



Your NAWE Companion

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And Are We Yet Alive?

W. Laurens Hudson, *Kennesaw, GA*

Some years ago Bishop Richard Wilkie of the United Methodist Church wrote a book in which he expressed his concern about the decline of his denomination. He used the first line of the Charles Wesley hymn, "And Are We Yet Alive" as the title of his book, and, at Pat's suggestion, I have chosen to use those same five words as the title of this article. Bishop Wilkie's book was met with chagrin and even disdain by some in his denomination. The decline about which he was sounding the alarm was the result of a spiritual and theological deterioration that had begun long before he wrote about it. It began well over a century ago now when liberalism and/or neo-orthodoxy crossed the Atlantic Ocean from Europe and invaded North America through Boston University. (Perhaps there should have been a re-enactment of the Boston Tea Party in the form of a Boston Heresy Party to throw the heretical teachings into the harbor just as the patriots had done to the unjustly-taxed tea many decades earlier.)

If you are wondering what all of this has to do with us, let me remind you that the National Association of Wesleyan Evangelicals is one of the many spiritual descendants of American Methodism. Both Pat and I can trace our ecclesiastical lineage back to the fourth generation in this tradition. It saddens us when we realize that the movement that was once the largest Protestant denomination in America, was once THE holiness movement in America, and once had the largest Protestant missionary force in the world has now become an essentially apostate denomination.

How could all of this have happened? It happened because the spiritual and theological deterioration referred to in the first paragraph expressed itself in the denigration of the holy Scriptures. The teachings of the Old and New Testaments, especially the miracles, even the ones performed by Jesus Himself, began to be questioned. Many decades ago astute and alert lay people began to notice all of this in the official publications of the church, especially in the Sunday School curriculum materials. When these lay people confronted their pastors about the matter, the clergy typically tried to explain it away or just brush it off. This departure from the faith once delivered to the saints also reared its ugly head in the educational institutions of the church, especially in the theological seminaries. It may have taken the lay people a little longer to notice this. They eventually did, however, because it became apparent in the content of the preaching and teaching they were hearing.

Again, what does all of this have to do with us? It is the nature of organizations and institutions to change and liberalize over time. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to take care to see that the NAWE does not follow this trend. Many of the readers of this newsletter know how deeply troubled I am about the path our country has taken. I am fully persuaded that ultimately the United Methodist Church and its antecedents will have a greater degree of responsibility for this tragedy than any other ecclesiastical entity. This is why I say that. At one time there was a Methodist church of some stripe almost everywhere there was a post office. If a clear and consistent "Thus saith the Lord" had been coming from all of those pulpits on an ongoing basis, I do not believe our country would have plunged into paganism and heathendom to the degree that it has. May God forgive us and have mercy upon us.

June—July 2019



Praise & Prayer

Praise the Lord for being our refuge and strength!

Continue praying for United Methodists who are seeking God's direction, including some who have made inquiries about the NAWE.

Pray for our nation and leaders.

Pray for encouragement for our pastors.

Pray for VBS programs and other special outreach events during the summer.

Pray for our Annual Meeting:

- for our speaker
- for safe travels
- for our hearing and responding to the Word of the Lord

NAWE Annual Meeting Greetings from Our Speaker

Dr. Bill Ury

I am looking with great anticipation toward our time together. The Holy One has revealed to us His heart. His beautiful will is that each of us would live in the fullness of His love and life. The Triune God who is holy love has made a way for us to participate in that nature by grace. What a Gospel we have been entrusted with. I know that our time together this July will have been prayed over and that we all will come with hearts open, malleable and receptive to the Spirit of God.

As we minister to this world it is achingly clear that the deepest needs around us can only truly be met by being recreated in the image of God. It is we who must be transformed and re-created in His image. Then, and only then, will we really have anything to offer those suffering the vestiges of sin. That is why coming together to allow the Spirit to rekindle a desire for more of the perfect love He alone can produce in our hearts and in our congregations is so crucial.

The world has all too often seen churches that sit comfortably within the diminished truth that to be saved means that a person gets forgiveness from sins and then merely hangs on struggling with sinfulness till heaven. Those who don't know Jesus have every right to reject that as just another form of man-made religiosity. They know there is more for them but they do not have churches that proclaim the full truth of salvation. From the beginning to the end of Scripture our God has made it clear what He desires; He has promised and provided all we need to live in righteousness and true holiness. We must be clear in our living as well as proclaiming this all-sufficient Savior.

Would you ask him in the short weeks until we see each other face to face that He would meet us in His Word and in the power of the Spirit? I am so grateful for your faithful witness as Wesleyan Evangelicals. The Lord has raised you up. The world needs to see a fire-baptized church. We have to be what Jesus requires and enables, not for our own sakes, but for the sake of the world.

I am so grateful to be in this ministry with you. May He bless you each hour as you depend upon Him and trust Him for grace to minister holiness in real life. May we seek Him together for His mind to be made clearly known in our time of worship and response to His Word this summer.

Calendar



July 16-18: Annual Meeting at Danielsville, GA

Tuesday, July 16: 7:00 p.m. - Evening service with Dr. Bill Ury preaching

Wednesday, July 17: 9:00 a.m. - Devotion and reports

2:00 p.m. - Seminars (Dr. Bill Ury; Tim and Cathy Peek)

7:00 p.m. - Evening service with Dr. Bill Ury preaching

Thursday, July 18 - 9:00 a.m. - Devotion and reports

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