This issue of The Asbury Journal began with an idea by my editorial predecessor, Larry Wood. Larry saw an opportunity to publish for the first time some of the writings of Mary Fletcher, one of the stalwarts of the Methodist revival in 18th century England. In 2000 he made an agreement with David Frudl to begin transcribing some of the writings of Mary Fletcher located in the Methodist Archives and Research Centre at the John Rylands University Library, The University of Manchester. David began work on the “Watchwords” of Fletcher, a series of short meditations that she became famous for using in her extensive preaching ministry.

We publish some of that work in this issue of the Journal. We asked Gareth Lloyd, Methodist archivist of the John Rylands University Library to introduce us to the portion of the Watchwords called the Names of Christ, and to the history of the manuscript from which the transcriptions were taken. A second selection of Watchwords on the names of the church have also been transcribed, and we are considering possible publication of those also, if not in the journal then in some other form.

As you will see as you read these inspiring presentations, they were prepared for oral presentation, not publication. Although we have done some editing, we have also left quite a few stylistic inconsistencies—at least what we would today consider stylistic inconsistencies. A few of them include:

Lists. Mary Fletcher organized her material in lists and lists within lists. She used quite a variety of notations to identify the lists, such as 1st, 2ly, 3rd, etc.

Capitalization. She used capitalization for emphasis, not following strict rules of what should and should not be capitalized.

Scripture References. She seems to have assumed a great deal of knowledge on the part of her listeners as to where scripture references came from. Fletcher was probably using the King James version of the Bible as her reference. One would think that of the 70 names of Christ, most would
come from New Testament text. Actually a bare majority (38 to 32) are from the New Testament.

**Emphasis.** In addition to capitalization, she used underlining and italicizing to emphasize important points.

**Spelling.** In addition to the usual differences between British and American spelling, Fletcher seemed to have had a spelling style of her own. She also used words we don’t see often today.

In editing, we have left much of these idiosyncratic forms where they do not unduly disrupt the flow, so that what you are seeing here are the Watchwords pretty much as you would see them in her handwriting.

— Terry C. Muck, editor