

# THE DECREE

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"Wesleyan's Student Voice Since 1984"

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## Convocation opens 'year of reflection'

North Carolina Wesleyan College held its Opening Convocation ceremony Sept. 14 in the Dunn Center, using the annual occasion to reflect upon the Institutional Goals for NCWC and to address some of the questions that they raise.

Open to the entire Wesleyan community, the program was highlighted by four short presentations from members of the Wesleyan community — Rev. Edward F. Hill II, Dr. Tyrone Bledsoe, Dr. Mary Lou Steed, and J. Michael Hoppe.

Dr. John B. White, president of Wesleyan, provided the Invocation and the Closing Remarks, while Rev. Kirk B. Oldham introduced both the program and the speakers. There were also opening remarks by both Dr. Robert S. Trullinger, vice president and dean of academic affairs, and Justin Renville, president of the SGA. A musical number was also in the program, performed by Erma Hedgepeth with accompaniment by Katrina Lewis.

The Opening Convocation marked the beginning of what Oldham called a "year of reflection."

"We are launching a year-long discussion of our motto...and of our relationship to the United Methodist Church," he said, pointing out that this was brought about because "invariably,

changes in both higher education and the Church will force us to re-examine our identity as a church related college."

He went on to draw attention to "the important questions we must ask of ourselves and of the church" and to challenge the community to find answers for these questions:

- Take away the financial support and who are we as a college of the church?

- What distinguishes us as a church-related college as opposed to other institutions of higher education?

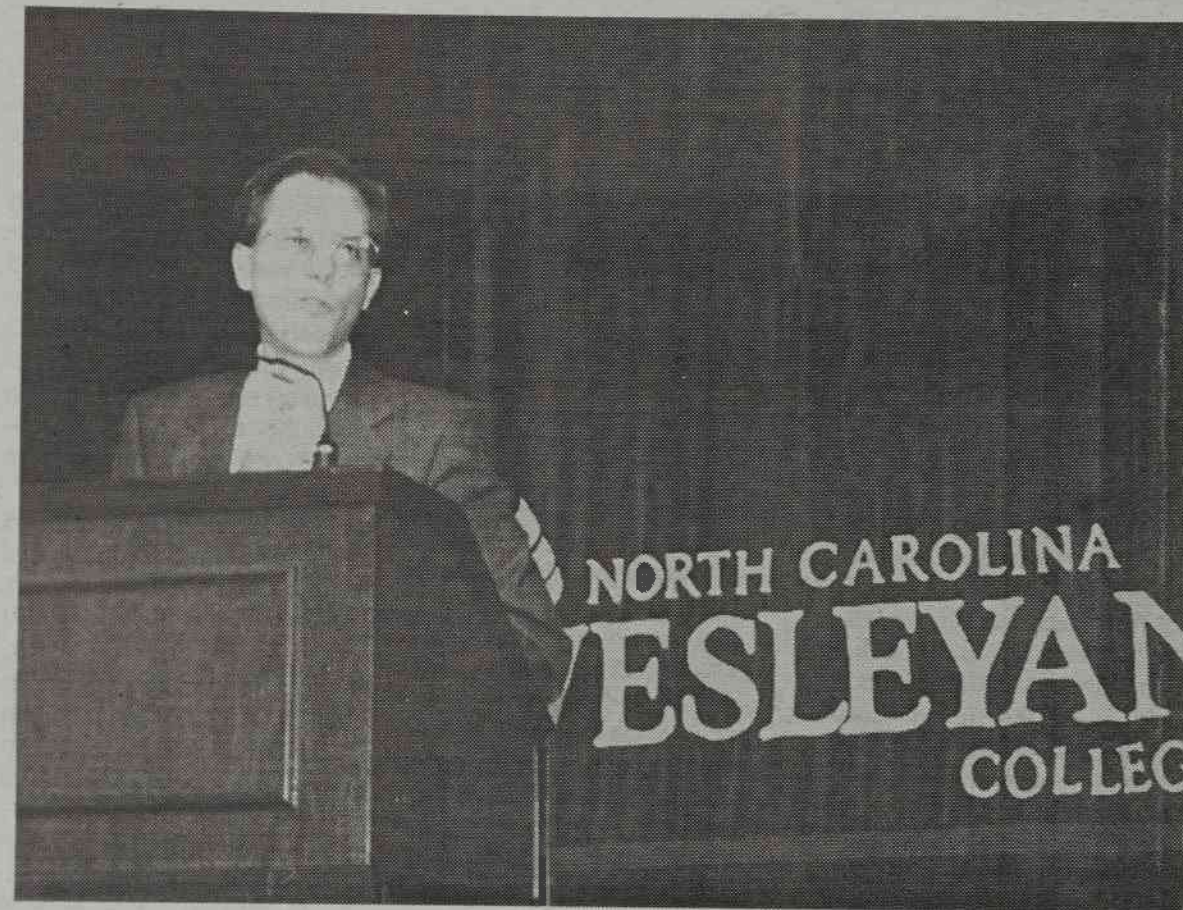
- What does it mean to "manifest our motto, 'Wisdom and courage through Christian education'?"

- Should our church relationship affect the character and quality of our communal life?

- The strategic plan of the college states that "The college's historic connection as a church-related college...will help define the college's commitment to values, to the essential worth of persons in community, to the reality of human transformation, and to an appreciation of the transcendent." What does that mean and how will it affect our daily lives?

- Will changes of direction in the United Methodist Church always be in our best interest as a college?

During his presentation, Hill



REV. EDWARD HILL SAID COLLEGE AND CHURCH MUST LEARN HOW TO RELATE TO EACH OTHER.

added a different perspective. Key among the several points he made was that it is important for the United Methodist Church to identify "what it means (for them) to be a college-related church." He indicated that this was essential in order to help facilitate Wesleyan work on "what it means to be a church-related college."

In his closing remarks, White took the opportunity to reemphasize points brought forth by the four main speakers. He stressed how important it will be for the college community, as a whole, to address these questions in the coming months.

To that end, the president announced that Bishop Marion

Edwards of the Raleigh Area of the United Methodist Church will be the speaker at the college's Founders' Day on Oct. 22. He added that planning is underway for other discussion, panels, and outside guests to highlight the year's emphasis.

The event concluded with the singing of NCWC's Alma Mater.

## 'Day for Wesleyan' draws area support

Community volunteers spent all day Tuesday promoting Wesleyan throughout the area, by nightfall raising \$356,161 for the 17th annual "Day for Wesleyan."

Support for the college has increased each year, with this year's total about \$2,000 higher than last year. The funds raised go into the college's operating fund.

Co-chairs for this year's event were Robert Beaman and Celeste Pittman, both of Rocky Mount, who planned the efforts by volunteers to ask local businesses and

individuals to contribute.

"From a business perspective, Wesleyan is an integral part of this community's economy," said Beaman, president of Stallings Oil Company and past chairman of the Rocky Mount Area Chamber of Commerce.

"With an operating budget this year of \$14,307,428, the college's impact on the area is around \$40 million," he said. "Supporting North Carolina Wesleyan is sup-

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VICTORY — Proclaiming success Tuesday night were (from left) SGA Vice President Richard Wilson, Day for Wesleyan co-chairs Robert Beaman and Celeste Pittman, College President Dr. John White, and SGA President Justin Renville.