

## A History of the Chaplaincy at DePauw University

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*Conversations about the spiritual lives of college students continue to grow within the student affairs profession. However, one area that has received little attention in this conversation is the role of chaplaincy in helping students explore their religious identities and providing spiritual care for the campus community. This paper traces the history of the chaplaincy at DePauw University as a way to look at shifts in perception of the role of religion in higher education. These shifts are significant because in a span of 70 years understandings of how one should engage religion have moved dramatically from a focus on Christian evangelism to a focus on engagement with religious pluralism. Chaplains have done this work for decades and offer a unique perspective on how to support college student religious and spiritual development in a rapidly changing environment.*

In 1985 the president of Carleton College, Robert Edwards, called a committee to review the role of the chaplaincy at that institution. In his charge he asked, “Why does a non-sectarian institution concerned with the intellectual development of students enter the domain of religion - beyond that embraced by its Department of Religion?” (Colwell, 2016, p. 92). Using Edwards’ question as a starting point this paper will trace the history of the chaplaincy at DePauw University and apply a framework for understanding religious life created by a DePauw faculty member to assist in understanding the shifts that occurred in this work. In a 1960s review of the DePauw Council of Religious Life, faculty member David A. Crocker created a framework for understanding religious life in higher education by identifying a series of shifts from support for religious particularity to engagement with religious pluralism. This framework, though never published, and thus not universally acknowledged, is useful for the way it describes a move made by many institutions as they engaged with increasing cultural secularism. The shift from religious particularity to engagement with religious pluralism was embraced by all

but the most religiously conservative of institutions, with each institution engaging these shifts in its own way. Considering the way that the role of the chaplain was defined at one institution, in light of the outside forces that shaped that work, offers insight for student affairs professionals as they consider how to meet the needs for religious and spiritual development in their students, and more broadly on the campus.

### **The Early Religious Landscape at DePauw**

Founded in 1837 by Methodists in Indiana, DePauw University has remained affiliated with Methodism for the entirety of its history. DePauw University was established with the notion that it would be, “forever to be conducted on the most liberal principles, accessible to all religious denominations, and designed for the benefit of our citizens in general” (DePauw University, n.d.) For the first 125 years the campus had no chaplain. Prior to the creation of the position many individuals held responsibility for the ongoing religious life of the campus from the religious leadership of the local Methodist church,

Gobin Memorial United Methodist Church to the University's Council on Religious Life. The council, founded in 1948, consisted of representatives of a wide variety of Christian denomination-based groups as well as representatives from Unitarian and Jewish student organizations (Council on Religious Life, 1960) and was responsible for a wide array of religious programming.

Like many small, religiously affiliated liberal arts colleges DePauw wrestled with the role of religion on campus. Many of these institutions were founded in the mid-to-late 1800s at a moment when there was a strong voice for the protestant evangelism of the Midwest. This notion held that by simply planting Protestant Christian colleges the Protestant Christian viewpoint would remain dominant over Catholic voices, which had increased with immigration. However, these institutions could not afford to identify only with the denominations that founded them. In order to remain viable they had to educate all students who were able to attend, regardless of the religious affiliations of those students (Marsden, 1994). The rise of new forms of scholarship also forced changes in theological understanding about the role and authority of Christian teachings. Just as the structure of the curriculum changed from a prescribed model designed to educate clergy to a broader curriculum designed to elevate new forms of scholarship and scientific research so, too, did the role and understanding of religious identity change. In his history, *The Soul of the American University*, George M. Marsden argues that this gradual change came to a head in the 1950s with William F. Buckley, Jr.'s publication, *God and Man at Yale*. In this publication Buckley contended that Yale had become a, "hotbed of atheism and collectivism" (Marsden, 1994, p. 10) playing on fears of communism. Marsden contends that what is most surprising is how

little remembered the religious dimensions of Buckley's argument were just forty years later, writing that "[i]t seems almost inconceivable that there could have been a national controversy involving the question of whether a major university was sufficiently Christian" (1994, p. 10). Marsden suggested that by the 1990s no major university would want to be considered Christian at all. This change came about as a result of enlightenment thinking which proposed that, "religious viewpoints... were... unscientific and socially disruptive" and liberal Protestantism, which allowed the exclusion of religious viewpoints "on the grounds that traditional Christian beliefs were unscientific...[and]... that cultural development advanced the Kingdom of God" (Marsden, 1994, p. 429).

DePauw's chaplaincy, like many others, was born into this debate and the beginning of this chaplaincy must be read in light of responses like Buckley's to shifts in the religious identity of higher education. As higher education lost its distinctly Protestant Christian character, institutions responded to critiques that they were not properly attending to the religious needs of their students by hiring chaplains. The chaplain was to ensure that young men and women remained connected to their religious identity, or obtained the correct Protestant Christian identity, while they were in college. In addition, these positions relieved the university president of the burden of planning chapel services and often took on teaching responsibilities.

In the 1954-1955 academic year DePauw University received a grant from the Board of Education of the Methodist Church to study the religious attitudes and backgrounds of DePauw students (Riggs, 1956). This report utilized four separate survey types to consider the religious identity of students, their religious

education, the way that they understood religious and social concepts, and how they spent their time with regard to engagement with religious activities. While the author indicated that the results of each section were given without analysis, the format and questions contained within the document show a bias that responds to Buckley's challenge to Yale in 1951. Little to no attention was given to non-Christian students and the focus of the results was on the largest percentage of respondents in any category: mainline Protestants. The document affirms DePauw's continued commitment to mainline Protestant Christianity and seems to assuage any concern that this college, which still identified publicly as a Christian institution, was at risk of walking away from that heritage. However, this image of what type of religious life was most important was already shifting on campus. As DePauw began to consider adding a chaplain to its staff, the Council on Religious Life was trying to assess its purpose in an increasingly secular institution.

### **Crocker's Framework for Understanding Religious Life**

In 1960, David A. Crocker wrote a review of DePauw's Council on Religious Life as a way to comment on the challenges facing the group. In it he states that the council had been apathetic towards its duties in the three years prior and that if it were to fulfill its role successfully it would need to have a clearer sense of its purpose (Crocker, n.d.). At the time the Council on Religious Life was responsible for oversight of all religious life on campus including programs for vocational exploration, Religious Education Week, study groups, and chapel meetings.

For Crocker there were three possibilities for how the Council might

address religious life on campus. In the first model, religious life was Protestant and Christian in character. This model represented the early stages of chaplaincy in higher education with its focus on the perpetuation of Protestant Christianity. This model was commonplace into the 1950s but was slowly being unsettled. In the second model religious life expanded, remaining Christian but broadly so by including Catholic voices. The second model reflected the transition in chaplaincy in the 1960s and 1970s, which was perceived as broadly Christian and sometimes attended to other religious traditions in an effort to engage campus pluralism. The third model embraced interfaith engagement and transformed the Council to an interfaith council. The third model was a truly interfaith chaplaincy which allows for students, faculty and staff to grow in their particular religious convictions while also encouraging them to learn about how to build healthy communities in a religiously pluralistic environment. In this model chaplains cared for all faculty, staff and students through programming designed to engage religious literacy, attend to the ritual needs of the community, encourage the faith development of individuals in the religious identity of their choosing, and support the right of individuals to identify with no religious tradition at all. This final model emerged in practice in the 1980s and 1990s where the best examples of this work include the creation of the chaplaincy at Wellesley College where Victor Kazanjian created the Education as Transformation project. Crocker's proposal of these three models is surprising when considering that Rigg's report on religious life at DePauw, with its lack of reference to religious diversity, was published just four years before Crocker's analysis. Crocker's models were important, not only for what they displayed about perceptions of religious life

at DePauw in 1960, but for the way they offered a frame for broader understandings of how to engage in chaplaincy in higher education.

### **Crocker's First Model of Chaplaincy at DePauw**

#### **The Methodist Campus Ministry**

At the same time that the University was utilizing the Council on Religious Life to connect the religious life of the institution to the administrative work of the institution, the Methodist Student Movement was thriving at Gobin Memorial United Methodist Church (Phillips & Baughman, 2003). While the Methodist Student Movement was a campus ministry (a Christian student group hosted by an outside organization in contrast to a chaplaincy program, which would be funded by the university) it served much of the function of an early chaplaincy by providing religious education, pastoral care and counseling to students. A full time advisor to this group was hired by the congregation beginning in the 1940s and the role continued until at least the late 1960s.

In a conversation about the early days of the chaplaincy, Dr. Robert Newton, emeritus Professor of Religion and Philosophy, recalled two key figures as Chaplains to the University, the first being the Rev. Samuel Kirk (Smanik, 2016). While Kirk was not a chaplain hired by the university, he was the Advisor to the Methodist Student Movement from 1961-1966 (Phillips & Baughman, 2003). Newton remembered Kirk's work with students during the racially charged 1960's. Kirk's work with students, according to Newton, was pivotal in creating change during the civil rights movement on campus (Smanik, 2016). For him, Kirk was one of the best chaplains the university had in its history (Smanik, 2016). The blurred lines between the role of the congregation

and the institution in supporting the religious lives of the students made room for chaplaincy work to happen in a variety of ways without an official campus chaplain, and allowed for the delay of hiring the first chaplain to the university. In comparison, Carleton College hired its first university chaplain in 1946 (Colwell, 2016) at the same time that Gobin Memorial United Methodist Church was hiring the first advisors to the Methodist Student Movement (Phillips & Baughman, 2003).

In the fall of 1960 Russell Humbert, then President of DePauw University, began formal correspondence with the Reverend Elmer I. Carriker, DePauw University class of 1935, in the hopes that Carriker would accept the position of Director of Church Relations, a role vacated upon the death of the Reverend Orville Davis (Humbert, 1960). Finally, on April 13, 1962 the university issued a press release which stated, "United States Air Force Chaplain (Colonel) Elmer I. Carriker, former DePauw University alumni secretary, is returning to the university as director of church relations" (Turk, 1962).

#### **The Chaplaincy Begins**

As director of church relations, Carriker's early work focused on the relationships between the institution and the North and South Conferences of Indiana United Methodism, as well as relationships with local churches including Gobin Memorial United Methodist Church. But over time those duties shifted to include increasing amounts of work with students and it was expected that this work was Christian education (Crocker, 1960, p. 2). By 1966, just four years after his formal appointment, Carriker's title had shifted to University Chaplain, and he had begun to assume new responsibilities for the ongoing pastoral care of the university. No documents exist that definitively say why

this shift occurred. However, when Carriker left in 1967 he wrote to then President Kerstetter to share his belief that the positions of University Chaplain and Director of Church Relations should be separated as it was not possible to give both roles the time they required. This indicates the value that Carriker placed on the role of the chaplain. He writes, “The present job structure of the Chaplain Office at DePauw has mostly ‘grewed like Topsy’, and as I discern the pattern of this job title at most places, my general activities have been somewhat peculiar” (Carriker, 1967). His recommendation was that the university hire a chaplain whose main responsibility was to attend to religious life on campus, coordinate the chapel schedule, and teach (Carriker, 1967). Just one year after accepting the title University Chaplain, Carriker resigned his post to take on the position of assistant to the President at Baker University (Associated Press, 1967).

In the spring of 1968, the Reverend Marvin C. Swanson was hired to replace Carriker as University Chaplain with rank of Assistant Professor. In keeping with Carriker’s recommendations, Swanson had experience as a chaplain in a private high school and had obtained both the S.T.B. and Ph.D. degrees that Carriker felt were important to the position (Farber, 1968). Swanson was hired in part to reimagine the role of the chaplain on campus particularly as it related to the director of the Methodist Christian Action Movement, formerly the Methodist Student Movement (Phillips & Baughman, 2003). In keeping with Carriker’s recommendations, Swanson took over responsibility for the planning of chapel services and oversight of student religious life, but was also asked to continue oversight of church relations (Kerstetter, 1968).

Swanson was passionate about international studies and devoted much of

his time to this work. In 1971 his duties were changed and he became the director of international studies in addition to the role of university chaplain (Phillips & Baughman, 2003). It quickly became clear that these two roles could not be performed adequately by a single person and President Kerstetter approached the North and South conferences of the United Methodist Church in Indiana to request funding for a full time chaplain to the university. In 1974 the Rev. Dr. Fred Lamar was appointed to the position.

The start of the chaplaincy was the history of a school that claimed to be non-sectarian but functioned in a very sectarian manner, wrestling with the role of mainline Protestant Christianity on campus. The early chaplains coordinated services, attended to the spiritual nurture of the protestant students, and faculty and supported religious programs, but the question of how those roles are embraced on a non-sectarian campus was not yet part of the consideration. This would change over the next 20 years.

### **Crocker’s Second Model of Chaplaincy at DePauw**

#### **An Ecumenical Christian Chaplaincy**

In many ways Lamar was the first chaplain to take the post with the intent to stay and create a broad ministry to the university. Carriker was hired as Director of Church Relations and only held the post of chaplain for a short period of time and while Swanson was hired to re-define the role of chaplain, he used the post as a springboard to other meaningful work within the institution. Lamar entered this work at a moment in which religion in higher education was broadening its perspective, and liberal Protestantism had taken on a particular social justice focused perspective in response to the Civil Rights Movement



and the Vietnam War. Of this period Marsden writes,

the fact that, among white Americans, more traditional religious views often correlated with racist views underscored the point that in public places religious privilege was dangerous. Hence... the more it identified itself with a social mission the less prominent should be its own identifiable social influence. (1994, p. 415)

The start of Lamar's chaplaincy also coincided with the end of the chaplaincy of the Rev. William Sloane Coffin at Yale. Coffin was one of the best known chaplains in higher education and his focus on a chaplaincy that embraces social justice continues to influence the profession. During his tenure at Yale, Coffin took a strong position as a supporter in the Civil Rights Movement and held leadership roles in clergy movements against the Vietnam War. Describing that era, Rev. Ian Oliver, the current, and first specifically Protestant, chaplain at Yale, writes that the chaplains, "imagined religion without stiffness, as an eternally radical prophetic movement always challenging authority, tradition, and puritanical morality... Radical 1960s-era chaplains destroyed their own role as the sole public moral voice of the university" (2014, p. 51).

Prior to his appointment as university chaplain, Lamar had been a pastor of a small congregation in Alabama, and the director of the Wesley Foundation at the University of Missouri-Rolla. Lamar's understanding of faith formation was born in the practical work of pastoring a southern Methodist congregation. The congregation expected a conservative pastor, focused on preaching, but in Lamar they received a dedicated Methodist who was also committed to the ideals of Christian social justice. Early in his appointment Lamar realized that preaching which focused on social justice and racial

reconciliation would not be well received by the congregation and began to offer mission programming to the youth, which would offer hands on experiences to help them understand social justice in a Christian framework. In turn, the youth advocated for social justice with their families and began to shift the focus of the congregation. Of this experience Lamar writes,

I began to discover a principle that changed my concept of ministry. In our time, radical changes in the value structures are seldom accomplished by verbal forms of communication, either by preaching about the need for change or by didactic teaching on ethical issues. In order for persons to heed the call for a significant change in their life commitments, they must have some experience which opens their minds and hearts to the need for change and encourages them to think such change is possible. (1984, p. 14)

This understanding of the role of experience in education would influence Lamar's ministry for the rest of his life.

Lamar brought his understanding of experiential Christian education to this position at University of Missouri-Rolla and immediately began working on programs of service, which in turn grew the size of the campus ministry. Over time the program was so successful that it merged with the United Campus Christian Fellowship to create the United Ministries in Higher Education (Lamar, 1983). These moves solidified Lamar's understanding of the role of experience in helping students develop their understanding of Christianity, and offered him the opportunity to explore truly ecumenical Christian work on a college campus.

Lamar brought these experiences with him to DePauw and immediately began the work of creating a similar campus ministry at the university. At his arrival on campus

Lamar inherited the work that had previously been done by Swanson, as well as a standing conversation about the role of the Methodist Student Movement the campus ministry which continued at Gobin Memorial United Methodist Church. Lamar's appointment by the Methodist bishop in response to the university's requests for a chaplain granted him the ability to work between and within the local church and university. For at least the first half of his time at DePauw, the focus of the ministry was community service. Lamar used his congregational and campus ministry experience of service as a venue for religious learning, the fundraising skills he gained in working in a campus ministry, and his experience in creating Christian communities to begin this new ministry as an ecumenical Christian project with significant external funding.

Begun in 1971, the Winter Term program at DePauw was created to allow students an opportunity to complete a project or original research. While the program was relatively new when Lamar arrived on campus, it had already received national notice in a *U.S. News & World Report* article dated January 29, 1973. This innovative program was the perfect opportunity for Lamar to expand his work in Christian experiential education. Faculty were already leading courses abroad during Winter Term and Lamar had experience leading mission trips during his time at University of Missouri-Rolla.

Lamar began the Winter Term in Mission program in 1974 and within 4 years it had attracted national attention. The Congressional Record from January 4, 1978 includes a recognition of "DePauw University's Service Program," which highlights the extensive service program being conducted in the campus ministry program through the Chaplain's Living Unit Council, Winter Term in Mission, and

names Chaplain Fred Lamar specifically. These programs were said to reach more than half the student body in any given year between one day service projects, longer term commitments in the DePauw Community Services program and Winter Term in Mission programs. The Winter Term in Mission program was so successful that students camped out in front of the offices the evening before registration for a chance at the trip of their choice.

In 1984, ten years after his appointment to DePauw University, Lamar was granted a sabbatical and during this time published, *The Role of the College Chaplain at the Church-Related College: A Personal Statement*. The text was part autobiography and part theology of chaplaincy and offered an important window into his work. In this document Lamar painted his theology as one that was purely Christian. Of his position at DePauw he wrote,

the chaplain's program with the assistance of the university should attempt to produce educated men and women whose lives have been transformed through an experience with the redeeming power of Jesus Christ and who have accepted the challenge to respond to his call for love and justice in the world by living as a changed people in our contemporary society. (Lamar, 1983, p. 25)

Lamar arrived at DePauw with the understanding that he was serving an institution with a distinctly Christian mission (Lamar, 1994). But in the late 1970s this changed and the DePauw bulletin of 1976/1978 was the last of these documents to describe religious life as a program that embraced "the ideals and objectives of Christian education" (Maloney, 1976, p. 82). It appeared that by the late 1970s DePauw embraced its non-sectarian identity in all aspects of its life, including religious life.

By the spring of 1994 shifts in the national conversation about the importance of community service led to an emphasis on secular service. At the same time it was clear that the work of the chaplain was no longer only about Christian education. In a letter to Bishop Woodie W. White, Lamar wrote that the programs for service had been separated from the work of the chaplain's office and were preparing to move into a new space on campus (Lamar, 1995). In the letter Lamar contended that these shifts were a result of the promotion of secular service and learning on the part of the Bush and Clinton administrations. While this was likely true to a degree it is also likely that these shifts were the result of changes in the broader conversation about the role of service engagement and the problematic connections to Christian missionary work. As the service programs moved out of the chaplain's office the programs of religious life expanded to include voices of increasing religious diversity and the chaplaincy embraced religious pluralism.

### **Crocker's Third Model of Chaplaincy at DePauw**

#### **The Chaplaincy Stumbles towards Pluralism**

At the end of his tenure, Lamar's programs had shrunk considerably and his way of answering the question of what it means to be a chaplain in higher education had shifted as well. Lamar moved from a model of chaplaincy that was ecumenically Christian with an emphasis on Christian education to one that acknowledged and supported the burgeoning religious pluralism on campus.

In a memo to then President Bob Bottoms, Lamar indicated his planned retirement date of December 1997 (Lamar, 1995). Upon Lamar's departure, President Bottoms was left to answer Edward's

question anew in light of the increasing religious diversity on campus. DePauw had always been a non-sectarian institution, and by the mid-1990s was no longer considering itself a Christian college in any manner. Chapel had almost evaporated but Bottoms, who was an ordained United Methodist minister, also had a clear sense of the importance of religious life on campus.

Nationally the conversation about religious life had also changed. With his publication of *The Soul of the American University* Marsden presented a compelling case that not only had education lost its soul, it had moved to established nonbelief (1994). However, "other scholars were beginning to detect signs that the privatization of religion in America may have passed its peak" (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012, p. 26). New conversations which challenged objectivity and expanded cultural viewpoints in the classroom also shifted the role of religion on campus. Of this moment in history Jacobsen and Jacobsen wrote, "Religious perspectives are unavoidably intertwined with multiculturalism and epistemological pluralism; the divergent ways that people make sense of reality are often influenced by their own religious or religion-like views of the world" (2012, p. 29).

Bottom's solution was to attempt to elevate the role of chaplain once again by changing the title and hiring a Dean of Chapel who would connect the university to Gobin Memorial United Methodist Church while also supporting the religious lives of the students. This decision was intended to benefit the university and Gobin Memorial United Methodist Church, a congregation with dwindling membership. The job description for this new position indicated that the university was looking for someone to preach on Sunday mornings to the congregation, to fulfill the role of religious leadership for the university through



oversight of the Office of Spiritual Life, and teach (Openings, 1997).

In anticipation of this change Rev. Dr. Bob Eccles, retired faculty and volunteer Associate Chaplain, wrote a thorough description of the current work of the chaplain's office, highlighting programs to support religious diversity, and the reality that two of the staff were retired volunteer Associate Chaplains (Eccles, R. S., Personal Correspondence, October 14, 1997). Eccles' main concern was whether or not a Dean of Chapel with responsibility to both a worshipping Christian congregation and a university could balance the competing needs of each community without forsaking one for the other. The chaplaincy, "successfully met students' needs and desire for ministry" up to this point and Eccles expressed a deep concern for the future (Eccles, R. S., The Encouragement of Religious Life, October 14, 1997, p. 4).

Eccles was not the only one concerned about this transition; students and faculty were also troubled by the new position. Dr. Paul B. Watt from the Asian Studies and Religious Studies Departments, wrote, "given the description of the position that I have read, I believe that the new deanship has the potential to weaken efforts made to date in the direction of diversity and to marginalize students and faculty of minority religious views" (Watt, P. B., Personal Correspondence, April 20, 1997). This concern was echoed by students who worried that the interfaith programs created by Lamar might be undone by a new Dean who was more focused on Protestant Christianity.

Into this complicated landscape the Rev. Dr. Wes Allen was hired in the winter of 1997. Allen's position was challenging in many of the ways anticipated by critics of the new position. Significant tension emerged between Allen and the pastor of the congregation, Rev. Rick Miller. In addition

to disagreements about the format of worship services and the direction in which the congregation should be headed, Allen and Miller disagreed about significant theological points such as the inclusion of women and LGBT people in leadership (Allen, 1998). The disagreements between the two were so extensive and irreconcilable that they split the church and Allen began a second worship service held on Sunday evenings.

Allen's tenure at DePauw was not without its successes. In an effort to expand interfaith engagement, he began a series of interfaith chapels, designed to gather students during pivotal moments of their college career to seek the wisdom of their various religious traditions. The diversity of religious organizations expanded to include a Muslim Student Association, a multicultural music group, and interdenominational worship experiences (Allen, 2000).

Allen also worked with a student to create the first Center for Peace and Justice named after an emeritus faculty member, Rev. Dr. Russell Compton. Compton had been a beloved professor known for a dedication to civil rights guided by his faith commitments as a United Methodist minister. Upon his retirement years earlier Compton became a volunteer chaplain along with Eccles. Taking on this role Compton connected chaplaincy to social justice in a physical way just as Coffin had done before him at Yale. Thus it was natural for the Compton Center to emerge from and remain connected to the chaplaincy in its early years. In 2001 Allen left the deanship in order to accept a faculty position at Drew Theological Seminary (Allen, 2016).

Following Dr. Allen's departure the Rev. Dr. Bill Hamilton accepted the position of Interim Dean of Chapel for one year. Hamilton, an ordained Presbyterian, was trained in conflict resolution and had

experience in interim congregational leadership. The following year he was listed in the directory as “Director, Compton Center for Peace and Justice; Part-time Assistant Professor of History and Philosophy” (*Directory*, 2003-2004, p. 22) and no one was listed as leading Religious Life on campus. In 2004 the Rev. Dr. Larry Burton was appointed by the bishop as the pastor of Gobin Memorial United Methodist Church and University Chaplain and Rev. Brad Tharpe was hired by DePauw University as Associate University Chaplain (*Directory*, 2004-2005, p. 15, 34). Both Burton’s and Tharpe’s offices were located in Gobin Memorial United Methodist Church and the expectation was that the positions would serve both the church and the university. Burton and Tharpe expanded upon Allen’s work and Bottoms’ vision of connection between the church and university by co-leading the congregation and furthering an interfaith program on campus. Only three years after his appointment, Burton was appointed by the bishop to a new position in congregational leadership.

The Rev. Dr. P.T. Wilson was appointed as University Chaplain in July of 2006 by Bishop Mike Coyner of the Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church and took on the role as left by Burton (*Directory*, 2006-2007, p. 38). Wilson did not bring chaplaincy experience to the appointment and made little change to the established pattern of the chaplaincy as set out by Burton. Tharpe continued in the position of Associate Chaplain under Wilson until President Bottoms changed Tharpe’s appointment from Associate Chaplain to Director of Spiritual Life. This new position would report to the vice president of student life while the university chaplain continued to report to the president. This action split the chaplaincy from much of the ongoing spiritual life of the students. Additionally, as

Wilson continued to work to maintain the chaplaincy alongside pastoral leadership it became clear that no university chaplain could fulfill the functions of both chaplain and pastor.

Rev. Gretchen Person arrived in 2008 to replace Tharpe as Director of Spiritual Life and remained for nine months. From 2009-2010 the position was vacant as the university re-considered the role on campus and what kind of individual would best meet the needs of the institution. In 2010 the position was filled by Rev. Kate Smanik. In 2014 Wilson was offered a new appointment, and a clergy couple, the Rev. Bryan Langdoc and the Rev. Maureen Knudsen Langdoc, were offered the respective positions. Knudsen Langdoc accepted the role of university chaplain while Langdoc took on the role of pastor to the congregation.

The arrival of the Langdocs to campus coincided with the idea of then-President Brian Casey, to revive the university chapel and return to a vision of religious leadership similar to that outlined by Bottoms, with a Dean of Chapel who would oversee interfaith programming, community service and social justice programs for the campus. The dean would partner with the congregation as needed but have no official responsibility for leadership of the life of that community. In 2015, Casey was hired as the President of Colgate University to begin in July 2016 (DePauw University, 2015) and the idea of the university chapel was abandoned.

In this context the staff were left to re-imagine the work of chaplaincy and once again answer Edwards’ question. This work was made more complex as the university reestablished connections between the chaplaincy, community service programs and social justice programs. The university now finds itself living into religious pluralism, exploring connections between

religious commitment, community engagement and social action in an activist moment in national history, and relying on the chaplaincy to guide it through the treacherous waters. In these spaces the chaplains are continually reevaluating their work, looking to colleagues for best practices in building community and supporting religiously diverse faculty, staff and students.

### Conclusion

The history of the chaplaincy at DePauw is both a unique narrative and one that mirrors the shift in the role of religion nationally. Read against the backdrop of historical texts such as David Crocker's analysis of the early Council on Religious Life at DePauw, *No Longer Invisible: Religion in University Education* and *The Soul of the American University* one can see the way that DePauw's history simply follows larger societal trends. And yet, the way that the chaplaincy gave birth to a nationally recognized, expansive community service program and later to a unique social justice program makes this story particular to DePauw. The work of the Rev. Dr. Fred Lamar and Rev. Dr. Russell Compton shaped the history of the chaplaincy in the direction of social justice, and unintentionally moved the institution from a Christian college to a secular institution through their efforts for social justice, inclusion and diversity. As Jacobsen and Jacobsen write,

paying attention to religion in higher education today is not at all a matter of imposing faith or morality on anyone; it is a matter of responding intelligently to the questions of life that students find themselves necessarily asking as they try to make sense of themselves and the world in an era of ever-increasing social,

intellectual and religious complexity. (2012, p. 30)

Like many campuses DePauw wrestles with the place and role of religion on campus, struggling between the competing demands of alumni who fondly remember the way the first model of chaplaincy shaped their religious understanding in the 1950s, faculty who wonder if religion has any place in the modern society, and students who long for deep and meaningful exploration of the religious pluralism that will shape their lives and careers.

Edwards answered his own question by stating that chaplaincy, "can provide certain resources and avenues not found elsewhere in the College: the value of reflection and calm; the idea of service to one's fellows; the beauty of liturgical music and literature; coming to terms with marriage, grief, loneliness, competitiveness, meaning and the fact of belief in faith" (Colwell, 2016, p. 92). Chaplains often embody these values on the campuses they serve by adding ritual in moments of transition from opening day to graduation and in times of grief and death. While chaplains often serve private institutions with a history of religious affiliation, other institutions are finding the value of hiring religious professionals who care for the religious needs of the community. As colleges and universities reevaluate the existing structures for religious life to better serve the needs of their students, faculty and staff, looking to the work done by chaplains may be instructive in finding new ways to engage religious diversity, support spiritual exploration, and offer faculty and staff religious council, especially on rural campuses that are often far from the religious communities where members of minority religious traditions would find support. It is in this complex new landscape that chaplaincy is once again surfacing as a

critical part of the life of intellectual communities across the country.

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