



Aug. 16, 2004

Contact: Lisa A. Fellers
Director of Communications
Office: (817) 531-4498
Cell: (817) 874-8683
lfellers@txwes.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wesleyan names first female chaplain

FORT WORTH, Aug. 16 – Dr. Gladys Childs has been named the first female chaplain of Texas Wesleyan University. Childs has served as interim chaplain at Texas Wesleyan since Sept. 15, 2003. Her husband, Thomas, is the pastor at Dido United Methodist Church, and one thing they share in common is the responsibility of praying in public. Since her husband usually assumes that role, Dr. Childs is becoming more accustomed to leading in prayer, and on occasion, she still forgets for a brief moment that it is *her* duty, until she is called upon by name.

Childs is the first female chaplain on record and the second full-time, paid chaplain in the history of Texas Wesleyan. Childs is succeeding the Rev. Jeff Miller, who resigned the position after serving as chaplain for more than 10 years. Childs has been with the University as an adjunct religion professor for three years, and has been an energetic advocate for campus-wide religious life and activities.

Dr. Jesse Sowell, who recommended Childs for the position, says, “She brings an

-more-

Aug. 16 – Childs as Chaplain, page 2.

excitement and enthusiasm, as well as her deep spiritual commitment and doctorate in Christian education and administration, to her new position.”

As the University minister, Childs supervises sanctioned religious groups on campus. She will continue to teach two church internships, host weekly chapel services, plan and oversee religious programming activities, represent the University to the Central Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church, coordinate the annual Willson Lecture Series and direct the on-campus Methodist Student Movement bible study.

“Besides her work on campus, she is an outstanding ambassador for Texas Wesleyan to the outside community and to the churches,” says Sowell.

Childs will be on campus full-time, which allows her to “get to know the students better and spend quality time with them ... I enjoy being the chaplain very much. It has given me a new way to reach out and help students,” says Childs.

Although Childs is a busy woman, she always makes time for the students. “Since I’m on campus, they drop by regularly to discuss issues that are going on in their lives,” says Childs.

Sowell adds, “Her students love her, and Wesleyan is indeed fortunate to have her as a part of our family.”

Childs has many goals for the University and religious life. She says she wants to help students leave Wesleyan as better people and “expand religious activities and programming available on campus ... to reach more students.”

Childs earned her undergraduate degree in Christian counseling and psychology

-more-

Aug. 16 – Childs as Chaplain, page 3.

from Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, her master's degree in religious education, and a doctorate in foundations of education with a minor in administration from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth.

###