

WITTENBERG UNIVERSITY
2007 REPORT TO THE SUPPORTING SYNODS

Wittenberg University – our Mission:

“Reflecting its Lutheran heritage, Wittenberg 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.”

The year 2007 at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio, has witnessed continuing energetic activity to transform this outstanding university. In 2006, Wittenberg reported commencing implementation of the strategic plan, “Distinctively Wittenberg – A Vision for Excellence” and the report of the Lutheran Identity Study Commission Report.

This year, Wittenberg University is pleased to report:

Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson: The Wittenberg community welcomed Bishop Mark Hanson as speaker for the Opening Convocation in September 2007. His message, “Service and Engagement in the World: A Lutheran Tradition” presented an inspiring and challenging vision of the relationship between the ELCA and its 28 affiliated colleges and universities. Bishop Hanson also had opportunities for conversations with Wittenberg students, faculty and staff where they shared thoughts and ideas. They discovered that Bishop Hanson is sincerely interested in their thoughts, ideas and questions.

Strategic Plan: Implementation of the Strategic Plan for Wittenberg University has continued. Wittenberg developed a comprehensive four year development model for excellence and implementation of the first year experience. In addition, actions are being taken to provide opportunities for all students to have the opportunity to study abroad which will help them become more responsible global citizens, as provided in the mission statement.

Campus Ministry: Wittenberg is pleased to announce that the office of Pastor to the University has been endowed through the generosity of Rev. David and Carol Matevia. Campus pastors, Rev. Andy and Rev. Rachel Tune, provide weekly worship services, lead a pre-theology group, and conduct special worship services, including Reformation service, Candlemas, German language service, and the Advent Service of lessons and carols. In addition, Pastor Rachel Tune led a student study and service trip to Washington, D.C., over fall break and a spring break service trip is scheduled for the Texas gulf coast. The Pastors’ Office partnered with the Community Service office in a \$50,000 Thrivent grant project, which was completed in 2007. The grant’s support of 14 faculty courses and four student organizations integrating service learning, social justice and spirituality, led to research in one case that helped the community partner secure a multi-million dollar grant for their work with sustaining marriages. Weaver Chapel has celebrated over 50 years of presence as the focal point for religious activities on campus as well as being a place for the entire campus community to gather for special events.

Martin Luther Scholars: A new scholarship program has been initiated at Wittenberg University. Fifty Martin Luther Scholars will be named based on nominations from Lutheran clergy. To qualify, a student must be a member of a Lutheran congregation, have a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 and be nominated by a pastor. In addition to attracting some of the finest Lutheran high school students nationwide, the Martin Luther Scholar program will provide additional opportunities for scholars to interact and explore topics of mutual interest.

Church Relations: Bob White, Director of Church Relations, continues to be active in the ELCA Youth Ministry Network (www.elcaymnet.org) where he serves as the Region 6 Facilitator – a coordinator of the network for the six synods in Region 6, and presents workshops for youth and youth leaders. Bob also is assisting the admissions office as coordinator of Lutheran recruiting.

We welcome all to visit our beautiful campus, tour the facilities and participate in the many opportunities of educational speakers, worship and music services and athletic events. Please visit our web site (www.wittenberg.edu) or call the Office of Church Relations at (937) 327-7411 for more information.

Bob White, Director of Church Relations