical niceties that were being promoted as "correct." Pastors were usually ignorant of the history and meaning of these fashions. Many turned to Marshall's column for guidance. Their questions were often trivial and based on misunderstandings. Here Marshall's journalistic skills came into play as he dispensed common sense to the confused. When asked, for example, how to get from the lectern to the pulpit he answered, "Walk," and then explained that Roman Catholics genuflected to the reserved Sacrament, which is not on Methodist altars.

The Order needed a regular periodical, and so *The Versicle* was launched with the Epiphany 1951 issue. David Taylor was its first Editor, and Larry Guderian of Oregon was its Publisher. Like a versicle in a liturgy, it was to be "an expression in search of a response, to the glory of God." Taylor aimed to go beyond narrow liturgical concerns and connect liturgy with life as a whole. He soon expressed this view in an article entitled "Life Is Liturgy."<sup>5</sup>

A persistent concern in the early issues was to counter the view common among Methodists that liturgy was incompatible with effective evangelism. "There is no conflict between liturgical interest and evangelistic fervor; indeed, one is almost a part of the other, or should be."<sup>6</sup> It was pointed out that Marshall was a member of his conference Board of Evangelism and had given a series of lectures to the clergy of his conference on evangelistic preaching. In 1955 he wrote a long article in *The Versicle*<sup>7</sup> on evangelistic preaching. Slocum "for years held a remarkable record for evangelism, bringing into his church hundreds of members on profession of faith.... These members have been adequately prepared by long-continued training in membership."<sup>8</sup>

Other writers included John Bishop, who had come from England and was doing graduate study at Drew. He strengthened ties with the British Methodist Sacramental Fellowship and began in the mid-1950s to write frequently for *The Versicle*, chiefly book reviews.

Such reviews were an important part of the journal's function, since recruits to the Order often had an interest in liturgy but only a shallow understanding of what it was all about. It was important to promote good reading in the field of liturgy, and members would frequently refer to books they had found helpful. Outside of Methodist resources, one of the books most read and quoted was Gregory Dix's *The Shape of the Liturgy*<sup>9</sup> Perhaps the influence of Dix can be seen when Cecil Swackhamer wrote: "We have discovered that the highest cannot be spoken, it can only be acted."<sup>10</sup>

Milton Peden of the North Mississippi Conference also wrote frequently for *The Versicle* in the 1950s. A devoted member of the Order, he was chief spokesperson for the Society of the Daily Sacrifice, a small group who advocated working toward weekly communion.

During the 1950s persons representing the Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox traditions began to appear both at convocations of the Order and in the pages of *The Versicle*.

This ecumenical concern could be a mixed blessing. When the 1956 Methodist General Conference enacted full clergy rights for women, *Versicle* publisher Larry Guderian wrote an article warning that this had set up another ecumenical barrier. In those days the Order was for all practical purposes a society of male clergy.

The Order grew. In 1953 it had 93 members and "friends." Although at times during the 1950s a membership of more than 400 was claimed, a careful count in 1960 showed 263 members. National convocations brought thirty to fifty out, a figure that remained fairly steady through the years.

It is interesting how quickly the Order became noticed, both denominationally and ecumenically. Ecumenical liturgical circles viewed it as a hopeful sign. Many Methodists who did not join were at least aware that it existed. Often they scorned it, stereotyping it as preoccupied with clerical collars and ceremonial trivia. I acquired that stereotype when I became aware of it in seminary about 1952, and as a result did not join until ten years later.

The reality was more complicated than the stereotype. As we have seen, the original Rule of the Order did require the wearing of "clerical garb" (the exact nature of which was unspecified), but this was soon relaxed. The practices of the two founding leaders were different, with ex-Episcopalian Slocum always seen in a clerical collar and Marshall "on again, off again" with his clerical collar. The pages of *The Versicle* during the 1950s dealt with theology, reviewed important liturgical books, and were in touch with what was going on in the liturgical movement at that time. Nevertheless, the clerical collar did become somewhat a badge of the Order, and convocations became a place where even those who did not dare wear clerical collars and genuflect at home did both in the company of like-minded spirits.

About 1960, a time of troubles set in for the Order. Taylor had had to be temporarily relieved as Editor of *The Versicle* from time to time during the 1950s. By 1958 he was preoccupied with pastoral duties and finally gave up the editorship in 1960. He located and went into teaching in 1962.

Marshall became Editor and Guderian Managing Editor as well as Publisher, but this did not last. Guderian very soon became a District Superintendent in his conference and had to resign as Publisher and Managing Editor. In 1960 Marshall's health broke. He gave up the editorship of *The North Carolina Christian Advocate*, which he had held since 1955. He took a small congregation in the Central Pennsylvania Conference but was limited in what else he could undertake. Slocum, a busy pastor and Secretary of his Annual Conference, could not devote much time to the Order. Little seems to have happened between 1960 and 1962. It could be called the first of the Order's near-death experiences.

But the Order was not dead. It continued to take in new members—like me. As a young pastor in Western Pennsylvania, I had developed a strong concern for worship and wanted to be in a network of persons who shared that concern. I got hold of an application form and on March 24, 1962 sent in my commitment to the Order with five dollars dues. Soon I received in the mail a membership card, which I still treasure, signed by R. P. Marshall, President and Wm. Esler Slocum, Secretary.

### **Second Period: 1962-1971**

The Order took on new life when Cecil Swackhamer, Methodist pastor in Stamford, Connecticut, invited a convocation of the Order to meet at his church in the spring of 1962.

At that convocation the Order was reorganized with a new set of officers who had joined the Order in the late 1950s and early 1960s: John Bishop, President; David Sealand, Vice-president; Thorwald Torgersen, Secretary; Lowell Williams, Treasurer. M. Lawrence Snow and David Bort were elected Editor and Associate Editor respectively of *The Versicle*. R. P. Marshall was elected Director, and Bill Slocum was elected Secretary Emeritus. Lawrence Guderian, Vergil Queen, and David Taylor were appointed by the Director as Representatives at Large.

Several things are worthy of note. Except for John Bishop, the only well known name, the active leadership had passed to a second generation of younger men. While there were no women, there was a lay person, Lowell Williams. Four of the six officers were from New Jersey, reflecting the fact that New Jersey was by then the center of Order activity. The other two were also from the Northeast, making it much easier for the officers to meet face to face.

The Editor and Associate Editor now also functioned as publisher and divided up their responsibilities.

As *The Versicle* resumed publication, it included news from the chapters. While there had been chapters in previous years, they are hard to document in the Order's publications. Now their existence became evident. Two of the most prominent and active chapters were in the Newark (now Northern New Jersey) and Central Illinois conferences. Today the Northern New Jersey Chapter remains the oldest continuously functioning chapter in the Order. Vice-president Sealand and Secretary Torgersen, were able to make trips promoting the Order and encouraging the formation of chapters.

The 1963 national convocation was hosted by the Central Illinois Chapter and held in Peoria. It was the first convocation I attended, and about forty were present. I remember that almost everyone but me wore clerical collars, and quite a few genuflected. That seemed to confirm my old stereotype of the Order.

On the other hand, the addresses and conversation showed that some of the members were seriously attempting to relate to the ecumenical liturgical movement. Furthermore, the Order appeared to be looking for direction. I decided to be a more active member, and sometime during the next year I persuaded an independent liturgical interest group with which I was affiliated to invite David Seal and Thorwald Torgersen to Western Pennsylvania to promote the Order.

In 1964 the Methodist General Conference met in Pittsburgh, and the Order held its national convocation at the same time in First Methodist Church, Pittsburgh. We observed General Conference with interest as the new *Methodist Hymnal* and *Book of Worship* were adopted. In our own meeting we adopted a revised Rule of Life and Service.

Elections at this meeting were held for the quadrennium. The Secretary, Treasurer, and Editors were re-elected. John Bishop had been disappointingly inactive as President. Edward Perkinson of Ohio was elected to replace him. I was asked to run for Vice-president against the incumbent. I agreed and was elected. David Sealand was then elected Chaplain. A member of the nominating committee later said that they wanted me because I was a "mainline Methodist." I was glad to be part of a move against romantic "high church" practices that fostered stereotypes and hindered the Order in what I saw as its proper mission.

Either at this meeting or the following year the title "Secretary" was changed to "Executive Secretary." This reflected the fact that Thorwald Torgersen was doing the office work for the Order and was its center of communication, in addition to being a busy pastor in New Jersey and in spite of receiving no pay from the Order. For most of the next twenty years Torgersen, more than anyone else, held the Order together through good times and bad.

Romey Marshall continued to be a major influence upon the Order. As Director (President Emeritus after about 1965) he was active in the Order and on its Executive Committee through the 1960s, even for a while after his retirement in 1967, until failing health made this impossible.

In our conversations at the 1964 convocation, he shared with me his enthusiasm for the liturgical renewal that was taking place in the Roman Catholic Church and his hopes for the Second Vatican Council then in progress. He had spent considerable time at a Benedictine abbey and become acquainted with progressive Catholic thinking. He admired the work of the

Liturgical Conference, a Roman Catholic liturgical renewal society. He reported with enthusiasm on an annual convocation of theirs in Philadelphia that he had recently attended. He expressed the opinion that what was happening in the Roman Catholic Church was far more significant for ecumenical liturgical renewal than what was happening in the Episcopal Church.

That summer, shortly after I had been appointed to a pastorate in Erie, PA, he invited me to join him and another member of the Order in driving to Saint Louis for the 1964 convocation of the Liturgical Conference. There, with about 9,000 persons in attendance, the first version of the Mass in English translation was celebrated. Workshops and exhibits introduced us to the potential vitality of contemporary Catholic worship.

The effect on me was electrifying. I saw the handwriting on the wall, not only for the Latin Mass, but also for the prevailing style of worship in Anglican and more formal Protestant churches. Prayerbook English as we had known it would go the way of Latin. Liturgical music and other arts would be radically changed. The newly-authorized *Methodist Hymnal* and *Book of Worship* would be out of date the day they were published. A whole new process of liturgical reform was needed—one that would combine our expanded knowledge of ecumenical liturgical history and theology with a freedom to use whatever language or art form most fully expressed the faith of the Church of all times and all places in the here and now. On that trip, and in our many conversations before and after that, Romey Marshall encouraged this vision and became for me an important mentor.

Early in 1965, Edward Perkinson called me to say he was in process of becoming an Episcopalian and was resigning as President of the Order, making me President for the rest of the quadrennium. He fully recognized that, given the stereotype of the Order as a group of closet Episcopalians, it would be embarrassing for us to have an Episcopal President.

During the next three years national meetings of the Order were held at seminaries in various parts of the country—Perkins in 1965, Duke in 1966, and Garrett-Evangelical in 1967. We saw seminaries as good recruiting fields and also wanted to strengthen the Order in the South and Southwest, where it had always been weak. Attendance continued in the thirty-to-fifty range, about what it had been in earlier years. Additional Executive Committee meetings took place at least one other time each year, made easier by the fact that all officers lived in the Northeast.

As early as 1962 there had been discussion of changing the name of *The Versicle* to something that would more clearly communicate who we were. In 1965, editors Lawrence Snow and David Bort recommended the name *Work/Worship*, which was first used with the Epiphany 1966 issue. The name reflected both our conviction that liturgy was "the work of the people" and also our desire to relate worship to life during the workaday week.

In April 1966 the Methodist Commission on Worship held a national convocation in Baltimore to celebrate the publication of the new *Methodist Hymnal* and *Book of Worship*. The officers of the Order met as an Executive Committee at that convocation and became acquainted with the officers of the Commission on Worship, whose chair was Bishop Lance Webb and whose Executive Secretary was William F. Dunkle. As a result, the Order was invited to send its President as a guest at future Commission meetings, and a good relationship developed. This could not have come at a better time. Already at the Worship Commission convocation voices were raised to point out that both ecumenical influences and changes in the secular culture required much more radical liturgical reforms than those embodied in the new *Book of Worship*. By 1967 the professors of worship in Methodist seminaries were brought into consultation and urged the Commission on Worship to begin immediately to study ecumenical and contemporary worship trends with an eye to making available additional musical and liturgical

resources. This was the beginning of the generation-long process that culminated in *The United Methodist Hymnal* (1989) and *The United Methodist Book of Worship* (1992).

The question was periodically raised whether we were really an order or simply a society. In a time of increasing ecumenical conversation it became embarrassing to have to explain to Roman Catholics that we were not like the kind of orders they knew, but were more like what they would call a society. Yes, we had our Rule, but it lacked the kind of specific vows and disciplines historically associated with an order.

It was evident that neither the membership nor the Executive Committee of the Order was of one mind on this issue. Some were content that we be a society of persons sharing the concerns listed in the Rule, while others hoped we would evolve into a true order with a more demanding Rule and closer community. Our discussions of this issue had a way of coming out something like this: yes, we want to be a true order, even if we may fall short of it now.

A step toward becoming a full-fledged order was taken in 1967 by the development of a first version of the historic Daily Office for voluntary and optional use by members. We had progressed from the days twenty years earlier when the Rule stated, "Observe private devotions daily." Not only could "devotions" mean almost anything, but growing historical, theological, and ecumenical awareness had led us to realize that the Order needed *corporate—not private—daily* worship. It should be worship that linked us, scattered though we were, to the corporate daily worship of the universal Church. The classic way to accomplish this was the Daily Office—what the Anglicans called Morning and Evening Prayer and what the Roman Catholics were coming to call the Liturgy of the Hours.

It fell to me to devise a simple form of Morning and Evening Prayer that would be a first step for those new to the Daily Office. There had been such a form in the 1945 *Book of Worship*, though there was no such form in the new 1965 edition. Romey Marshall also recommended to me the simple form of Morning and Evening Prayer in the pre-Vatican II Roman Catholic *Saint Joseph Missal*. Freely adapting these forms, and using both classic and original prayers, I compiled short orders of Morning and Evening Prayer, both of which would fit on the two sides of a card. These cards were then printed and distributed to members of the Order. [*ed. note - this is the "tan card rite" with which many are familiar*]

At the 1968 General Conference, the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church united to form the United Methodist Church, and I was elected to its Commission on Worship. At the first meeting of the Commission in June, I was elected its Executive Secretary, on condition that I resign as President—though not as a member—of the Order. There would have been a conflict of interest between having such a key role in the official denominational worship agency and being President of an order engaged in advocacy with it.

Since there was no vice-president, and since Lowell Williams had resigned as Treasurer, Torgersen became President and Secretary-Treasurer, valiantly holding the Order together in what proved to be a time of troubles. Interest, and especially financial support, fell off. The publication of the new *Book of Worship* and *Methodist Hymnal* (soon renamed *The Book of Hymns*) and the vigorous continuing activity of the Commission on Worship convinced some that the Order was no longer needed, although I repeatedly stated that the Order was more needed—and could be more useful—than ever. Also, membership in the Order was divided in their reaction to the ecumenical and contemporary pressures for more radical reform.

The resulting tally, in which no name received a majority of the votes, revealed a close division on whether we should become more truly an order or be clearly a society. A second ballot was taken in 1973 with two choices: "Order" or "Society." The result was a clear vote

to remain the Order of Saint Luke. A North Central Jurisdictional Chapter, organized in 1973, began an active life that reflected more of a desire to be a true order than existed in the East.

In 1974 a national convocation was held for the first time since 1971. There was increased emphasis on chapters. Romey Marshall, whose health no longer permitted him to attend meetings or take any active part in the life of the Order, was elected Director for Life. Two national convocations were held in 1980: at Drew in the spring and in Cleveland in the fall. This acknowledged the growing strength of the Order in the Midwest as well as its continuing strength in the Northeast. The following were elected for the 1980-84 quadrennium: Vernon Schmid (Eastern Pennsylvania), President; Clifford Field (New York), Vice-president; Thorwald Torgersen (Northern New Jersey) Secretary-treasurer; Don Brown (Northern New Jersey), National Formation Officer; and David Bort (Northern New Jersey, living in Vermont), Editor.

Several things are noteworthy in this list of officers. It was solidly North-eastern, in spite of the growing strength of the Order in the Midwest. It was still solidly white male clergy, though by this time the membership included female clergy and both male and female laity. The new office of Formation Officer shows the increasing emphasis on the spiritual formation of both members and of chapters. The emphasis on chapters was continuing, and by 1982, ten chapters were listed.

In 1981 changes in the titles of two key offices were a sign of more changes to come. "President" became "Canon" and "Secretary-treasurer" became "Chancellor." Vernon Schmid brought to the Order a strong concern to relate worship to world peace and social justice, but his militant activism took him to the point where he had to resign and let Clifford Field take over as Canon. Tim Crouch (East Ohio) was now Chaplain.

In the spring of 1984 there was good news. The Order had a presence at the United Methodist General Conference in Baltimore, which officially adopted the new liturgy later incorporated into *The United Methodist Hymnal* (1989) and *The United Methodist Book of Worship* (1992). It set up a Hymnal Revision Committee to prepare a new hymnal. For the first time, it officially recognized the Order. Soon afterwards, the Board of Discipleship invited the Order to become affiliated with its Section on Worship and send a representative to its meetings.

But this was a time of discontent within the Order. Some of the older members were unhappy with the new official liturgy and wanted something more like the old liturgy. Others were ardent supporters of the new liturgy and were unhappy that the Order had made so little input into the process by which it had been developed. When the Order held a celebration of Holy Communion, inviting General Conference delegates and the general public, the fact that the new official liturgy was not used caused consternation.

While the Order had occasionally sent an observer to meetings of the Section on Worship of the General Board of Discipleship (successor since 1972 to the old Commission on Worship), relations between the two had been rather distant for the previous sixteen years. The Board of Discipleship had a number of what were called "affiliated organizations" related to it, with provision for representation. Tensions between the Board and some of these organizations had raised fears on the part of some in the Order that such an affiliation would bring unwelcome controls. Some in the Section on Worship feared that a close relationship with the Order might make it harder to win the denomination-wide consensus necessary to enact the new official liturgy. In summary, many felt in the months following General Conference that the Order needed a major renewal if it was to rise to the challenge of leadership in the further development and implementation of the new United Methodist liturgy.

#### **Fourth Period: 1984-1999**

In the fall of 1984 the Order held a quadrennial convocation in Jeannette, Pennsylvania. The new official liturgy was celebrated. James F. White, one of the principal architects of the new liturgy, was one of the featured speakers. The invitation to become an affiliated organization relating to the Board of Discipleship was accepted. Michael O'Donnell (East Ohio) was elected Canon; Thorwald Torgersen, Chancellor; Clifford Field, Formation Officer; and Timothy Crouch named Chaplain for the 1984-88 quadrennium. The Northeast now shared leadership with the Midwest.

Under O'Donnell's leadership, important changes were soon made. He attended meetings of the Board of Discipleship and its Section on Worship, where he was an active and helpful participant. Later, during the 1988-92 quadrennium, he was an important participant in the development of *The United Methodist Book of Worship*.

The publication program was greatly expanded. This new program had already begun with the publication of the first issue of *Doxology*, edited by David Bort, an annual journal of liturgical scholarship and reflection that continued under his editorship through the 1997 issue. In 1985, publication began on the *Newsletter*, renamed *The Font* in 1990, which is an in-house newsletter containing matters of interest to the membership. In 1988 *Sacramental Life* began publication, edited by O'Donnell. It is a liturgical journal with articles of interest both to members and to non-member sub-scribers. OSL Publications, established under the leadership of Tim Crouch, has published or brought back into print many fine liturgical books.

The leadership of the Order recognized that it had been far too much an organization of white male clergy. In the mid and late 1980s there was a dramatic increase of women in the Order. Although the great majority were—and still are—clergy, the number of laity was slowly growing. The recruitment of persons of color has gone more slowly yet, except in Asia. But the goal of inclusiveness is clear, and the Order constantly struggles with it. This gave rise in the 1990s to recurring debates about the European cultural style of the Order's worship.

In the late 1980s and 1990s the Order moved in the direction of being a true order rather than simply a society. The change of the title "Canon" to "Abbott" in 1986, as well as other title changes, declare this intention, as does the increased seriousness with which profession and the Rule are taken. The vigorous debates in the 1990s on the purchase of a retreat center show how far the Order has come, even though the results to date have been negative. Life Membership no longer denotes persons who have given money to "endow" their payment of dues; it denotes persons who have professed life vows to the Order. Especially generous donors now are more accurately designated Benefactors.

Especially important has been the development and publishing by Order of Saint Luke Publications of a new version of the Daily Office for use by members. *The Book of Offices and Services* (1988) represented a substantial advance over the card provided twenty years earlier. Between 1991 and 1994 a much fuller Daily Office for Advent/Christmas and Lent/Easter, edited and compiled by Dwight Vogel, was published in three volumes. Since then, he has been continuing this work, and a further expanded and revised Daily Office for the entire year is available.

*The Book of Offices and Services* also contained resources for the liturgical anointing of the sick, marking a reaffirmation of the Order's concern for spiritual healing. Michael O'Donnell, representing the Order on the *Book of Worship* Committee (1988-1992), played a key role in developing for the first time a substantial section on "Healing Services and Prayers" in *The United Methodist Book of Worship*.

Already by 1986 the number of chapters had risen to 18, and formation of chapters has continued to be a major objective. Membership like-wise has gone from 351 in 1986 to 418 in 1988, 637 in 1991, 847 in 1993, and 771 in 1999.

The 1988 quadrennial convocation in Cleveland, where *The United Methodist Hymnal* was introduced, had by far the largest attendance in the history of the Order. O'Donnell was re-elected. Robert Mitchell (Western New York) was elected Chancellor-General and Karen McMartin (Northern New Jersey) General Formation Officer. In 1991 French Ball (East Ohio) became General Formation Officer.

Attendance at the 1992 Convocation in Kansas City, Kansas, where *The United Methodist Book of Worship* was introduced, was the next highest in the history of the Order. O'Donnell was reelected. Nancy Parks (now Crouch) was elected Chancellor-General. Mark Mashburn was elected General Formation Officer, and Dwight Vogel Prior-General. During 1992 Rich Cooper was replaced as Editor of *The Font* by Clifton Guthrie, who served until 1994.

The 1996 quadrennial Convocation was held at the Oakwood Conference Center in Syracuse, Indiana. For reasons of health, Michael O'Donnell did not run for re-election. Dwight Vogel was elected Abbot; Mark Stamm, Prior General; French Ball, General Formation Officer; and Nancy [Parks] (now) Crouch, Chancellor General.

Between convocations, annual retreats have been held each October at the Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville (1993, 1997), Saint Paul's Retreat Center in Pittsburgh (1994, 1995, 1998), and El Carmelo Retreat in Redlands, CA (1999). Executive Committee meetings are held in the spring and immediately before and after the fall retreats.

At the 1997 retreat David Bort was honored for his 35 years of editing publications for the Order and made Editor Emeritus of *Doxology* for life. He had been, in turn, Associate Editor of *The Versicle* and then *Work/Worship* journal, Editor of *Work/Worship* newsletter, and Editor of *Doxology*.

The new co-editors of *Doxology*, Ron Anderson and Cliff Cuthrie, announced their intention to make it an academic journal acceptable in academic tenure review. An editorial board of liturgical scholars was formed and held its first meeting at the January 1998 meeting of the North American Academy of Liturgy. For several years OSL Publications had had an exhibit at the annual NAAL meetings, and at its January 1999 meeting complimentary copies of the first issue of the new *Doxology* (1998) were distributed.

Michael O'Donnell had given up the editorship of *Sacramental Life* after the last 1996 issue and been replaced by co-editors Mary Benedict and Greg Hayes with the first 1997 issue. Hayes became sole Editor with the first 1998 issue.

*The Font* had also changed editors again. Bill Englebreth, who had become Editor in 1994, had been replaced in mid-1997 by Sky Lowe-McCracken.

After Michael O'Donnell was no longer able to represent the Order as an affiliated organization at meetings of the General Board of Discipleship, I was delegated to do so, having retired from the staff of the Board in 1993.

A number of chapters are currently active, but perhaps the most distinctive chapter development during the 1990s has been the Cyber Chapter. Members are in constant contact on the Internet. Queries are raised and answered, issues are discussed, prayer requests are circulated, and many other types of sharing occur.

After more than fifty years of history, much has changed but the basic questions persist. For most of this time the United Methodist Church has been losing members, and the denominational mood is less optimistic than in 1946. More people would say now that we have neglected our Wesleyan heritage and are proclaiming much less than the full gospel. Liberals and conservatives are polarized and no longer content to tone down their differences.

In the present scene the voice of the Order is hard to hear. Our founders combined liturgy with evangelism. They had a passion both to learn from the treasures of the historic and universal Church and to spread the whole gospel. Such a combination does not fit neatly on one side or the other of the current battle lines.

Indeed, what divides United Methodists and other Christians today tends to divide the Order as well. Liturgically some tend toward the traditional Anglo or Eastern Catholic, while others want to be creative and innovative styles within a flexible basic pattern. We are far from agreement as to what architectural and visual environment, or what types of music, or what styles of presiding, are appropriate for worship. We may or may not give high priority to ethnic, cultural, or global inclusiveness in worship. We may or may not emphasize the relationship of liturgy to issues of justice and peace. We may or may not share the passion of our founders for evangelism. Whatever else we have been, we have never been a monolithic lobby for any particular reforms in the wider Church.

Rather, when we have been effective it has been as a supportive community upholding one another on our spiritual journeys. Both our one-to-one spiritual direction and our daily prayer for one another have great power. Members who are abreast of current liturgical studies and movements, or who are more mature in worship and worship leadership, teach and mentor those who are less informed or experienced. I am convinced that many have been saved for effective ministry by the support and guidance supplied by the Order. If for some members the OSL has functioned more like an order, and for others more like a society, there is ample evidence that it can be effective either way.

Where we have influenced the wider Church it has generally been quietly and indirectly. Books and periodicals published by the Order have influenced many beyond our own membership. Some of us who have had significant roles in the liturgical reforms of the past generation have been greatly helped in doing so by our nurture within the Order. As we continue on our path and struggle with the great perennial issues, we find that the journey has been far better in the company of our sisters and brothers in the Order.

*Hoyt Hickman, OSL, has served the Order and the Church in a variety of capacities. This history was written for the fiftieth anniversary Convocation in October 1996 and was published in Sacramental Life (Fall, 2006)*

#### ENDNOTES

1. R. P. Marshall, "Wesley Versus Methodism," *The Pastor* (July 1945, p.40).
2. R. P. Marshall
3. R. P. Marshall
4. R. P. Marshall
5. *The Versicle*.
6. *The Versicle*
7. *Ibid*
8. *Ibid*
9. A C Black, London, 1945
10. *The Versicle*