



*From the Office of the President
The Rev. Kristin Johnston Lergen, Ph.D.*

RESPONDING TO COVID-19: UPDATE AS OF APRIL 2021

We find ourselves approaching the end of another academic year, one which has offered many reasons for hope—namely, the expansive roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccinations. Many of us and our loved ones have been vaccinated, and for that, we give thanks to God. We know that the roll-out is uneven in places, but the vaccine is coming for us all soon.

As you know, spring semester courses have been offered digitally only and campus has remain closed to visitors, but **it is our plan to start reopening campus beginning July 1, 2021 and convene Prolog Week and the Fall Semester residentially in addition to our regular distance learning models.** The WTS COVID-19 Task Force continues to monitor the situation carefully and will do our best to share updates as things change.

Updated Temporary Policies for Wartburg Seminary as of April 2021:

1. TEEM courses in June and July will occur digitally, but Fall Prolog Week will be held in-person on campus, and residential courses will resume for the Fall Semester.
2. All students, faculty, and staff are **strongly encouraged to be fully vaccinated** for the sake of the health of the whole community.
2. Students, faculty, and staff are expected to continue following COVID-19 best practices as prescribed by the seminary—including **mandatory mask use** in campus buildings outside of private offices and residences.
3. Campus will continue to remain closed to the public but remain open to students, faculty, and staff through July 1, 2021. Updated policies after July 1 are forthcoming.
4. All students are expected to follow the policies set forth by the governments, organizations, and synods where they are serving.
5. The whole WTS community is encouraged to practice care and consideration for yourself and others. This includes staying home if becoming symptomatic, consulting with medical staff if symptoms persist, and asking for help when needed.

Our prayers for strength, consolation and healing continue for all those in special need during this time. We are confident in this community's ability to be flexible and resilient, and we wait in confident hope for the days coming soon when we can gather here at the Castle!

Blessings and prayers are with you all.

The Rev. Kristin Johnston Lergen, Ph.D.
President