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CHAPTER 5

*Scientia et Religio ex Uno Fonte*

In the *Voice* of December 9, 1960, appeared a statement that can be observed as a turning point in the history of religion at the College. It covered some seventeen hundred words, signed by nearly all of the forty-four Presbyterian Scholars. To be a Presbyterian Scholar—and more of them chose Wooster than any other Presbyterian-related college—was a big deal for young people who had been grounded in their local churches and had survived a national competition to receive the award. These were not the antiwar protestors or hippies who became so visible later in the '60s; rather, these students were so scrupulous that while the statement declared full support from thirty-nine of the forty-four, the students noted one of their number who disagreed with the statement, another who didn't think it went far enough, two who questioned a single element, and a fifth who simply announced neutrality. So their carefully crafted, more-in-sorrow-than-in-anger letter attracted the attention of everyone at the College, including Lowry, who, according to his biographer, considered this "his worst ordeal as president."

The Scholars began by decrying "the mutual inability of the administration and students to express their purposes and desires in terms understandable to each other. This lack of communication is basic." They contended that unlike in earlier generations, even students of strong religious convictions chose Wooster for its academic strength, not its church connection, and, "at present much of the exposure to Christianity at Wooster is superficial because it makes no more than a passing attempt to relate Christianity to the problems, questions, and issues in the student's mind." They complained that Westminster Presbyterian Church, trying

to be both a church and a college chapel, did not satisfy either need. They sought not ending a religion requirement in the curriculum but rather “expanding the choice of courses.” And they contended that faculty quality could be improved by withdrawing the rule that “it shall be the declared policy of the College to employ as regular members of the Faculty only men and women who are active members in good standing of some evangelical Christian church.”

Then they offered some remedies for what they called the College’s “intellectual provincialism”: Establish “departments in Eastern and African [studies] to broaden the student’s understanding of the world in which he lives.” Increase “the number of foreign students.” Decrease “the percentage of Wooster graduates on the faculty and in the administration.” They also suggested “a college chaplain who could devote his full time and energy to his campus ministry.”

The Scholars’ statement led to a committee formed by the Student Senate and the Student Christian Association, which took its cautious conclusions to the Board of Trustees the following March. In a subsequent report, delivered in chapel on May 15, 1961, five months after the statement, committee members told their fellow students: “We tried to indicate [to the trustees] that much of the dissatisfaction which has been expressed on the campus this year has arisen out of the belief that Wooster can do a better job of living up to its ideals, and not out of the belief that Wooster should change its basic ideas or goals. By doing this we hoped to make it clear that the specific recommendations for changes in college rules . . . represent more than just normal student griping.”

In the chapel report, the committee declared, “First, we recognize that the church which supports this college does so because it believes that God became man in Jesus Christ. . . . Whether or not an individual student at Wooster accepts or rejects this belief can never affect the fact that this belief is the reason for the church-related college.” This statement itself was perhaps a leap of faith that many students and faculty might not accept; in any case, the report contended that the College’s true religious sense could not be maintained by forced rules. For example, the requirement that students attend the church of their choice at least eight times a semester should be changed to “the college encourages” such attendance, which “we feel would eliminate the present hypocritical attitude.” Dealing with the religious restrictions on faculty, which might keep some professors from

accepting positions at Wooster, the committee was extremely cautious; it suggested that the rule might be eliminated but might even be retained if “concern over the academic standards of the school could be largely alleviated without making an actual rule change.” Finally, the committee dealt with “that overworked word, communication . . . that the most important change for the health of the Wooster campus is the creation of a climate of opinion in which general campus discussion about college problems and intelligent student efforts to effect changes, is considered by all to be normal and natural.”

The March 1961 meeting of the board had already portended a significant new element. President Lowry announced that James Blackwood, the pastor at Westminster for nine years who had been a stalwart within the church and a respected citizen of the city, would leave Wooster as soon as he could find another post. Blackwood later wrote that after the Presbyterian Scholars suggested he could not handle both the church and student chaplaincy, “nobody had to tell the pastor he was done for. He had known that a long time.” Later that year, he left for a pastorate in Florida, where, among other things, he turned his writing skills to preparing a definitive biography of Howard Lowry. Blackwood’s two successors over the next decade, Bev Asbury and Ray Swartzback, turned out to be extraordinarily successful at both the pastorate and the chaplaincy.

As anyone with a passing interest in the College’s history knows, nearly all of the changes the Scholars sought have been realized: the religion question was removed from the faculty application in 1978; the first Jewish faculty member, historian David Gedalecia, joined the College in 1981, and others have since; an official chaplain, Linda Morgan-Clement—a Presbyterian—came aboard in 1996; scores of foreign students enrolled; a curriculum encompassing all world religions was developed. The Scholars’ letter didn’t bring about these changes—some came decades later—still, it was an opening. Change resulted because new minds came to the administration, faculty, and Board of Trustees, and certainly because the world outside left Wooster no choice but to look at itself, and the world, differently—to become and remain, in a word, relevant.

Needless to say, religion and the College have been intertwined since even before its beginnings. On the very first page of the first volume of Wooster’s history, Lucy Lillian Notestein conjures up this image of a Presbyterian minister, J. A. Reed, in the autumn of 1865, as

he looked, beyond the valleys of the Applecreek and Killbuck, to the hills. . . . With heart full, he dismounted, and at the edge of the woodland fell on his knees to give thanks for such beauty. Rising, he was startled with a new thought. What a site this would be for a college! What a place this for youth to come to for study, where in this view across the hills they might constantly be reminded of the glory of God! Again he sank to his knees. Might this be God's leading touching his heart? . . . that He might open the way for this college. . . . linked with that of the Church and its ministers.

The next year, the University of Wooster was officially organized. After being turned down by a Cleveland minister in their search for the first president, the trustees settled on Willis Lord, professor of didactic theology at a Presbyterian seminary in Chicago (it became McCormick Seminary). Lord's letter of acceptance spoke of "a new seat of liberal yet Christian learning" and closed, "I deeply feel the need of the hearty confidence and cooperation of the board and especially of the light and power that come only from God." On September 7, 1870, after prayers and hymns, Lord delivered an inauguration address startling in concept for its time: he took the controversial stand that women should be allowed to attend along with men, and he equated the study of modern languages with Greek and Latin. More, he insisted upon scientific study—Darwin's published theory was barely a decade old—which in no way conflicted with belief in God: "The hand which laid the foundations of the earth and balanced and lighted the stars in the heavens is the same hand that traced the lines and pages of the Bible; and that therefore, by no possibility, can the testimony of these great records conflict. There may be human misrepresentations of both; but there can be no jar in their real contents." President Lord's call seemed fitting for the new school's motto: *Scientia et Religio ex Uno Fonte*—Science and religion from one source.

A great number of things about The College of Wooster changed in its first three-quarters of a century, but one didn't: Lord's five successors—Archibald A. E. Taylor, Sylvester F. Scovel, Louis E. Holden, John C. White, and Charles F. Wishart—were all Presbyterian ministers. The first president not to be a minister was Howard F. Lowry, yet he was a devout Presbyterian layman, active in church leadership both on campus

and nationally—he was a trustee of both the Pittsburgh and McCormick theological seminaries and a member of the church’s Board of Foreign Missions.

In his first “Adventure in Education,” published in 1945, Lowry left no doubt about his views in a passage titled, “Religion and Education”: “At the heart of Wooster’s adventure is the Christian religion. . . . In many ways, therefore, led by a faculty of Christian men and women, Wooster is a training in practical Christianity. . . . The glory of God would be badly served by second-rate courses in the arts and sciences. Wooster denies that there is any real incompatibility between a Christian education and a liberal education.” Lest it be misunderstood, Wooster’s national reputation under Lowry was what he intended: it was seen as a church-related college of liberal thinkers with high academic standards. Beth Irwin Lewis, the daughter of missionary parents who spent many years on Wooster’s faculty and in the administration, said she was almost forbidden to apply to the College in 1952 because her extended family considered it too liberal.

Lowry’s successor, Garber Drushal, who was raised in the Brethren Church, appeared to think it necessary to become a Presbyterian as he became president of the College. Henry Copeland, who followed Drushal, was a devoted Presbyterian who, in his inaugural address, “A Place Apart,” stated, “Wooster was founded by Presbyterians who had the conviction that the Prophets, the Evangelists, the Apostles, and the Incarnate Word had provided glimpses of the timeless and the infinite and that divine principles of truth and righteousness ought to be incorporated into human affairs.” Copeland made religion a central element of many speeches and so often ended talks with prayer that friends complained he left his audience reluctant to applaud. The next president, Stan Hales, was an Episcopalian, thus the first leader of the College who was not a Presbyterian; in search committee discussions as he was approved in 1996, it seemed apparent that he was Christian, but no one even raised the question of his religious choice. Hales’s successor in 2007, Grant Cornwell, said he was raised an Episcopalian, then added, “Now I’m a philosopher. I have my own religious practices and beliefs.”

In the early years of Lowry’s presidency, Westminster Presbyterian Church was led by C. John L. Bates, a stately Canadian and the son of missionary parents, who became a civic leader in Wooster and whose

wife, Jean, founded a popular nursery school.<sup>1</sup> In 1952, the year Blackwood succeeded Bates, an informal census of Wooster students by religious preference counted 604 Presbyterians, about half the student body. The next highest denomination was Methodist, 112, followed by Congregational, 63; there were, among others self-identified, 18 Catholics, 2 Jews, 1 Buddhist, and 1 Universalist.

The 1960s, as everyone knows, led to many changes in the United States, in organized religion not least, and the Presbyterian Church nationally was in the progressive forefront. A considerable number of its clergy took active roles in the civil rights movement and gave early support to campaigns against the Vietnam War and in favor of the women's liberation movement. With such new priorities, certainly including how it would spend its money, and a rising skepticism about religion among students, in 1963 the church released a study called "The Church and Higher Education." This recommended, among other things, that Presbyterian colleges no longer demand that faculty be "active members of some evangelical Christian Church" and that the curriculum be broadened to include "a mature classroom encounter with the Judaic-Christian heritage." The latter had already become a part of the Wooster curriculum; the former took longer.

It was hardly surprising then that by the late '60s the Presbyterian Church decided to cut loose its colleges. In 1968 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA (not yet united with the southern church) voted that synods should relinquish control, accepting "the wisdom of the synods divesting themselves of the particular responsibilities for direct election or confirmation of trustees or the exercise of other responsibilities that represent latent powers over the governance of the college. The capacities for responsible action by both synod and college seem to be enhanced when the autonomy of each is recognized and when a mutual working agreement becomes characteristic of the relation." On June 20, 1969, the Synod of Ohio passed this motion: "The Synod of Ohio, through proper action of the judicatory, will release any owners of the College of Wooster and its assets to the Board of Trustees . . . and will give to the

1. The nursery school was founded in 1946 as the Junior Women's Club Nursery School. Since 1974, when the College took ownership, it has been called The College of Wooster Nursery School. After the Bates family left Wooster, the school was headed by Esther Young, Clare Adel Schreiber, Lynn Akam, Carol Stewart, then Joyce Murphy.

Board of Trustees . . . the full freedom of electing its Board of Trustees.” The College’s lawyer, Dan Funk, drew up the first change of incorporation detail in more than a century, which the board approved and was filed with the state. Whether any students noticed is problematic.

To its 1968 declaration, the Assembly had added that if any colleges wanted to remain church-related, they could adopt new covenants of affiliation with the synods. On Wooster’s behalf, Drushal negotiated such a covenant, which had two benefits: It pleased a large portion of the faculty by making clear that the College was freed from church ownership, and it also pleased important trustees and donors, as well as many alumni, because the covenant officially maintained Wooster’s ties to the church, the importance of which Drushal well understood. Citing “a great deal of misunderstanding” about the new order, in the fall of 1969 the relatively new president and relatively new Presbyterian said, “It should now be clear that The College of Wooster still remains a church-related institution of the United Presbyterian Church, USA, and that this relationship is expected to grow and develop through the years.” Every five years since, the covenant has been renewed (now with the Synod of the Covenant, which consists of the Presbyterian churches of Ohio and Michigan) without much ado and without a great deal of responsibility on either side; the synod makes a token \$10,000 annual gift to the College, which in turn gives it to Westminster.

It cannot be ignored that these changes were occurring in a time of national turmoil on many fronts—notably civil rights advancements in a stubborn South and furious protests against the Vietnam War—and inevitably the Wooster campus would be swept up in this unrest. Still, to an element on the Wooster board the College need not yield completely either to broad national change or to unwinding ties with the church. The Board had tasked the Committee on Religious Dimension, chaired by trustee Juliet Stroh Blanchard, to undertake a long-range study of the relationship between the College and the church, and on May 31, 1968—less than two months after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. and on the eve of the Robert Kennedy assassination—it began its report:

Basic Assumptions—Wooster is a Christian college. “Our educational experience has been, is now, and shall be rooted in the deep conviction of Protestant Christianity.” This commitment has been stated unequivocally in various ways in the Charter, Catalogue, and many College

publications and documents. . . . The Committee accepts these statements as the philosophical framework within which to examine the religious life of the College . . . Without resolving all of the ideological differences, the term “religious dimension” is interpreted not as something peripheral, or optional, or adjunct to the pursuit of knowledge, but as an integral part of the intellectual, personal, and social life of the college community . . . To put it very directly, if Wooster is, in fact, a Christian college, it ought to be different from other independent liberal arts colleges which make no such claim or which consider church-relatedness a handicap.

The twenty-six page report ranged across relations with the national Presbyterian Church and with Westminster, church-sponsored events on campus, the quality of the religion department, and student activities and standards of conduct. It accepted the idea that a certain number of church attendances should no longer be required but came down in favor of a required “chapel,” even though “its form, content, and title be revised to be more consistent with prevailing conditions.” It recommended an official Committee on Religious Dimension—which the board established and which remained part of the board’s governance structure for more than four decades. The report concluded: “The College of Wooster, conceived, nurtured, sustained by Christians for a century, in this new day seeks to be Christian in a pertinent, vital fashion.”

The committee evaluated the Department of Religion at the College as “outstanding.” All of its eleven faculty members—all male and four of them part-time—owned divinity degrees; eight had earned PhDs (Aurelia Takacs, who held degrees from Oxford University, Union Theological Seminary, and Columbia University, was the first woman to serve in the department, as a leave replacement in 1960–61.) It offered twenty-one different courses and averaged thirty to forty majors every year. The committee reserved special praise for the department as a “counseling resource.” “A discussion of religious and personal questions of individual students is a large part of the work [of the faculty].” Its model was Art Baird, the leading, and at times single, proponent of teaching “religion” as the department’s most important task and assuming a pastoral role. He inspired many students in the classroom, and a certain element of them turned to him for counseling outside the classroom.



Yet, by then, the faculty, chaired by Gene Tanner, who had come to the College in 1953, was assuredly reinventing itself. Baird's position led to some tension within the department, since his colleagues preferred a more academic approach and considered counseling better left to pastors. One of them, Harold Smith, a scholar of world religions, declined to teach sections of the New Testament. Bob Smith, a scholar of ancient civilizations, became so uninterested in the routines required of a Presbyterian minister that he gave up his ordination. Gordon Tait, a scholar of religious history, authored both a fiery essay on Prexy Wishart's ideological victory over fundamentalist William Jennings Bryan for leadership of the Presbyterian Church in 1923 and an important work on John Witherspoon, the Presbyterian minister who led New Jersey's delegation to the Continental Congress and signed the Declaration of Independence.

Not accidentally, in 1969 the Department of Religion became the Department of Religious Studies. As would be expected, change was coming to the curriculum. Historically, some courses on the Bible had been taught by ordained Presbyterian ministers without PhDs, and until the '60s students could fulfill their religion requirements with a semester course in the Old Testament and a semester course in the New Testament. It did not please scholars in the department that Virgilius Ferm, who had come to Wooster in 1927 and headed the philosophy department until his retirement in 1964, had taken upon himself the responsibility for teaching some of the more thoughtful courses in religion, dealing with the history of Christian thought and the philosophy of religion. By the late '60s, though, the religious studies scholars had taken over, and the yearlong religion requirement could be fulfilled with such courses as Christian Theology or American Religious Groups, which included Catholicism, Judaism, and various denominations of Protestantism.

Over the years, both course offerings and requirements continued dramatic change, and the 2011-12 catalog is illustrative. Courses in the religious studies department were presented in two areas. The first, called "Religious Traditions and Histories," offered such courses as "American Religious Communities, Chinese Religions, African Religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, The Life and Teachings of Jesus, The Life and Thought of Mahatma Gandhi, Global Christianity, Native American Religions and Culture, Third World Feminist Theology." The second area, "Issues and Theories in the Study of Religion," offered "Ethics in a Social Perspective,

Women and Religion, New Religious Movements, Religion and Spiritual Biography, Christian Ethics, Religion and Film.” Biblical Hebrew could fulfill the foreign language requirement. And the only theology requirement for graduates of the College was called “Religious Perspectives,” in which “students . . . complete a course from any department or program that examines the religious dimension of humankind in relation to issues of cultural, social, historical, or ethical significance.”

In one of those coincidental but quite wonderful turns of fate, the '60s upheaval in religious consciousness at the College—and elsewhere—brought to Westminster Church two ministers who could not have better fit the tenor of the times. The first was Bev Asbury, Blackwood's immediate successor in 1962; the second was Ray Swartzback, who followed Asbury in 1967 and served until 1972.

Asbury's journey to Wooster was unusual. A Georgia native and graduate of the Yale Divinity School, he landed at a liberal Southern Baptist church in Zebulon, North Carolina, at the age of twenty-four; inconveniently for the liberal young pastor, North Carolina was turning sharply conservative. Asbury's efforts on behalf of civil rights and labor unions led to establishment pressures that his church could not withstand, and, he recalled later, “I was asked to leave the state of North Carolina.” He moved to Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, where he became a Presbyterian, and soon took a Presbyterian pulpit in Webster Groves, a St. Louis suburb. The Yale chaplain, William Sloane Coffin, recommended him to Wooster's Westminster search committee. He was scouted by Bill Craig, chairman of the College's speech department; they hit it off, and he was offered the Westminster pulpit.

Soon Memorial Chapel was packed every Sunday, and popular demand led to the reprinting of his sermons. In Wooster, he led a civil rights march from campus downtown, and he took a dangerous journey to Hattiesburg, Mississippi, along with religious studies professors Tait and Harold Smith, to support voting rights for blacks. But perhaps more important he became a trusted counselor to students: a Danforth Foundation study indicated that he was advising more students than ministers at any other campus in the nation. He also shared with Vi Startzman, director of the medical center in Hygeia Hall, programs in pre-marriage counseling.

When Asbury left at the start of 1967 to become the first campus chaplain at Vanderbilt University, his surprising successor was Swartzback.

“Ray made me seem like a conservative,” joked Asbury, whom Swartzback invited back several times to preach at Wooster. A World War II veteran wounded in the Battle of the Bulge, Swartzback began his career at twenty-six in a working-class, white, industrial area of Cincinnati, with a pulpit that had gone unfilled for several years. A 1954 cover story in *Presbyterian Life*, titled “The Church Nobody Wanted,” chronicled his success at building the congregation from zero (his wife was the only person in the pews the first Sunday) to the hundreds. Then this young white man took over a black church in inner-city Detroit, which, during the riots of 1967, was the only structure in its neighborhood left undisturbed.

Swartzback, who told the Westminster search committee that he would serve no longer than five years, was attracted by the fresh opportunity but almost shell-shocked by his new surroundings, as he later described: “From a congregation steeped in the black experience, a congregation that knew how to syncopate, I found myself toe-tapping to the strains of Bach. From a support community composed of domestic workers, assembly-line hands, and political activists, I found myself confronting thirty-five retired missionaries, a host of PhDs, a smattering of students, and a goodly number of town persons—all deeply committed to the world of books.”

Fortunately for both Swartzback and Wooster, he arrived just as a growing number of white students were angered by the Vietnam War and the relatively small black student population was angered by what seemed a lack of administrative effort to increase diversity. Perhaps unique at the College, both groups grew to trust him. So when the campus seemed on the verge of eruption after the killings at Kent State, and when black students threatened to disrupt Homecoming, Swartzback was a steadying influence. In 1972, true to his word, he left the College to serve in Glenville, a largely black area of Cleveland, from where he went to a similar church in the New York City borough of Queens, before retiring to a small farm in southern Ohio, where he spent much of his later years devoted to his lifelong hobby of carving wooden songbirds.

Like those of other principal elements of the College, the religious perspective of the Board of Trustees changed dramatically over the years. The University of Wooster was incorporated in the state of Ohio on December 18, 1866, by the Synod of Ohio of the Presbyterian Church, and its first board declared: “Resolved that we enter upon the work of establishing the University of Wooster with the single purpose of glorifying God in

promoting sanctified education and thus furthering the interests of the church and its extension over the whole earth.” Since the Synod of Ohio continued as the College’s owner of record until the 1960s, it officially appointed all Board members, although approval of the board’s own choices had long been a formality. At that point, according to the bylaws, at least 75 percent of the board’s members were to be “communicant members” of the Presbyterian Church, and as many as five of its thirty-six members were Presbyterian ministers. (Almost never did a year go by in those days that at least one Presbyterian minister in Ohio was found worthy enough to receive an honorary degree from the College, and one year there were four.) The bylaws have been amended several times to reduce the Presbyterian requirement, first to 50 percent, then to 33 percent, then to 25 percent. No other religious qualification appears in the bylaws, and it is impossible to tell when a Roman Catholic was first elected to the board, but it is probable that, in 1974, Harold Freedlander, one of the city of Wooster’s most prominent businessmen and philanthropists, became the first Jewish member.

It didn’t seem to matter that not until 1969 did the board officially control the College; the differences were internal and moved with the times. Every board meeting and every board dinner into the twenty-first century began with a standard Christian prayer; now the prayer can be Hindu and offered in the language of Nepal, or the gathering can be welcomed with a Unitarian Universalist reading. The longstanding Committee on Synod Relations fell out of date as the College became independent. When in June 1969 the board replaced it with a Committee on Religious Dimension, the committee was led for its first eight years by Juliet Blanchard and bulwarked by fellow trustee Chuck Dilley—staunch defenders of the religious history and customs of the College. Blanchard told the board in June 1970 that the committee needed to offset the rumor—presumably from the 1968–69 negotiations—that “the churches have kicked out the colleges.”

The committee met regularly with the chairman of the Department of Religious Studies, the pastor of Westminster, and, eventually, the College chaplain, along with other interested faculty and students. In later years, led by John Compton, a renowned professor of philosophy at Vanderbilt University (and son of Arthur Compton), and Gene Bay, senior pastor of the Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church, it performed a significant role for the board, monitoring and reporting on both the changes in campus procedures—the end of required church attendance, reduction in the

number of days for chapel attendance, the change in name from “chapel” to “convocation,” the elimination of regular convocation—and also efforts to bring religion and spirituality to the College in new ways. In short, it served as a connecting link between the College as it had been—dear to large numbers of alumni—and the College as it was becoming. Ultimately that ended, too. The committee survived until 2011 when a reorganization of the board allowed it only ad hoc status, subsuming its responsibilities into two other committees, those of academic and student affairs.

That newer religious dimension of the College took another consequential turn in 1995. When dedicated trustee Henry R. Luce III (whose grandparents were Presbyterian missionaries in China) wanted to honor Henry Copeland upon his retirement as president, Copeland suggested endowing a College chaplaincy. Luce did, insisting upon naming the position the Henry Jefferson Copeland Campus Chaplain and Director of Interfaith Campus Ministry and adding the concession to history that the holder be a Presbyterian minister. Until this endowment, the role had been filled in eclectic ways. Some years, the minister of Westminster accepted the dual functions of pastor and chaplain; as responsibilities grew, an associate pastor at the church, Cynthia Jarvis and Barbara Battin among them, served as de facto chaplain. It was one of Copeland’s insights that the College would benefit from separating the chaplain’s role from the church, and the Luce endowment made that possible.

As it happened, the connection to Wooster’s history and the concession to modernity were nearly perfect: The first, and only (to 2012), campus chaplain was a Presbyterian minister, Linda Morgan-Clement, born in Hong Kong and raised in the United States, a classic tie to the missionaries who had gone to China in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, gone from Wooster to carry Christianity to the Far East, then frequently sent their children to the College and not infrequently returned to Wooster in retirement. That said, she was every bit a modern American woman. Morgan-Clement came to Wooster with no specific marching orders—it was not clear whether she was to be pastor only to students or to the entire campus—and she spent years creating her position. For example, she and the dean of students, Ken Plusquellec, himself an ordained Presbyterian minister, fairly quickly agreed that the College of Wooster Volunteer Network, students who work in the community, seemed appropriate to campus ministry, so she took charge of that. She also focused on building

a multi-faith campus ministry, rather than an interfaith one, which she believed locked students into “silos,” Muslims in one place, Jews in another, Christians in another.

Assigned to windowless space in the basement of Lowry Center, she went to work on diversity—what she called the “critical non-mass”—meaning that none of the faith groups, even Presbyterians by this time, was big enough to go off on its own. Although by no means do all students, whatever their faiths, belong, the College has, for instance, an active Newman Club for Catholic students and an active Hillel for Jewish students. A nun serves as the campus Catholic minister, and the national Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship supports a full-time staff member. Rabbi Joan Friedman, a scholar of religious history and a tenured faculty member, holds trifurcated status: one-third time a member of the Department of Religious Studies, one-third in the Department of History, and one-third an advisor to Jewish students. The year 2007 brought for the first time a Muslim to the annual Theologian-in-Residence program. Morgan-Clement also teaches—Feminist Theology and the Theology of Peace over the years as well as a course titled “Inter-Faith Dialogue.”

One of Morgan-Clement’s proudest contributions to the College was to develop a multi-faith baccalaureate service. Over the years, baccalaureate had come to seem vanilla—a Christian framework, usually with a Presbyterian minister preaching, but, as sensitivity grew for all faiths, without mention of the sacred. Then, with student input, the service became welcoming to parents of all religious faiths, with, for instance, names for the sacred in many faiths spoken and used. In 2011, the baccalaureate speaker was Rabbi Patricia Karlin, one of Stanford University’s chaplains. Morgan-Clement’s baccalaureate prayer that day began: “May our praise rise like incense and our gratitude soar like music, Gracious Creator. We have come to this place from across the globe; drawn together for the lives of our seniors, a shared love of learning, and dreams of a better world. We thank you for binding us together across oceans of difference—Obvious and invisible, Explored and denied, Respected and repressed—All of which have become a part of this place that we call Wooster. We are grateful for so much.”