



Firmly rooted in its Lutheran heritage, Wittenberg University, located in Springfield, Ohio, continues to adhere to its mission and values as it challenges students to become responsible global citizens, to discover their callings, and to lead personal, professional, and civic lives of creativity, service, compassion, and integrity.

Students are indeed living out their callings in service to their neighbors both near and far. As part of the weeklong celebration of the Inauguration of Wittenberg's 15th President, Mike Frandsen, the campus came together for two service events. In the first, more than 225 students, faculty and staff packed 85,000+ meals over 24 hours through the Lesotho Nutrition Initiative (LNI). LNI was founded with students by our own Scott Rosenberg, professor of history, chair of our Peace Corps Preparation Program, and Honorary Consul to the Kingdom of Lesotho, a small landlocked kingdom in the middle of South Africa. The second event took place at Oesterlen Services for Youth, a social agency affiliated with the ELCA in Springfield, where students helped to refresh residents' living spaces with painting and stenciling.

The April 5 Inauguration also brought distinguished church leaders to Wittenberg, including Southern Ohio Synod Bishop Suzanne Darcy Dillahunt, Executive Director of the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities Mark Wilhelm, and our own Board Chair, the Rev. Jonathan Eilert from Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Loveland, Ohio. The event itself proved both unifying and inspiring. To see photos and read a recap of the week, visit a special website that was created at www.wittenberg.edu/inauguration.

Earlier in the spring, Wittenberg had the honor of welcoming retired Bishop Munib Younan of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, and recent president of the Lutheran World Federation. A Palestinian Christian, Bishop Younan is sought after for his perspective on just peace. At Wittenberg, he spoke on the global refugee crisis and the challenges and opportunities of interfaith work in Jerusalem. Wittenberg remains grateful to the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities, which provided a portion of the funding for the bishop's visit. Wittenberg also sponsored a visit from the Bishop with Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Springfield, and the congregations of St. Anne Episcopal Church and Lord of Life Lutheran Church in West Chester, Ohio.

Wittenberg also celebrated its Lutheran heritage last fall in a rich array of observances of the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation, including a poster exhibit from Germany, an exhibit from Wittenberg's extensive archives showcasing Reformation-era artifacts, the Sauer Symposium, concerts, and an all-class-year Wittenberg Choir reunion.

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The commemoration closed with a service of word, prayer, and song, which brought together Lutherans, Catholics, and other Christians to give thanks for reconciliation in the Gospel, as well as a visit from “Martin Luther” on October 31.

The spring Board meeting will feature a presentation from faculty, students, and the university pastors on the continuing significance of the university’s Lutheran heritage for Wittenberg’s mission and future initiatives. Additionally, the Board is expected to receive an update on strategic planning efforts, which have included conversations surrounding the launch of a new Center for Vocation and Lifelong Learning to ensure that Wittenberg students understand the impact of vocational calling in one’s life. Moreover, the university is currently exploring expanding its mission-centered commitment to service and compassion with a new undergraduate program in nursing.

Lastly, campus ministry was enhanced earlier this year with the addition of Dan Jacob, a 2010 alumnus of Wittenberg, and an ELCA deacon. Under call from the Southern Ohio Synod Council, Jacob was installed this past fall as a Ministry Associate in the University Pastor’s Office to work with contemporary worship, ELCA-related events, and various campus ministry initiatives. A double major in English and philosophy with a minor in history, Jacob received his master of divinity from Yale Divinity School. He has served as a youth director in Connecticut and Ohio, and is working with youth at Peace Lutheran Church in Beavercreek, Ohio, along with serving at the university.

Wittenberg continues to encourage Lutheran students to attend by offering the \$80,000 Martin Luther Scholar Award, among other scholarships. Wittenberg cordially invites all members of the synod to visit campus for worship services, athletic contests, and Wittenberg Series cultural events, or to set up a visit in the archives. Lutheran youth groups are encouraged to retreat at Wittenberg as well, so as to experience firsthand a student life of faith and service. Please visit our website at www.wittenberg.edu or contact Deacon Dan Jacob at Weaver Chapel, 937-327-7411, for more information.

Submitted as 2018 Synodical Report