

WITTENBERG UNIVERSITY
2008 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.”

Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio, continues with purpose and energy to transform this outstanding university. We are pleased to report:

Programs focusing on the intersection of faith and reason: During 2008 Wittenberg sponsored several provocative speakers through the Witt Series and other programs to address issues of significant importance to our church and society, including:

- Kenneth Miller, author of *Finding Darwin's God*, presented a lecture to a packed auditorium addressing issues of faith and evolution.
- Dr. Gary Simpson spoke at the Kenneth H. Sauer Luther Symposium on “Can War be Just: a Lutheran Perspective”.
- The Springfield Muslim community again celebrated an Iftar during Ramadan on campus and invited the Wittenberg community to attend and have discussions of our different religious traditions. The event was sponsored by the sociology department and the pastor's office.
- “Faith & Politics: a Public Forum” a panel discussion with people from a variety of faith traditions to discuss how their faith informed their decisions to support the two presidential candidates. This program was sponsored by the political science, sociology and religion departments and the pastor's office.

Campus Ministry: Serving the Wittenberg community for the past 10 years campus pastors, The Rev. Andy Tune and The Rev. Rachel Tune, provide weekly worship (traditional and contemporary) and chapel services as well as minister to the University community. Special services are presented annually including:

- Festival Choral Eucharist for Reformation service with the Wittenberg Choir and Handbell choir. The preacher in 2008 was The Rev. John Schleicher, Bishop of North/West Lower Michigan Synod.
- Candlemas – Medieval Candlelight Vespers –The presentation of Jesus in the Temple is one of the oldest festivals in the Epiphany Season,
- German Language Epiphany Service – presented annually in January,
- Service of Lessons and Carols for Advent and Christmas - featuring Advent scriptures and music by the Wittenberg Choir, Handbell Choir, Wittenberg Singers and wonderful hymns.

In addition, the campus pastors coordinate activities among many of the eight campus religious organizations, serve as advisers to Weaver Chapel Association, lead the pre-theology group and work with students in numerous activities including Crop Walk, Relay for Life, and Fair Trade sales in support of Lutheran Global Missions.

Martin Luther Scholars: The first group of 18 Martin Luther Scholars are on campus. This unique scholarship program provides awards 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 offers additional opportunities for scholars to interact and explore topics of mutual interest. In 2008 the MLS group visited Wittenberg's historic Reformation Collection – including an original letter from Martin Luther and one of the earliest printed German language bibles in existence – and had discussion with Dr. Tim Bennett – a Reformation scholar.

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 and presents workshops for youth and youth leaders. Bob also is assisting admissions 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