

Life Together

THE MAGAZINE OF
WARTBURG THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Fall 2020





LifeTogether

The official magazine of Wartburg Theological Seminary for our alumni and friends. Permission is granted for additional use in congregations. Founded in 1854 and located in Dubuque, Iowa since 1889, Wartburg Theological Seminary is one of seven seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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FALL EDITION 2020

Wartburg Theological Seminary
Dubuque, Iowa 52003

Phone: 563-589-0200
Fax: 563-589-0333
www.wartburgseminary.edu



Mission Statement

Wartburg Theological Seminary serves Christ’s church through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by being a worship-centered community of critical theological reflection where learning leads to mission and mission informs learning.

The community embodies God’s mission by stewarding resources for engaging, equipping, and sending collaborative leaders who interpret, proclaim, and live the gospel of Jesus Christ for a world created for communion with God and in need of personal and social healing.

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From the Boards of Directors & Trustees

As chairs of the Boards of Directors and Trustees we are charged with taking stock of the big picture of Wartburg Theological Seminary. We are in awe of the remarkable strength and resiliency of this institution year after year, no matter how unprecedented the context in which this mission is called to thrive. We cannot recall a time in our lives, and likely neither can you, when our church and society were evidencing a such a crucial need for truly exceptional leadership; a wounded world requiring deeply valued, gospel-centered servant leadership called forward, formed, and deployed at Wartburg Seminary.

Last fall, we welcomed the largest incoming class in the history of our seminary. Despite the uncertainties occasioned by the pandemic, we have continued with steady growth in our total enrollment this fall. In order to supply our church with dedicated and effective rostered leaders, our seminary administration, faculty, and staff demonstrate a distinctive style of teaching and formation: evangelical in substance and entrepreneurial in style, making the transition to online learning a smooth one.

We are grateful especially for the leadership of our Interim President, Dr. Kristine Stache, who has led with confidence and grace in this unpredictable time of transition. Having worked in many areas of seminary leadership, Dr. Stache brings a rich set of academic and administrative experiences to her role of Interim President. Stache's appointment has ensured Wartburg Seminary's strategic visioning and partnerships remain strong and continue to be executed faithfully to serve our mission and our world. The search process for our next president is proceeding according to plan. We are prayerfully optimistic that our new president will begin serving by the first of the year.

Our exceptional faculty members continue to attract and engage a talented array of students from diverse backgrounds to thrive in the missional magic of Wartburg, for such

a time as this. They have exhibited tireless commitment to providing incomparable, personalized teaching for each student. We also welcomed two new faculty members as of July 1, 2020, whom you will read about in the following pages. In addition to hiring Dr. Man-Hei Yip, Assistant Professor of Systematics, and Rev. Dr. Jan Schnell, Assistant Professor of Liturgics, the Wartburg Seminary Board of Directors authorized a search for a third new faculty member in the upcoming fiscal year.

We are grateful to count you among WTS supporters and for your trust in the work of our mission. Your trust has led WTS to be #1 among its peers in alumni support, and #5 among all Association of Theological Schools (280)! Thank you, thank you, thank you. We invite you to find your name in the pages that follow and to consider how you will respond to God's invitation to invest in WTS's mission in the years to come. Will you give from your financial resources? Will you encourage people you know with gifts for ministry to consider seminary?

For all of the outpouring of generosity reflected in the stories and names in this edition of *LifeTogether*, we are deeply grateful. Thank you for trusting Wartburg Seminary with your expression of abundance. Thank you for serving the church and God's mission in our world.

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Together, Wherever We Are

BEGINNING THE 167TH ACADEMIC YEAR WITH LONG-HELD WARTBURG SEMINARY TRADITIONS

Reflections on Prolog Week traditions during an untraditional start to a new academic year at Wartburg Seminary



A NEW KIND OF BEGINNING

Hosting an all-digital Prolog Week was certainly an atypical start to a new academic year at Wartburg Seminary, but we began in the way that we always do: centering our community in worship. The worshipping community at Wartburg Seminary gathers to receive God's Word and sing God's praise throughout the year as the center of life together as a learning community.

Looking towards a semester of gathering fully online, we continue to be committed to living into being a worship-centered community. Each student, faculty, and staff member received a 5x7 Good Shepherd icon in the mail with an invitation to set up a sacred space in their home or office to use for daily chapel worship and personal prayer. A much larger version of the icon

will also hang in our chapel and be a focus during our liturgies. Matthew O'Rear, Interim Dean of the Chapel and Assistant to the President for Strategic Initiatives, shared that the icon "will help connect the community when we are not gathered and provide a tool for students to set a sacred place in their home for prayer, reflection, and the reminder that Christ is indeed the good shepherd, ever calling and leading us."

Each day during worship, members of the community will be invited to have various objects: a bowl of water, a candle, a Bible, or something that conveys God's word to tie into our daily worship. Having dedicated space for worship helps as we transition from class time to worship.

OPENING WORSHIP

Opening Worship at Wartburg Seminary is a long-held tradition, taking place on the afternoon of Labor Day in September. It is a time to gather as a community for the first time in a new year, and also to welcome the new students in our midst. Each of their names is read by our Admissions team, and they are officially welcomed into the student community by our Academic Dean and Seminary President (in this case, Interim President).

Our beloved Rev. Amy Current, Vice President for Admissions and Student Services, preached her last sermon in her role at WTS before she steps into her new calling as Bishop to the Southeastern Iowa Synod. She preached these words to the community: "We are a people—siblings in Christ—claimed, called, and sent to bring the good news of peace to a world that is suffering. We are called to carry the Good News of Jesus from behind closed doors,

to remind one another—friends, neighbors, those with whom we disagree—to proclaim that God is God of the living. The church is not dead or dying, but the church, through the Holy Spirit, is resurrecting still."

Following the sermon, Dr. Kristine Stache, Interim President, marked the official opening of the year with this charge: "As we begin this new year together, I encourage you to embrace your studies, because what you will learn has the power to change the world. I encourage you to seek out ways of being community that might look and feel different, but are constant through Christ's presence. And I implore you to be gentle and patient with one another—your student colleagues, staff, faculty, and yourself in these challenging days. Continue to find ways to listen to God's voice, the same voice that called you here and who will continue to call you throughout your life. And so, even in such an uncertain and unusual time as this, it is with great joy that I officially open Wartburg Theological Seminary's 167th academic year."

CONVOCATION

Convocations at Wartburg Seminary are community conversations about topics that matter. They focus on current, often-challenging topics that deserve face-to-face dialogue. Convocations strive to host discussion in ways that bring us together as community, invite open-ended questions, and welcome everyone's voice. Convocations are neither lectures nor simply presentations. They are face-to-face conversations, inspired by Jesus' teachings (Matthew 18:15-20), that strive for mutual understanding, solidarity, and wholeness in communities today. Our Prolog Week topic was "Being a Community Digitally in These Unique Times."

Troy Troftgruben, Associate Professor of New Testament and Community Life Chair, shared: "We had a refreshing and real conversation about the many stresses and challenges upon us these days—from the pandemic to injustice, from schoolwork to ministry responsibilities, from childcare to Zoom fatigue, and from fear of the unknown to sadness about not being 'at the castle.' Many of us feel burdened, tired, and in grief. We reflected on the dynamics around technology—why it makes us tired even as it connects us in life-saving ways."





REV. DR. JAN SCHNELL

"We also heard words of good counsel about taking time away from screens, time with others, time for ourselves, and time for play. We reflected on the power of prayer, worship, and time in silence. We are reminded of the spiritual significance of practicing joy, even during a pandemic. In the end, we shared some of our greatest stresses as well as the things now giving us joy. One student wrote to me: 'It felt like a re-set for me in so many ways—odd to say that is needed at the start of the semester, but I suspect others felt this way too.'"

Rev. Dr. Jan Schnell, Assistant Professor of Liturgics, shared of her first Convocation with the WTS community as a faculty member: "I'm coming into a deeper appreciation of what our Distance Learning (DL) and Collaborative Learning (CL) students have experienced for years—that learning online fatigues us in particular physiological and psychological ways. This makes me grateful for the mentorship our DL and CL students have shown: they are hungry to learn, attentive, and active participants. As far as I can gather, this is because they focus on how

important this work is and how fortunate we are to get to study the practices of leading Christian communities to the honor of God's glory. Their model calls to those of us who have been residential to show up similarly focused on the calling of the Spirit in this time of learning, while being honest about particular challenges we face during this time, so that we can also be aware of particular strategies for thriving in learning and community during a time that is, yes, stressful, and yet also beloved."

LOOKING FORWARD

Matthew O'Rear reflected on our time together in worship over Prolog Week: "A robust worshipping life has long been a hallmark of our life together. Even though the community is not physically gathered, our commitment to worship is still core to the mission at Wartburg Seminary. For the first time in 167 years, the Seminary community did not gather to open the academic year in person. Nevertheless, the Wartburg Seminary community gathered in digital space, around the means of grace, to hear the Word, sing, pray, and welcome those new to our community. Christ was indeed present! We know time apart will provide many challenges, but by God's grace, we will gather daily as a community to hear God's story, possibly in a new way."

We invite you to pray with us in our continued life together as Christian community undefined by physical space as we press on in a new academic year:

We give you thanks, O God, for all of life and for our common calling as your servants, for the work of your church and for the ministries of word, sacrament, and service. We give you thanks for women and men whom you call to be leaders in your church and for teachers who form them for service. Through the witness and mission of our seminaries, may the church join courageously in your work of compassion, mercy, justice, and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**



ANDREW PERGER



ALANA HARMS



DAMISHA MCFARLAND-POLLOCK



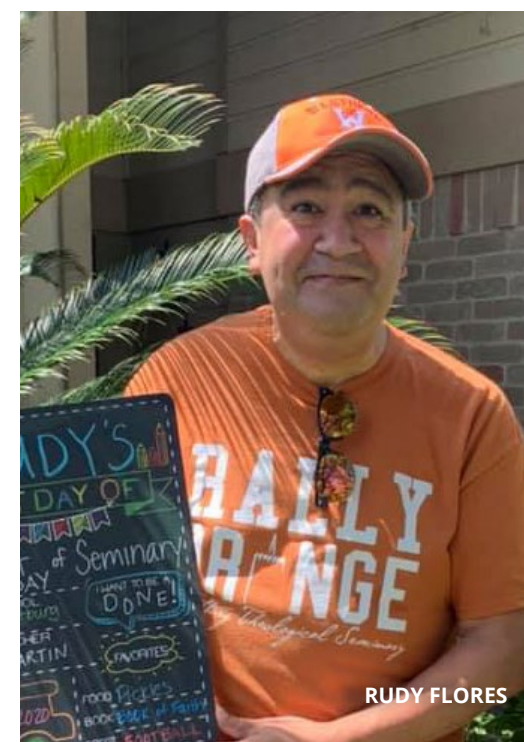
JAMIE RICHARDS



JONATHAN LYS



SARA FUNKHOUSER



RUDY FLORES



NICHOLE D'ONOFRIO



SHRUTI KULKARNI

“Intrigued, Excited, and Scared to Death”

COHORT OF EIGHT STUDENTS CONNECTED TO ST. ANDREW’S LUTHERAN CHURCH JOURNEY THROUGH ONE-YEAR MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM

In the fall of 2019, Wartburg Seminary launched a one-year Master of Arts program. When WTS Board Member Michael (Mike) Carlson ‘04 heard about this new program at one of the Board of Directors meetings, he immediately thought of the staff at his congregation, St. Andrew’s Lutheran Church in Mahtomedi, MN. He began getting the word out to various staff members. Through email, one-on-one conversations, shared discernment, and encouragement, eight people connected to the ministry of St. Andrew’s Lutheran Church began in the one-year Master of Arts program in September 2019.

They found diving into seminary with a cohort of colleagues invaluable, remarking that they didn’t know each other all that well before beginning the program at WTS, but by the end, they considered each other “family” and “connected forever” by the experience. We interviewed a few of those now-alumni, all of whom are on staff at St. Andrew’s, to learn more about their journey together through the program.

Can you share what you thought when you first heard about the idea of doing the new one-year MA program as a cohort?



Heidi Lender (Resource Counselor): I had been looking at other programs because I had always thought about seminary. I didn’t find what I was looking for in other programs, and Mike had just sent an email to all staff and said, “Hey, there’s a new program at Wartburg. Check it out. Let me know if you’re interested.” I checked it out, and I think I sat with it for quite a while, just trying to discern whether or not it was my next step. Once I decided it was, I went to Mike and I said, “I want to do this.” And he said, “Well, you’re not doing it alone, so who else is going with you?”

Kristine Mason (Case Manager, Community Resource Center): My reaction was, “Well, how much time is it going to

take and how many books do we have to get and how many classes is it? Can we really do this in a year? And how is this going to work while we’re still working our jobs?” I did some research and asked a lot of questions. I sat with it a little bit like Heidi did before deciding to do it.

Tara McAdams (Senior Marketing Communications Consultant): For me, this came out of nowhere. I thought, “Seminary? Me, go to seminary?” And then I heard everybody else talking about it. I remember sitting with it, and the first time I thought that I could do it was maybe two days after I heard about it. It was a complete leap of faith thinking that I could do this, because I’m not the seminary “type.” It was complete trust that I could do this. Once I knew that there were going to be others of us doing it, I thought, “Yeah. Okay. We’re going to take this step by step and we’re going to do it.”

Lisa Grundtner (Director of Funeral Ministry/Support Groups): Mike was so enthused about it and one of his wonderful lines to us was, “You could have your master’s in a year.” You know, that’s a big deal. I was really intrigued and excited and scared to death. But knowing we’d have our cohort was an absolutely huge thing to encourage me to do it.

Let’s hear about your Prolog Week experience. What was it like coming down all together and as you started diving into seminary full steam ahead? Were you happy that you made this choice, feeling overwhelmed, or all of the above?

Tara: I have such happy memories of it for many reasons. It was beautiful weather. We were there with people from all over that we had never met before. And I thought, “Here is a whole bunch of new people that we get to know, learn with, work with, and laugh with.” Knowing that our cohort was there together was great, but then we were part of this greater student body that was really wonderful.

Kris: I rode down with Heidi, and the whole time I was thinking, “What am I doing?” And on one of the first days when we walked into the auditorium with everybody in there, the big whiteboard said, “Welcome home.” And I’m thinking, “Home? This is not my home. I am far away from my home and I have a stomachache and I’m here with my coworkers. This is great, but I’m scared to death.” And by the end of the week, I remember we looked at each other and

said, “Oh, we have to leave here. Wouldn’t it be really cool to be able to stay here and do this?” So, just those four or five days there made me think, “Yeah. This, this feels like it could be home.” It was a really, really cool week.

Tara: Everyone wanted us to succeed, and it was very clear that everyone’s desire to help and to talk and to listen was authentic. That was part of the Wartburg mystique—that it was so intimate and personal and authentic. And boy, that came across immediately the first week, and I experienced that the whole year. It was really lovely and unusual.

Lisa: It’s true—right away during Prolog Week, and Kris talked about it too, how welcome we felt, how hard you guys worked to make that work well. To us, it was seamless and wonderful.

You’ve talked a little bit about your cohort and how important that was. Can you talk about how it went once you returned home after Prolog Week? How did you lean on each other as you dove into the rest of the semester?

Lisa: We were really fortunate as a cohort to have the resources that we have at St. Andrew’s. We also had a study group, so we would all get together after work once a week. We didn’t all have the same classes, so we would get together and talk about our different projects and papers. That helped a ton.

Carrin Mahmood (Director, St. Andrew’s Family Shelter): Mike would join us and just about bite his tongue off not jumping in to answer things for us when we’d be struggling with something. You could just tell he wanted to just expound. And then once in a while, he’d throw something out, saying, “Well, have you considered looking at it from this point of view?” He could not have been more excited through the whole process for us, so that helped.

Kris: We all went through and said, “Okay.

Who has Plural Worlds? Who has this class? Who has that class?” And then we put somebody in charge of sending out an email every once in a while. “Okay. This is what’s coming up in this class. You have to post for this. This is when the paper is due.”

Joe Holmberg (Communications Director): I’d come into work and Lisa would say, “I noticed that you didn’t have a VoiceThread post, and that’s due by noon today.” And it’s like, “Oh, thank you, thank you!” I don’t know how we could’ve done it without the cohort. It’s really a great way to get through, and St. Andrew’s set us up to succeed. They really did.

Carrin: And Wartburg too. I could do a Zoom with my granddaughter in my lap. I have classes, and she just attended with me. Wartburg is all about, “Yep. Your family first and bring them.”



FROM RIGHT TO LEFT: JOE HOLMBERG, LISA GRUNDTNER, TARA MCADAMS, BRAD BRUNFELT, CARRIN MAHMOOD, REV. MICHAEL CARLSON, KRISTINE MASON, JOHN GUTTERER, HEIDI LENDER, AND CARRIN MAHMOOD'S DAUGHTER

Is there a particular instance, story, or meeting with a professor or a certain topic that was really meaningful for you?

Joe: One of the most impactful moments of my life was the entire semester of Systematics. This happened throughout the entire Wartburg experience the whole year, but especially in Systematics: there were just moments where at 2:00 a.m. concepts would hit me, and I would just literally break down in uncontrollable tears. It was mostly out of happiness, and a lot out of the impact of getting close to God and close to life. There were other times when I'd be driving along cursing and yelling out loud in frustration. And again, that's where I thank God for Mike, because I would call him and work things through with him. And he said, "You're not the first to ever yell or scream aloud." Those were just really big moments. And then there were the moments of elation, of just reading something and it clicks. The whole thing turns over and you finally get it.

Heidi: The dedication of the faculty and their willingness to want to know about you and your life outside of class was beautiful. That's what makes Wartburg, Wartburg, right there. They care. They truly care. I was about to write my capstone paper, and it was COVID and I had stuff going on at home and work and finals. I sent an email off to

May [Persaud] because she's my advisor, and she just sent this beautiful email back saying, "Yep. You know, I get it, and it's going to be okay." Not only did she send me an email back, but then she had Winston send me an email, too. They were all supporting me and saying, "You know what? You can do this and you're not alone." And it was beautiful how it was more about you than what you ended up producing.

Tara: Heidi and I both had May Persaud as our advisor, and I remember when May called me about a week before Prolog Week and just wanted to get to know me and to talk through what I was going to register for. We talked for an hour and a half, and she just wanted to get to know me. I had some questions, and then she got Winston on the phone and had Winston call Sam Giere to ask about something. I was blown away. I'd never had this level of personal attention, all to make sure I got what I thought I wanted from this program.

Kris: I feel like everyone was cared for equally. We weren't the people who were going to be there for four years, but I never felt any differently cared for or taught to than any of the other students.

Lisa: I agree with everything everyone's saying. The professors and the staff are obviously so sincere and caring. Susan Ebertz was my advisor and she had this rotation where she would periodically pray for everyone, and every time, it was so touching. She says, "Okay. I'll be praying for you this week, and what can I pray for?" And where do you get that, you know? We were lucky.

Carrin: The first semester—except for maybe one or two classes—we took what

was recommended. But then Wartburg really heard us when we all kind of diverged for the second semester and said, "For me and what I do in work, it would be way more useful if I took these classes." And not only did they listen at a registration level, but the professors were willing to let us take classes with fourth-year students because we were only there for one year. So, from the professors all the way through the administration, everyone was really willing to say, "Let's make this program work for you guys."

Can you speak to the areas of your work at St. Andrew's that have been enriched or changed by your studies at WTS?

Heidi: Having more of a Lutheran theological understanding and more of a biblical background really helped me see the world differently, which helped me help others see the world differently. Whether it's counseling or spiritual direction, I do it with a whole different lens than I would have prior to WTS. It's literally changed my world, and I hope that I'm a better counselor and a better spiritual director because of it.

Carrin: I think, like Heidi said, I learned a new language there at Wartburg. I learned a new thought process. Wartburg speaks with great intentionality. Every time a professor or anyone speaks, it was fascinating to listen. And just that alone, just some of those habits that they modeled, I can bring that into my practice.

Lisa: I learned so much. A lot of what I was hoping to get out of the program was to understand why we do what we do and the theology behind that. I did my capstone project on funeral practices: our theology and why we do what we do at funerals. I wrote my paper as a proposal to the pastors here to actually propose some funeral practices that we don't necessarily do at St. Andrew's. So, the program had a huge, huge effect on my role here.

Joe: In a broad sense, I think the way that we've been taught to focus outside ourselves has brought great empathy toward everything we do. Like Heidi said, it brings a different lens. And so, our focus, everything we do, every moment, every task at work, is with the other in

mind. That empathy alone is just great in a big, broad sense. And then, again, that theological understanding just helps me as a communications person to better communicate, better articulate the good news in everything we do, in every program, in every paragraph that we write, and in every word that's spoken. So, the impact is both broad and specific.

Tara: I think too—and this just came to me recently—that what Wartburg helped me see was that everything we do, in whatever we do: our work is ministry. Whatever you're doing in your life, you're ministering to others, and you're the conduit through which the Holy Spirit can really make things happen in the world. I wasn't able to see that until I really started to put together so many things from Sam Giere, Martin Lohrmann, Winston Persaud, and the beautiful comments that they made.

Carrin: What I appreciated too is talking to people in ministry outside of St. Andrew's. I'm in contact with new ministers all over the country because I got to know them at WTS, and have access to new ideas.

Lisa: We've all talked about being a part of Wartburg. Mike would always talk about what a special, amazing place it is, and I think every one of us feels that and understands now. It really is.

Responses from interviewees have been edited for length and clarity. Learn more about the Master of Arts program at Wartburg Seminary at wartburgseminary.edu/master-of-arts.

Wartburg Seminary Impact Report

From the Interim President

The Numbers: Fiscal Year 2019-2020

At Wartburg, we have often said that we explore new ways of preparing leaders for a changing world with deep roots. Those deep roots were planted in a time of crisis when Wilhelm Loehe saw an emergency need for pastors to be trained to share the gospel with the world around them. Our roots have enabled us to be nimble and agile in response to changing contexts while remaining firmly planted in who we are as a worship-centered community.

This year brought transitions in our community accompanied by a global context none of us could have predicted. We entered into a Presidential transition and search, our beloved professor Rev. Dr. Gwen Sayler passed suddenly, a worldwide pandemic unfolded around us, and systemic racism became more visible than ever. Any one of these items could have been enough to unsettle a place, but our deep roots were built for this: weathering the unexpected is what we do. Innovation, growth, and new programs are the fruit these roots have produced for more than 165 years.

We are called to this work—even in 2020—to continuing being who are, planted in an identity undefined by our castle walls. We hear over and over the call to let God be God and to trust God to do what God promises, to build us into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, even when—or perhaps especially when—we are scared, tired, weak, or unsure how this will all work out.

As we continue to adjust to new ways of being together, studying together, worshipping together—some of our many ways of enacting our shared life together—Jesus continues to come to us, to be in the midst of us, and give us his peace. So, while this past fiscal year found us in a unique set of “you can’t make this up!” events both in the world around us and within the castle walls, one thing was always for certain: these roots would hold strong.

We have you to thank for that.

You have continued to pour into our mission in ways that have made it possible for us to meet challenges without disrupting the daily rhythm of life at WTS: worship continued, every single class met as we transitioned to fully online learning, searches for faculty members and a new president pressed on—all with no required technology upgrades. Our students, staff, and faculty were all prepared to make the shift to a digital WTS as made necessary by the unfolding pandemic.

Our life “Together, Wherever We Are,” is not due to our matching shirts, shared lingo, or the right Zoom link. It is because of who Jesus is and what God in Christ does in, with, and through each of us. Your support alongside the promise of Christ made it possible for us to end—for the 11th straight year—with a positive budget. It is because of you that we can continue to do the work to which we are called by God: preparing valued leaders for a changing world. Over 90% of WTS students pursuing a degree or the TEEM (Theological Education for Emerging Ministries) path will be rostered ministers in the ELCA, with half of those already serving congregations while they study at WTS.

For all of this, we thank you for pouring into the deep-held roots that make up the mission of WTS. It is because of you that WTS steps forward into the future with strength and confidence in our ability to continue saying yes to our shared call to spread the good news of Christ—and for all of this and so much more, we celebrate. Thank you!

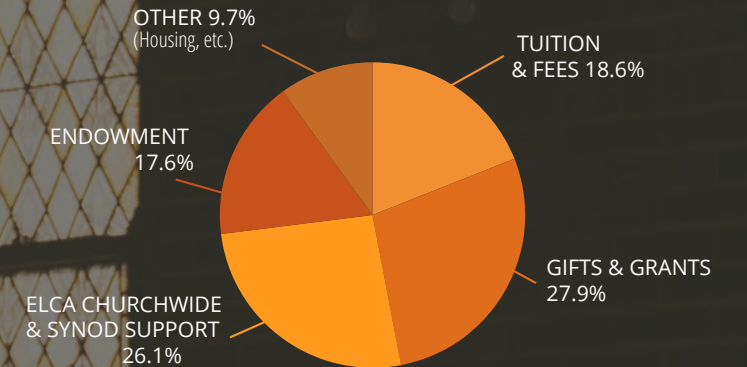
Peace in Christ,

Kristine M. Stache

Dr. Kristine Stache
Interim President

TOTAL REVENUE*

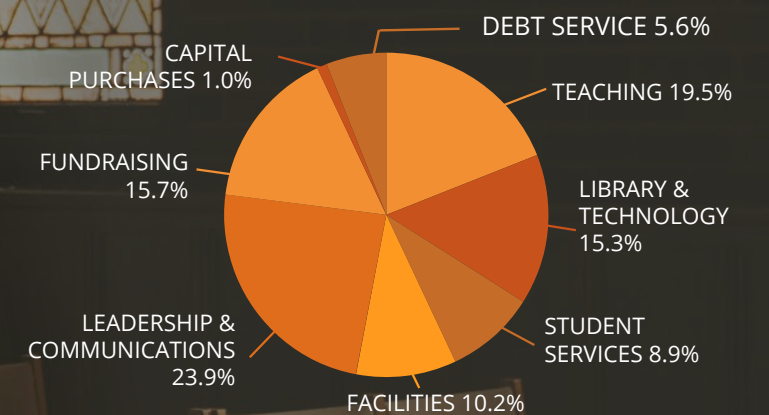
\$5,735,369



*Does not include \$514,233 in estate gifts

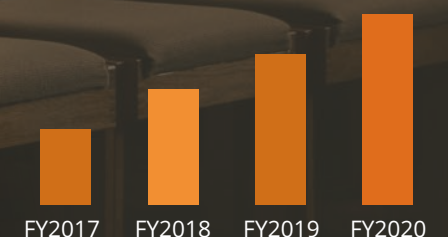
TOTAL EXPENSES

\$5,538,627



TOTAL ENDOWMENT

\$28,858,086



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The beauty of our new digital life together is that I can throw ideas out and collaborate with people in Chicago, Florida, Colorado—you name it! That’s the beauty of this time and my WTS program: it facilitates an ease of resource sharing.

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List Continues on Pg. 20

Getting to Know Dr. Man-Hei Yip

WARTBURG SEMINARY'S NEW ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF SYSTEMATICS



DR. MAN-HEI YIP

GROWING UP IN HONG KONG

I was born into a large family with six siblings: five older sisters and one younger brother. My parents are not Christians, but they sent us all to a Christian school, and from there I learned about the Christian faith. The privilege of being the youngest daughter in my family enabled me to enjoy the freedom to pursue my own interests and choices. My parents did not usually say too much about my decisions. That doesn't mean they were uninterested; rather, they expected me to be responsible and study hard to have a good job in the future. So, it was perfectly fine for me to go to church, attend worship services almost every Sunday beginning from my teenage years, and participate in short-term mission trips, provided that I did not give up on my studies.

I was baptized in my first year in university. My whole life changed after that. I did not end up following the path most of my friends did, getting a high-paying job and a nice house (or apartment, in the case of Hong Kong). After graduating from university, I traveled to different parts of the world

and served in different capacities, such as taking an internship at the Lutheran World Federation in Geneva, Switzerland, volunteering for outreach ministries in Mongolia, and later engaging in community development work in Cambodia.

When I was in Mongolia, I saw a lot of people struggling and trying to make ends meet. I started to ask what church mission really means to people who are living in abject poverty. Putting it bluntly, it is irresponsible to simply tell people that Jesus loves them and walk away. I was looking for a deeper understanding of church mission, and it was then that Karen Bloomquist, former director of the Department for Theology and Studies of the Lutheran World Federation, introduced me to Wartburg Theological Seminary. At that time, Wartburg offered the Master of Arts in Theology, Development, and Evangelism program. I was so excited because that was really something I was looking for. My husband (fiancé at the time) was also thinking about pursuing theological studies. Three months after we got married, we found ourselves at Wartburg studying and taking classes together.

ON BEING AN IMMIGRANT

I never thought I would become an immigrant. Born and raised in Hong Kong, I saw a lot of immigrants and migrant workers coming to work in the city and live among us. I heard about their hardship. I would show compassion to them. I would try to raise awareness about the plight of these invisible communities, but deep down in my heart, I knew I could not pretend to understand them and speak for them.

After moving to the United States, I now have *immigrant* attached to my identity. I am not a spectator commenting about people's suffering or reflecting

on suffering from far off. I am actually one of them, being and feeling what it means to be marginalized. Am I therefore wanting to erase my differences and immerse myself completely into the white culture? Not at all. Being an immigrant opened a whole new set of experiences and became a way of witnessing a vastly different way of life.

In my 2018 *Currents in Theology and Mission* article, "I Am an Immigrant," I talked about how society has constructed our idea of immigrants, arguing that claiming immigrant identity in the Imago Dei is actually subversive. If our perception of immigrants is primarily based on biased and inconsistent portrayals of human beings, it is not just being unhelpful but also harmful. By accentuating the importance of subverting the immigrant narrative, I insist that affirming one's value and subjectivity is both urgent and necessary. Each individual is created full of dignity for the glory of God.

Each one may be different in skin color, language, cultural custom, and practice, but each single individual is inherent with the most fundamental quality of being worthy and honored. Difference essentially reflects the reality that God is not watching over us at a distance, but firmly and passionately participating in human history. God's glory shines through the face of each individual, regardless of differences. Because of that, otherness becomes sacred, for God does not side with those wealthy, powerful, and lovable elites, but opts for the marginalized as a way of witnessing to God's glory, love, and faithfulness to the world. It is the Imago Dei that gives value to humanity, and not certain social policies or political ideologies.

The change in discourse on the immigrant narrative should force us to rethink how we relate to others, particularly those who are continually and unjustly stigmatized. Our presence should help remind Americans that their ancestors were once newcomers to the United

States. The way we reflect on the past or remember history will also inform our way of relating.

RETURNING TO WARTBURG SEMINARY

I did not know about the open position in systematic theology at Wartburg until I received a nomination to apply. It was around March, when a lot of people were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant lockdowns. In the meantime, anti-Asian hate incidents exploded across the country. When I was asked to share my core theological commitments in light of pressing global issues with the Wartburg community, I wanted to invite everyone to reimagine God during the pandemic with a focus on the pain of certain communities or members of society whose lives had been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. The task of reimagination also involves a rethinking of God's justice, which inevitably confronts theories of punitive justice and thus encourages us to change our social behaviors and reorder social relationships.

As both an institution and a community of faith, Wartburg's openness, willingness to listen, and engagement in transformative missions really moved me. It also brought back memories of studying at Wartburg during my formative years and how the Wartburg community would sincerely stand with the oppressed and constantly support people's struggle for freedom and justice. So, it was extremely exciting for me to receive the news that I was called to be Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology at Wartburg Theological Seminary. It was also the most humbling moment of my life, empowering me to move forward and meet new challenges ahead.

I hope that my work, including my teaching and writing, does not simply change the image of the church but instigates real change in the structure of the church. Being a diverse church together is more than a slogan; it requires commitment and courage to create lasting change.

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I'm the full-time Director of Retreat Ministries at Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp and am adding the Master of Arts program at WTS this year! HUGE thank you to Jackie (Director for Admissions) for being part of the Holy Spirit nudge to take this next most faithful step.



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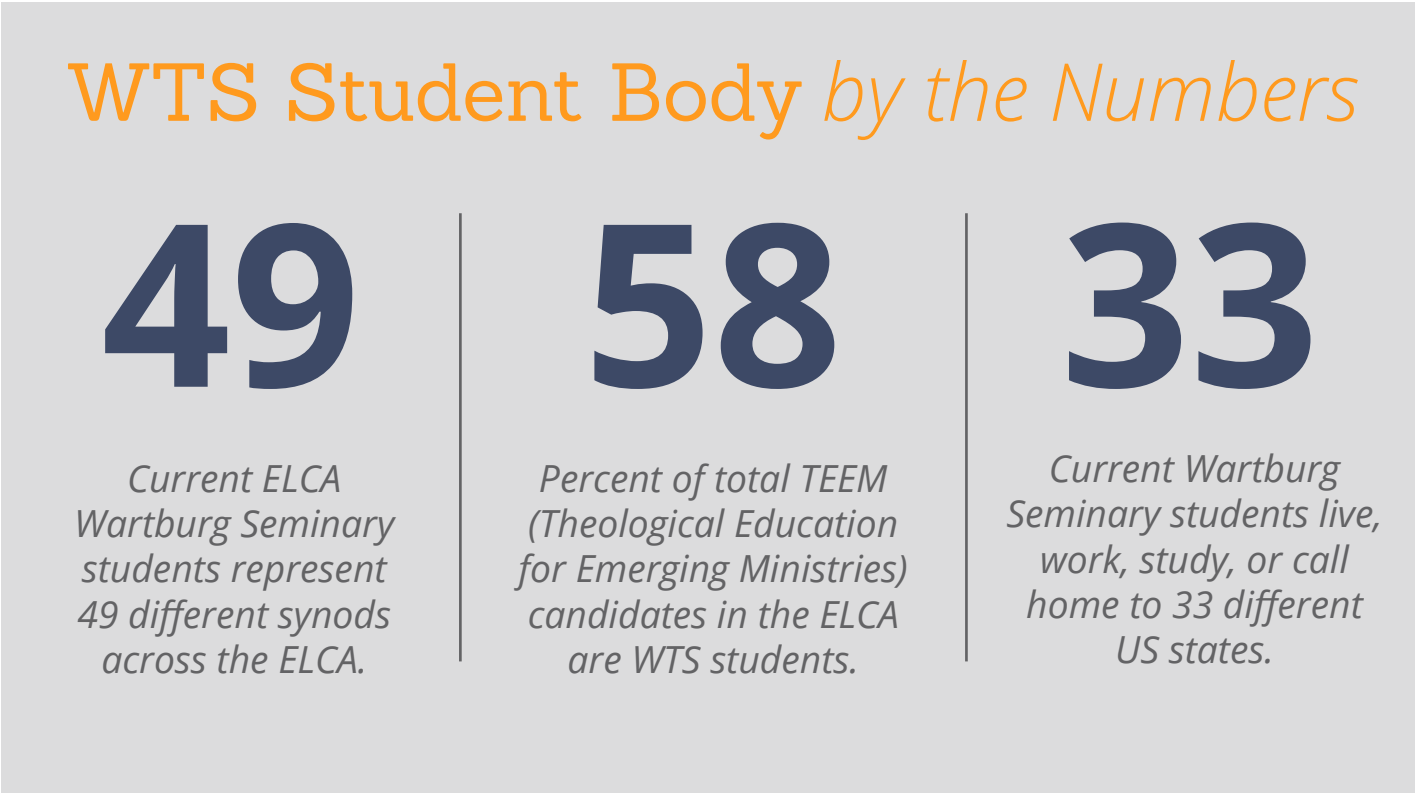
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List Continues on Pg. 26



“YESENIA MORALES, MASTER OF DIVINITY STUDENT
Everyone at Wartburg made me feel more than welcomed. I felt seen and accepted by everyone I’ve met and that, for an immigrant woman in this country, is not easy to find.



Three Congregations Come Together to Fund Full-Tuition Scholarship

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE WALWORTH JEFFERSON SCHOLARSHIP

Congregations have long played a crucial role in the formation of students and church leaders. Wartburg has been blessed this past year by churches in the South Central Synod of Wisconsin coming together in new and creative ways to make a difference for students.

Last year the endowment committee members of Sugar Creek Lutheran Church in Elkhorn, WI worked together to make a difference. They were moved to think big, tackling the question of how they could impact ministry in communities like theirs across the country. They decided to support a seminary student with a \$6,000 gift to Wartburg Theological Seminary. What they did not yet realize was that the Holy Spirit was working through their gift to inspire others. They soon found themselves building a partnership within the Walworth Jefferson Conference. Sugar Creek Lutheran's pastor, Pastor Dick Inglett (WTS class of 1989), began spreading word of the gift around the conference in hopes of partnering with another congregation. When asked why Wartburg Seminary, Pastor Dick explained, "Wartburg Seminary is a recognized leader in providing quality education in preparing pastors for our setting, so it seems like a natural fit and partnership. Wartburg has also been a leader in being innovative on how pastors are trained and educated for ministry. This forward thinking is vital."

This forward thinking inspired Pastor Linda Winkelman (WTS class of 2007) of Jefferson Prairie Lutheran Church in Poplar Grove, IL. She jumped at the opportunity to both partner in ministry and lift up leaders in the church. The Jefferson Prairie endowment committee agreed, gifting \$6,000 to the WTS Scholarship Fund. One Jefferson Prairie council member shared: "Part of Wartburg Seminary's mission is to foster community, which is what we are doing by partnering with other congregations to do ministry."

The Jefferson Prairie congregation has witnessed this community-building firsthand, as they have hosted November's "Rural Plunge" students for a number of years. This has been a deeply meaningful experience for students and congregations alike, as many of the students who participated have worked or been formed

solely in urban or suburban settings. This rural immersion gives them a broad experience and new understanding of different contexts.

With a total impact of \$12,000, Sugar Creek and Jefferson Prairie found themselves in the wonderful position of being able to fund more than a half-tuition scholarship for a Wartburg student in need! This was already great news, but the Holy Spirit was not finished doing God's work. Pastor Dick and Pastor Linda shared the story of their partnership at the Walworth-Jefferson clergy meeting, asking if any other congregations felt moved to join and support Wartburg Seminary students training to share the Good News. Pastor Amy Waelchli (WTS class of 2014) of Trinity Lutheran Church in Fort Atkinson, WI heard the call to bring this opportunity before her council, who voted to gift an extra \$5,000 toward the scholarship. The **Walworth Jefferson Scholarship at Wartburg Theological Seminary** was now ready to provide a **full-tuition annual fund scholarship**, helping students in need follow their call.

Pastor Amy shared that Trinity was so excited at the opportunity to support a student because this had been their goal for years. "Trinity has an endowment fund for theological education to further Christ's church in the world. It was unused for many years, awaiting the opportunity to send one of 'our' members to seminary. However, all students are 'our' members because we are one church in Christ. Using the fund to further someone's education is a gift of faith to the whole church." She added that they were particularly excited to support a Wartburg Seminary student because "Trinity treasures leaders who are community-minded, theologically sound, passionate preachers, and good teachers."

Since 2015, scholarship dollars awarded to students at Wartburg Seminary per year have increased by 224%. This year Wartburg will award over \$2.2 million in scholarships. This initiative by the entire Wartburg Seminary community has led to a 76% decline in total student tuition borrowing. Partnerships like the scholarship set up by Sugar Creek Lutheran, Jefferson Prairie Lutheran, and Trinity Lutheran have made this reality possible. The Wartburg



REV. AMY WAECHLI DURING A CHILDREN'S SERMON AT TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH IN FORT ATKINSON, WI



JEFFERSON PRAIRIE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN POPLAR GROVE, IL CHOIR SINGING CLOSING BLESSING DURING WORSHIP



SUGAR CREEK LUTHERAN CHURCH IN ELKHORN, WI YOUTH GROUP PREPARING FOR A TRIP

Seminary community coming together makes all the difference.

"Together we can provide a full scholarship for a student at Wartburg. This is not something that we could do by ourselves," explained Pastor Inglett of Sugar Creek. A member of the Jefferson Prairie Council agreed: "We motivate and inspire each other. Sharing ideas between congregations helps keep us from getting stagnant. ... It's exciting to be able to significantly change someone's life by giving them the financial means to learn and then go out into the world to lead God's people in sharing the gospel in word and service."

Wartburg Seminary is dedicated to growing relationships with congregational partners and knows how students and congregations can be transformed when they relate to one another. This fall Wartburg will be connecting a student to the partnership. This student will truly know that they are being lifted up by three communities of faith and will have an opportunity to preach at one or more of the congregations when possible.

Wartburg Seminary celebrates our ministry partnership with the Walworth Jefferson Conference and thanks every leader who came together to make such an impact in a student's life. Each pastor has made it clear they do not see this as the end of the road. The Walworth Jefferson Conference Scholarship is open to being renewed each year and will continue to encourage other congregations to join the partnership or create their own to support students following their call to seminary.

"Not only will we be building relationships with Wartburg and a Wartburg student," Pastor Inglett of Sugar Creek explained, "but we will also have a greater opportunity to build relationships with sister congregations. It is also a witness and model for other congregations in the ELCA to work together around shared interests and ministries. All three of our congregations hope that other ministry partnerships will develop and congregations across the ELCA will provide scholarships."

If your congregation is interested in supporting leaders following their call at WTS, please call our Development Team at 563-589-0322.



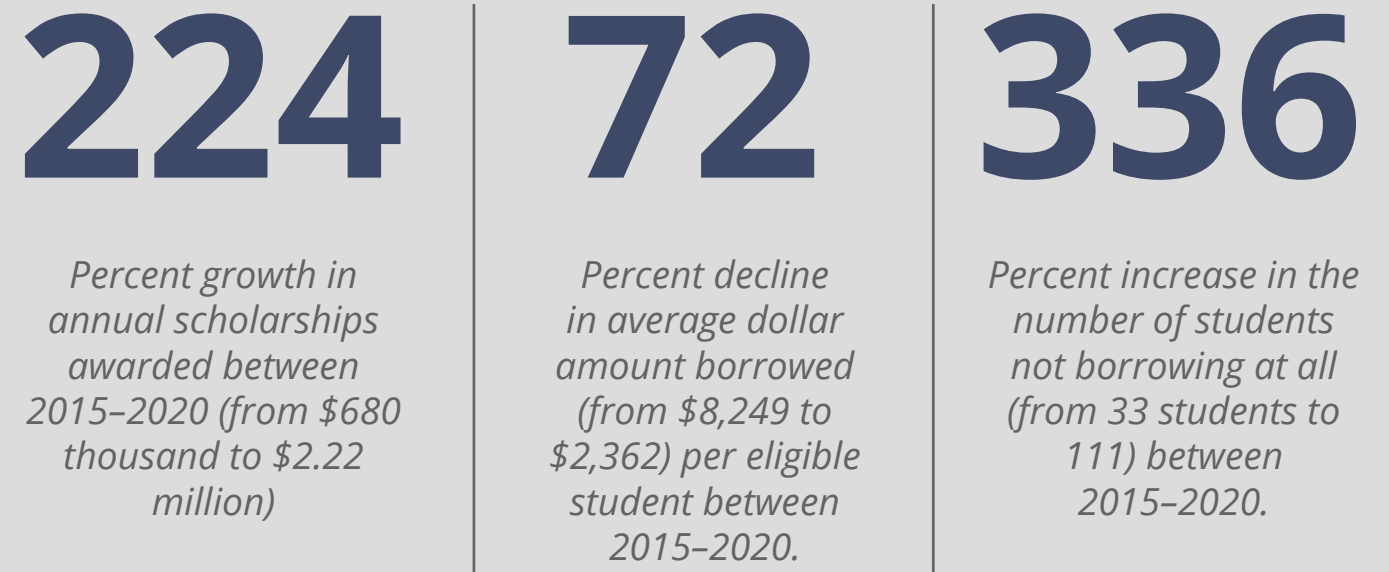
**DAMISHA MCFARLAND-POLLOCK,
MASTER OF DIVINITY STUDENT**

I chose WTS because when I first visited for an Admissions event, I felt like I had come home. Everyone—the staff, students, and professors—engaged me personally and challenged me intellectually. For me, it is all about community and being a part of this amazing WTS family.

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List Continues on Pg. 39

Called to be Committed: Monthly Giving Impact Stories

DONORS SHARE WHY THEY CHOOSE TO SUPPORT WARTBURG SEMINARY'S MISSION MONTHLY

Automatic, regular giving is beneficial to you and Wartburg Seminary. By giving monthly, or other frequencies, you can make budget-friendly payments over time that add up to a larger gift at the end of the year and for years to come. Your impact on Wartburg students lasts throughout the year! Read stories from a few of our supporters who opt to give this way and consider joining them.

REV. DARYL AND MRS. GWEN DAUGS

Wartburg Seminary is a family institution for us. My father, grandfather, older brother, niece, and nephew are all graduates. We all received excellent educations. I received outside support for my education and through our giving we can support other students. Our decision to give monthly fits our limitation of income during our years of ministry and over the length of time is a significant amount. It represents our commitment as opposed to a portion of unused money. I would hope that future students at Wartburg Seminary might continue to experience the fellowship and education that is unique to the learning environment at Wartburg.

REV. DAVE CHRISTIANSON

I was called to ministry in 2007, and with discernment that revealed a passion for pastoral work in rural ministry. I found Wartburg to have the best resources among all the ELCA seminaries to pursue that goal. The school also had just started a well-thought-out TEEM program that my bishop, Rev. Duane Peterson of the Northwest Wisconsin Synod, recommended. As a member of TEEM's second cohort, I found the hybrid learning scheme of online and on-campus study perfectly suited to develop my understanding and skills in the company of many similarly situated students.

Wartburg had a profound impact on my life and call that I feel is a blessing every day, and one I probably can never fully repay. God truly speaks and works through WTS. My hope is that current students are served as well as I was by Wartburg, which I am certain will be the case.

Efforts to finance these new students' expenses through grants, endowments, and synodical funding will go a long way to make their development easier and more

focused and bring in even more eager and inspired ministerial candidates. I pray that they too will be inflamed by the work of the Holy Spirit as they pursue their studies and then move on to be servant leaders in their own congregations. I also hope they will love and recognize the role of Wartburg in their continuing education, and in their relations with alumni, wherever they find them!

REV. JANET AND MR. ALAN WOLD

We chose to give to Wartburg Seminary because of my deep appreciation for the education I (Janet) received there, both scholastically and spiritually. We decided to give monthly because it is an easy way to financially support a place I hold dear in my heart. I know that cash flow can be an issue. Monthly gifts allow Wartburg to know what and how much to expect from us as donors. Having the money come directly out of our checking account makes it part of our "first fruits" giving.

What do I hope for students today? That they are challenged in their seminary education to learn how to deal with the unexpected (like a pandemic!). I hope their education will go beyond scholastics and include relation-

ships that will last a lifetime, as they have for me. I hope that they will be in a safe environment to explore with others their theology and spirituality. I hope they will look back at their time at Wartburg Seminary with a deep appreciation for all it helped them to become.

BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR

Join these and many more of our faithful group of regular supporters one of three ways:

- Complete the information on the enclosed envelope and indicate that your gift will be a monthly contribution.
- Visit our giving page at www.wartburgseminary.edu/giving-opportunities (be sure to indicate the frequency in the provided drop-down).
- Contact our Development Team at development@wartburgseminary.edu or 563-589-0322.

You may choose your automated gifts to be monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, and even annual! Even with a recurring gift, you have freedom to choose the timing and amount that best suits your budget.

Wartburg Seminary Legacy Support

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The Tower Community of Wartburg Theological Seminary recognizes with gratitude those supporters who have made a commitment to the seminary through a planned gift. These promised gifts enable us to walk into the future of theological education with ambitious visioning and transformative initiatives. An asterisk (*) is used to indicate new members.

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“PAUL ERBES, VICE PRESIDENT FOR DEVELOPMENT

In another sign of Wartburg’s financial stability, the seminary is pleased to announce that it has **paid all long-term debt obligations**. Vice President for Finance and Operations Andy Willenborg explained, “Due to generous donor support and prudent fiscal management, the seminary is now able to redirect several hundred thousand dollars per year in support of other facets of our mission.”

Several large estate gifts in recent years, combined with the sale of the Pulpit Rock apartment complex, have given Wartburg greater flexibility to increase support to students, launch new programs, and build up cash reserves for a sustainable future. This solid financial foundation means every gift given to support Wartburg now has an even bigger impact on our ability to serve the church with more leaders.

BEQUESTS RECEIVED JULY 1, 2019–JUNE 30, 2020

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stephen.phelps@elca.org
314-703-6949

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ljohnson@lfsfsw.org
713-775-1595

Illinois
Tim Urness
tim.urness@elca.org
331-444-3120

Iowa
Mike Klinefelter
mike.klinefelter@elca.org
402-943-7272

Nebraska
Sarah Callahan
scallahan@lutherangiving.org
402-342-5728

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dczac@lfsfsw.org
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jdellis@lfsfsw.org
830-305-2758

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cynthia.halverson@elca.org
773-380-2572

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Wartburg is blessed by the support of congregations, businesses, and other organizations. This listing identifies their generous gifts for the day-to-day operations of the seminary as well as funding for scholarships, new initiatives, or other designated and endowment funds.

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“CARRIE BRCKA, MASTER OF ARTS STUDENT

I’ve had so many fears and doubts that have talked me out of seminary for so long. Those fears all perished during Prolog Week this fall. Peace and excitement have filled me. It’s been the absolute BEST.

Immanuel Lutheran Church WELCA, Compton, Illinois
Little Norway Lutheran Church WELCA, Black River Falls, Wisconsin
Moscow Lutheran Church, Austin, Minnesota
Northeastern Iowa Synod WELCA, Decorah, Iowa
Our Saviors Lutheran Church, Outing, Minnesota
Our Saviors WELCA, Waubay, South Dakota
Our Saviours Lutheran Church, Bremerton, Washington
Perry Lutheran Church WELCA, Mt Horeb, Wisconsin
Rock of Ages Missionary Baptist Church, Dubuque, Iowa

Sisters of Charity BVM, Dubuque, Iowa
St James Lutheran Church, Garden City, Kansas
St James Lutheran Church, Allison, Iowa
St James Lutheran Church WELCA, Forreston, Illinois
St John Lutheran Church, Marion, Texas
St John Lutheran Church WELCA, Pomeroy, Iowa
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Zion Lutheran Church, Muscatine, Iowa

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Faculty & Staff Updates



Rev. Dr. Jay Alanis, Associate Professor of Theology, Culture, and Mission and Executive Director of the

Lutheran Seminary Program in the Southwest, delivered online sermons in Spanish during worship at Proyecto Santiago, a Spanish-speaking ministry of St. James Episcopal Church in Austin and at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Manhattan. He taught a TEEM course on Pastoral Arts to Spanish-speaking students addressing the pastoral care needs of the immigrant community, taught an online class for Kinsmen Lutheran Church of Houston on the theme of "A Lutheran Border-Crossing: Serving the Neighbor During the Spanish Flu Pandemic of 1918," and recorded a podcast with Barbara Cox for "40 minutes of Faith" focusing on immigration and the Bible. Jay wrote reviews for three books: *Introducción al Nuevo Testamento* by Mark Allan Powell, *Stories from Global Lutheranism: A Historical Timeline* by Martin Lohrmann, and *The Bend of the River* by Edward Rickford.



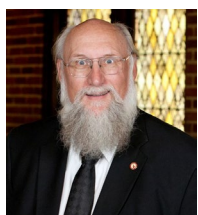
Rev. Amy Current, Vice President for Admissions and Student Services, has been elected to serve as Bishop

of the Southeastern Iowa Synod of the ELCA.



Rev. Dr. Martin Lohrmann, Associate Professor of Lutheran Confessions and Heritage, has

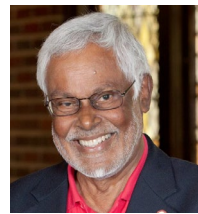
completed his book *Stories from Global Lutheranism: A Historical Timeline*, which is forthcoming from Fortress Press as part of the Lutheran Quarterly Books series. The book tells stories of how Lutheranism has become a global movement over the centuries.



Rev. Dr. Craig L. Nesson, Professor of Contextual Theology and Ethics, William D. Streng Professor

for the Education and Renewal of the Church, and Academic Dean, edited the article "Case Studies on ELCA Social Statements: For Personal Reflection and Group Discussion," a collection of case studies by WTS students for *Currents in Theology and Mission* 47 (April 2020). He published *Wilhelm Loehe and North America: Historical Perspective and Living Legacy* (Wipf & Stock) and presented on "Church Leadership in Polarizing Times: Staying Centered in Jesus Christ" for the Western Iowa Synod in August.

Rev. Dr. Winston D. Persaud, Professor of Systematic Theology, Holder of the Kent S. Knutson and UELC Chair in Theology and Mission, and Director of the



Center for Global Theologies, presented via Zoom at "Summer Missionary Orientation," GM/ELCA and

gave a theological presentation for Western IA Synod rostered leaders, attended the Central States Synod Candidacy Retreat, and Toronto School of Theology Virtual Forums this summer. He preached at the ordination of 2020 graduate, Kelly Jean Ylitalo, in Aug. and submitted to *Dialog* the article "Articulating Christian Doctrine in the Pluralistic World of the Twenty-First Century."



Rev. Dr. Char Rachuy Cox, Director of Contextual Education, taught a five-week "Christian

Worship" class for the Diakonia (Lay School) program in the South Central Synod of Wisconsin June-July. This 15-hour class explored historical, theoretical, and practical considerations regarding worship.



Rev. Dr. Jan Schnell, Assistant Professor of Liturgics, joined the faculty on July 1, 2020. She recently

submitted "From a Scholar" sermon assists for a portion of an upcoming *Sundays and Seasons: Preaching*. She is co-developing a webinar on

worship and ministry during- and post-pandemic this fall. During J-term, she and Itonde Kakoma will offer a course on dismantling racism. This course will study racism as a system and will move beyond silence to the actions of Christian love. She dreams that this content could be offered to congregations.



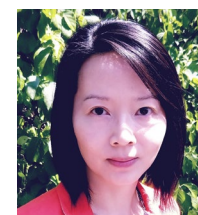
Rev. DeWayne Teig, Instructor in the Pastoral Arts and Advisor for TEEM, shifted from the usual on-campus TEEM

intensive teaching format to a synchronous online delivery this summer. He taught a required TEEM course, "Educational Ministry: The Church as Learning Community." The class explored the task of Christian education in our day as being evermore a prophetic one by asking: What is faith? How is it taught? Who among us doesn't need to hear a fresh word of hope? Where is the church in sharing its indispensable message so that society is transformed?



Rev. Dr. Troy Troftgruben, Associate Professor of New Testament, is currently serving on Wartburg's presidential search team and is chairing

a search for an Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible. This summer he published an essay, "Prayer and Ethics in the Sermon on the Mount," in an issue of *Word & World* journal honoring one of his teachers, Mark Throntveit. This summer he conducted a survey project among church leaders to learn from their online ministry practices during the pandemic. He is also working on several articles that deal with creative strategies for teaching online.



Dr. Man-Hei Yip, Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology, joined the faculty on July 1, 2020. She published *Interrogating the Language of "Self"*

and "Other" in the History of Modern Christian Mission: Contestation, Subversion, and Re-imagination in August (Pickwick Publications).

Meet a Member of the WTS Board of Directors!



REV. DR. AMSALU GELETA

The Rev. Dr. Amsalu Geleta serves as the Executive Assistant to the Bishop and the Director of Evangelical Mission in the Delaware-Maryland

Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Previously, he served as a pastor of St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Springfield, Virginia (for seven years) and Christ Lutheran Church in Baltimore, Maryland (five years). A native of Ethiopia, he graduated from Mekane Yesus Seminary in 1995.

In 2000, he earned a Master of Philosophy in Religious Studies at the Norwegian Lutheran School of Theology. In 2005, Pastor Geleta graduated from the Virginia Theological Seminary with a Master of Theological Studies.

In 2011, he earned his Doctor of Ministry at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. During his quest to become an ordained minister, Rev. Dr. Geleta has held various positions in academia and has served as a hospital chaplain. He was elected to the ELCA Church Council in 2009. He served and is serving on different synodical and churchwide working groups, committees, and boards.

Since joining WTS board he has served on the Academic Committee, Faculty Search, and President Search Committees. He regards it as an honor and privilege to serve on the WTS board and support the excellent work of the WTS community. He enjoys spending his free time with his wife, Ife Choma, and his daughters, Deborah, Simbo, and Kenna.

Alumni Notes

'51
Rev. Wilbert Doerr died on July 16, 2020. He served First American Lutheran Church, Olney; St. John's, Warrenton and St. Paul Lutheran, Shelby; St. Mark, Bridge City; St. James, Harper; St. John, Marion; Immanuel and Trinity, El Campo, all in Texas.

'58
Rev. Marvin Rothfusz died on June 29, 2020. He served congregations in Stickney, SD; Coleridge, NE; Marshall, MN; and New Auburn, MN. He was also an editor of children's educational material for Augsburg Publishing House, and after leaving the ministry in 1974 served as director of a Minnesota Head Start Program district office.

'60
Rev. Ervin Langholz died on July 8, 2020.

'64
Mary Jacobs, wife of **Rev. La Moine Jacobs**, died on May 8, 2020.

'73
Rev. Curtis Miller died on September 15, 2020. He served Holy Trinity, Dubuque, IA, and St. Paul, Tama, IA, as Assistant to the Bishop of the Iowa District of the American Lutheran Church, and then for 14 years as first Bishop of the Western Iowa Synod of the ELCA. After his service as Bishop, he served Christ, Cottonwood, MN.

'78
Rev. Martin Osterloh died on September 5, 2020. He

served Immanuel, Elkport, IA; Hope, Littleport, IA; Salem, Correctionville, IA; Ascension, Goose Lake, IA; and Midland/Deep Creek, Midland, SD.

'19
Rev. Claire Ackleow was ordained on September 19, 2020. She has been called to serve Faith Lutheran Church in Jeffersonville, IN.

'20
Rev. Anthony Acompanado was ordained on August 16, 2020. He has been called to serve Ascension Lutheran Church, Waukesha, WI.

Rev. Maria Bonine was ordained on October 12, 2020, at St. John's, Mendota, IL.

Deacon Kenneth Champagne was ordained on September 6, 2020. He has been called to serve as Deacon for Discipleship at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Fairfax, VA.

Rev. Jason Davis was ordained on September 20, 2020. He has been called to serve as Assistant Pastor at St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Huntsville, AL.

Rev. Charlotte Eversoll was ordained on July 26, 2020. She has been called to serve St. Luke Lutheran and St. Paul Lutheran, Emerson, NE.

Rev. Elisabeth Himmelman was ordained on August 7, 2020. She has been called to serve First

Lutheran Church, Kearney, NE, as Associate Pastor of Youth & Young Adult Ministry.

Rev. John Jorgensen was ordained on September 19, 2020. He has been called to serve New Life Lutheran Church, Sergeant Bluff, IA.

Rev. Kate Kieckhafer was ordained on August 8, 2020. She has been called to serve Grace Lutheran Church, Darlington, WI.

Rev. Kirsten Lee was ordained on September 20, 2020, at New Era Lutheran Church, Muscatine, IA. She has been called to serve New Era and Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Dureant, IA.

Deacon Nichole (Coco) Lyons was ordained on July 13, 2020. She has been called to serve St. Michael Lutheran Church, Omaha, NE.

Rev. Thomas Schwolert was ordained on September 12, 2020, at the Briarwood Leadership Center in Argyle, TX. He has been called to serve Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Garland, TX.

Rev. John Sheahan was ordained on August 15, 2020. He has been called to serve Bergen Lutheran Church, Roland, IA.

Rev. Kelly Ylitalo was ordained on August 9, 2020. She has been called to serve Mission United Lutheran Church, Pelkie, MI.

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Admissions Online Open House

December 6, 2020
Advent Lessons & Carols (Livestream)

January 12, 2021
Admissions Online Open House

March 19-21, 2021
Considering Your Call Weekend

April 6-7, 2021
Reformation & Reunion (Online)

April 20, 2021
Admissions Online Open House



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