

LifeTogether

The background image is a photograph of the Wartburg Theological Seminary. In the foreground, a large bronze statue of Martin Luther stands on a stone pedestal. He is depicted in a long robe, holding a book in his left hand and pointing with his right. The sun is setting behind the statue, creating a strong lens flare and illuminating the scene. In the background, the seminary's main building is visible, featuring a tall, square stone tower with a clock face and a crenellated top. The building has Gothic-style windows and a central arched entrance. The sky is a pale, hazy blue.

THE MAGAZINE OF
WARTBURG THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Fall 2023

2023 Impact Report

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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Jessica Schneider, *Director of Communications*

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Wartburg Theological Seminary
Dubuque, Iowa 52003

Phone: 563-589-0200
Fax: 563-589-0333
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

Dear Friends of Wartburg Seminary,

As we reflect upon another remarkable year at Wartburg Seminary, we are delighted to share some highlights from our 169th school year. It is with great gratitude that we reflect on the milestones and accomplishments of 2022-2023.

Lead Boldly, Exceeding Expectations:

We are thrilled to report that your steadfast support has allowed us to exceed our goals and expectations in several key areas of our comprehensive capital campaign:

- **Scholarships:** Through your generosity, we have been able to provide more scholarships to our deserving students than ever before, easing their financial burdens and allowing them to focus on their theological education.
- **Endowment:** Our endowment fund has seen significant growth, ensuring the long-term sustainability and impact of Wartburg Seminary for generations to come.
- **Fritschel Hall Remodel:** The completion of the major remodel of Fritschel Hall has transformed it into a state-of-the-art facility, providing a more vibrant and modern space for our students, faculty, and staff.
- We still need your help to reach our \$28 million overall goal by the end of December, which will set us up for a strong future.

Leadership Transitions:

Wartburg Seminary welcomed new leadership into our community this year:

- Academic Dean: Rev. Dr. Cheryl Peterson
- Vice President for Development: Michael Johnson
- New Members of the Wartburg Seminary Board of Directors:
 - Rev. Dr. Erik Gronberg, Bishop of the North Texas North Louisiana Synod who holds a degree from Harvard in Environmental Science and Public Policy. Before graduating from Luther Seminary, Bishop Gronberg worked as an investment banker assisting municipalities, hospitals, and universities structure their debt financings.
 - Rev. Minna Bothwell, pastor of Capitol Hill Lutheran Church in Des Moines, Iowa. Pastor Bothwell serves a congregation that hails from 20 countries, worships in three languages, and offers innovative ministries to refugees and those burdened by medical debt.
 - Rev. Emily Norris, pastor of The Dwelling in Winston-Salem North Carolina. The Dwelling is one of the fastest growing congregations in the ELCA, serving and ministering with those who are unhoused, assuring them that “there is holiness in the identity as someone experiencing homelessness” because “we are all wanderers in search of belonging.”

We are blessed by these capable servants to join us in pursuing God’s mission here at Wartburg. We will also give thanks at our October Board meeting for the long and faithful service of our retiring Board Chair, Steve Cornils, and James Mohn, Chair of the Finance Committee. The vision and faithful dedication Steve and Jim have brought to our board have been unstinting. And what they have achieved through their work is yet another sign of God’s abundant love for Wartburg, outpoured in the form of gifted leaders who offer sacrificially their time, talent, and treasure to achieve God’s purposes.

Student Community and Engagement:

Our student enrollment remains strong, reflecting the enduring appeal of Wartburg Seminary as a center for transformative theological education.

A Legacy of Faith and Learning:

As we look toward our 170th year, we celebrate the enduring legacy of Wartburg Seminary. Our commitment to nurturing future leaders, fostering deep theological understanding, and promoting justice and compassion remains unwavering.

None of these achievements would have been possible without your steadfast support, dedication, and faith in our mission. Your generosity empowers us to lead boldly into the future.

Thank you for being part of the Wartburg Seminary family. We look forward to what the next year will bring as we continue to grow in faith, learning, and service together.

Blessings,

Kathy Patrick
Chair, Board of Directors

Rev. Dr. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl '77
Chair, Board of Trustees

A close-up photograph of a stained glass window. The window features a geometric design with dark leaded glass panes and lighter, textured glass sections. The colors are primarily earthy tones like brown, tan, and green, with some darker accents. The lighting creates a warm, slightly blurred effect, emphasizing the textures and patterns of the glass.

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Board Chair Admitted as Fellow of the International Academy of Trial Lawyers



Wartburg Theological Seminary Board Chair and Gibbs & Bruns partner Kathy Patrick has been admitted as a Fellow of the International Academy of Trial Lawyers.

Founded in 1954 and recognized as the most prestigious organization of trial lawyers in the world, IATL admission is an exclusive honor that is limited to just 500 active trial lawyers in the U.S., and another 150 from 40 countries across the globe.

Fellowship in the Academy is by invitation only. Trial lawyers become Fellows only after an extremely rigorous vetting process that includes both peer and judicial review. The Academy seeks out Fellows who have achieved a career of excellence as shown by their skills in trial, and as demonstrated by their integrity and professionalism. Members are often heavily involved in pro bono efforts and generously contribute time and resources to their local communities.

IATL Purpose

- Promote reforms in the law.
- Facilitate the administration of justice.
- Cultivate the science of jurisprudence.
- Promote the rule of law internationally.
- Elevate the standards of integrity, honor, and courtesy in the legal profession.

This distinguished honor underscores Kathy's lifelong passion for trial law and her selfless devotion to pro bono and civic efforts.

Kathy joins her partners Robin Gibbs (admitted to IATL in 1993) and Barrett Reasoner (admitted to IATL in 2016) in becoming a treasured member Fellow of this elite organization.

Reflections on Fall 2023 Prolog Week Convocation

TROY TROFTGRUBEN, CHAIR OF COMMUNITY LIFE

In Matthew 18, Jesus tells his followers to come together directly with one another to address stumbling blocks and resolve conflict. In that spirit, Wartburg has a historic practice of convocations—community conversations—in which we come together, several times each academic year, to talk about important matters related to our life together in Christ. The practice also reflects Wartburg's emphasis on the value of "open questions" (vs. closed, tidy answers) as healthy for both community and spiritual discernment.

For the last half decade or so, Wartburg has held convocation during Prolog Weeks, since the gathered community that week in residence allows for dialogue face to face in a way unrivaled at other times. The Thursday of this fall Prolog Week saw that tradition carried out under the tent on Wartburg Seminary's Quad (behind Martin Luther), with a focus on how we will enter this academic year as community.

Led by members of Wartburg's Community Life committee (consisting of faculty, staff, and students), we considered four core values related to Wartburg's identity: Inclusive Language, Expectations, Navigating Conflict, and Practicing Celebration. Deacon Kellie Lisi framed and led the conversation, introducing it with meaningful metaphors and stewarding our overall time together. For each core value, we heard from two guest speakers—a student leader and a faculty member—to

spur on our thinking. This year we heard from students Christina Johnson, Zach Manzella, Curt Peterson, and Bunny Dillard, and from faculty members Sam Gilmore, Jan Schnell, Craig Nesson, and President Kristin Johnston Largen. Their reflections included insights from Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Life Together*, experiences on internship and in classrooms, and reflections on the power of language to include and exclude. At each point, we asked: "How do we practice [this core value] with one another in community?" and discussed it at tables with others.

As we talked, we wrote down our ideas, questions, and suggestions on Post-it notes to be submitted and displayed for others to see. We also had opportunity for select table members to offer key insights from their table conversations for the whole gathering to hear. Community Life chair Troy Troftgruben closed the time with a sending blessing.

Every academic year is a new year at Wartburg Seminary, making it important for us to enter faithfully and well. In an age of increasing social and political divisions, we cannot take community for granted or assume it will just "happen" on its own. For a seminary that treats community as a significant spiritual practice, this convocation helped us begin the year with appropriate expectations, awareness of challenges, and an eye to honoring and celebrating with our neighbor.



RAUSCH FAMILY LEAVES LEGACY OF TECHNOLOGY

AN INTERVIEW WITH CARL AND VALERIE RAUSCH

From establishing the first card catalogs in the library to providing Wartburg's first wireless network, the Rausch family has long supported bringing the latest technology to Wartburg Theological Seminary.

Carl Rausch and his wife Valerie have deep connections to Wartburg Seminary. Carl's grandfather, Emil Rausch, was a graduate and served as Wartburg Seminary's fifth president from 1932 to 1938. Carl's father, George Rausch served on the Wartburg Board of Directors for more than 20 years in the 1950s and Carl served on the Wartburg Board of Directors for twelve years and the Board of Trustees for seven years.

Around the year 2000, several of the Rausch cousins decided they wanted to find a way to memorialize their grandfather. The family contacted David Solberg, Wartburg's VP of Development at the time, and invited him to come visit with the family at their annual reunion, so that he might suggest a way for them to memorialize their grandfather. David did some research and found that one of Emil's accomplishments had been to formalize the seminary's library with a card catalog. Although it may seem trivial now, the library and its card catalog were essentially the cutting-edge information technology available at Wartburg at that time. With this in mind, Solberg proposed that the Rausch family memorialize their grandfather by jump-starting information technology in seminary education. The family immediately bought into this idea.

A couple of years later the Rausch family met many of Wartburg's technological needs, including the purchase of much-needed computers and developing the "Rausch Technology Center," a room in Fritschel Hall outfitted with the newest technology, free for student and faculty use. A few years later, when stu-

dents and faculty began using laptops, the Rausch family provided funding for wireless networks to be installed.

Zoom Video Communications was founded in 2011 by Eric Yuan; he launched his software in 2013. Shortly thereafter the family was asked if some of the Rausch Fund could be used for a Zoom pilot program at Wartburg. Interestingly enough, one of Carl and Valerie's best friends was one of the first people Eric Yuan had hired, so they were very familiar with Zoom. The answer was an enthusiastic "YES!" Little did the family know that providing funding for Zoom then would position Wartburg as a leader in distance education long before their peers started using it and COVID-19 required it.

We recently caught up with Carl and Valerie Rausch to talk about the impact their family has made on Wartburg.

How do you feel technology has transformed modern ministry?

Technology has transformed ministry in so many ways, but I would have to say the training for sure. It's transformed how people come to the ministry. Today 70% of Wartburg students are distance learners. The church is changing. And the concept of how you study to become a pastor and learn to lead must change too. Fortunately, Wartburg was at the cutting edge—the head of the pack, and they opened up an opportunity for so many people. Especially since students are not all 20-something. They might be 30 or 40 or even older and think, "Boy, I wish I had gone to seminary but now it's too late." Actually, it isn't too late anymore! They can still participate, and what's more, they can thrive.



Photo contributed by Carl and Valerie Rausch

Valerie and I were visiting Wartburg a few years ago and received a demonstration on how classes operate. We walked into one of the Zoom rooms and there were three or four residential students there, but there were also 10 to 12 online students. One was actually sitting in her car on the side of the road. It was impressive for sure, but the thing that has impressed us the most is the quality of the distance learning students. As an example, we heard from a student who lived in New York City, and she was so thankful to our family for piloting Wartburg's Zoom program. She said, "I have been called to ministry for 20 years, I live in New York City, I'm married, I love my husband, I love my children, so I just thought, there's no way I can pick up and go to seminary. But because of Wartburg's DL program, my dream is fulfilled." It's that sort of thing—so many students without this technology wouldn't have a chance simply because of life circumstances.

What do you think the impacts of that change have been on Wartburg?

I'll preface this by saying our family has been so impressed by the way Wartburg has embraced technology and in doing so has changed the educational process. I knew a lot of the professors who were there in 2014 and I was so proud of them throughout the Zoom implementation. Change is hard, and it was a lot of work, but they embraced it. And the interesting thing is they did it so well, and then came the payoff.

They knew they were good. They knew Wartburg was a leader. They stood taller, they were proud of the work they had done and they were hungry for more success. That's the thing that makes it so easy for my family to give enthusiastically. It really is different from giving to other organizations. We know that the Wartburg faculty and staff and students are all in and the gift keeps giving through the impact that pastors and leaders have during their lives of service. We're proud to support that kind of environment. It says a lot about the community.

What are some ways we can continue to use technology to reach more people?

One thing our family does is support Wartburg with focus. Right from the beginning we wanted to do something technology related and we still do. The focus helps the energy and the energy gets more pastors. Technology has changed so much in the last 20 or 30 years. It's continuing to change, fast, and the church has got to change with it, but they need to do it with a clear focus in mind. For example, AI is huge right now, and it's just going to get bigger. There are smart people out there who are willing to look and investigate. If it has an application to seminary education I know Wartburg will be able to figure it out and make the education process even better. And if the education process is better, the output will be even better, too.

A Renewed Fritschel Hall

CONSTRUCTION IS COMPLETE!

One of the great joys of this Prolog Week was our inaugural blessing of the renovated Fritschel Hall. After opening worship, the community processed across the lawn and gathered in Our Lady of Guadalupe Commons to offer prayers of thanksgiving and celebration.

The renovation was designed to serve the whole Wartburg learning community, both when we are gathered at the Castle and when we are scattered around the country and the world. Fritschel Hall, in many ways, serves as the entryway to the Wartburg Seminary community; therefore, it all begins in Guadalupe Commons. Dedicating this welcoming place of community and hospitality as Our Lady of Guadalupe Commons is our way of signaling that Wartburg is a home for everyone, particularly for those who have been traditionally marginalized and excluded from the Lutheran Church.

For many Lutherans with Northern European roots, the Virgin Mary has not been part of their Lutheran tradition. In fact, she was seen as the exclusive property of the Catholic Church, and congregations often made deliberate decisions to exclude her from any role in worship and devotional life. However, Lutherans who have different ethnic and regional backgrounds often have a much different relationship with Mary. This is particularly true for Lutherans who come from Spanish-speaking countries in the Americas or who live and worship in the U.S. alongside people with these heritages and histories. In those contexts in particular, Mary often has had a very significant role, specifically her instantiation as Our Lady of Guadalupe, who appeared to a poor indigenous man, Juan Diego, in what is now Mexico City in the 16th century.

For countless generations of Spanish-speaking Christians, including Spanish-speaking Lutherans and

those who worship alongside them, Our Lady of Guadalupe has been a central figure in worship and personal devotion. She is not only the Mother of our Lord, but she is our mother: she is the one who welcomes everyone home, the one who makes a congregation a home.

Standing in Guadalupe Commons, we remember God's faithfulness to all of God's people all around the world, in many different contexts, in many different languages, with many different backgrounds. God has made all of God's people one family in Jesus Christ, and at Wartburg Theological Seminary, we give thanks for and celebrate the diversity in this body, in our body.

From Guadalupe Commons, Fritschel opens up in many directions. The classrooms and Koplitz Auditorium were remodeled to facilitate superior hybrid learning; in the airy and comfortable library, additional huddle spaces and small group learning areas were built into the new design; and the centralized Student Services Suite makes getting support quick and easy. All throughout are touches that remind us of the long history of this building: the exposed brickwork, limestone, and the Greek word *pistis* that serves as a visual reminder of God's long history of faithfulness to Wartburg Seminary.

We have some new art throughout the building as well, which points to our ongoing commitment to be a seminary for the world. This includes our new stained glass window, which is visible in the library and from the president's conference room. It is an interpretation of Revelation 22:2, depicting a tree in the Kingdom of God whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.

There is so much more to see! We can't wait for you to come and experience it for yourself.



Coffee an



Pastor Grant Vanderford, a 2020 graduate of Wartburg Theological Seminary appreciates a *good* cup of coffee. In fact, he sees it not only as an enjoyable part of his morning routine, but as an integral part of his mission to provide pastoral care. In the fall of 2020, Grant was serving as half-time pastor of Bethesda Lutheran Church in Moorhead, Minnesota and half-time as Pastor and Mission Developer of a new ministry with folks experiencing homelessness and economic insecurity. The Northwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA had been dreaming and praying about how the church might accompany folks in a new and vibrant way, especially in light of the rising numbers of people in the area impacted by the growing housing crisis.

The NWMN Synod's Director for Evangelical Mission at the time, Pastor Keith Zeh, approached Bethesda in the spring of 2020 and invited them to dream about and envision what it would look like to call a half-time pastor for their congregation and to have the other half of that person's ministry work be dedicated to accompanying folks on the street, in the shelters, and who have been pushed to the margins. He and Bishop Bill Tesch asked if Grant was willing to explore what it would look like to serve in this capacity—half-time congregational work and half-time mission development.

The dream, the hope for this thing, as Pastor Grant articulates it is this: "a gathering, a congregation, if you will, of folks who are out on the streets and who are in the shelters. Why? Because we notice that this population is only being served by the church in a very transactional way. God is calling us to embody love, to be Christ's body in the world for the sake of our neighbors." The need was recognized, all the various participants agreed, resources were called together from the ELCA Churchwide Office, the NWMN Synod, and local congregations, and Table of Mercy was established with Grant serving at the helm.

nd Compassion

It was the fall of 2020 when Grant, called as a mission developer and as a pastor of the Bethesda congregation, went all in—even though, with the surge of COVID, it was a terrible time to start a new ministry. “The first six months we really struggled to determine what this new ministry looked like. But it turned out that on a basic level, the needs were simply pastoral care. People in shelters and out on the streets needed someone to show up and sit there and listen.”

When a member of his congregation approached him with a \$2,000 check, Grant knew just what to do with it. He bought coffee. And he took that coffee to the streets and the shelters every Tuesday morning. “We started showing up with coffee, a little basket from the church kitchen, and a stack of yellow scrap paper and pencils for prayer requests. And that’s all we did. We showed up, talked to people, prayed with people, and drank coffee with people.”

For three years, Grant has shown up with coffee and compassion. And when people ask, “What’s the ultimate goal of the Table of Mercy? Are you going to end homelessness?” His answer is a plain and simple, “No, it’s not going to happen that way.” He goes on to note, “We have fantastic organizations that are exclusively geared to providing housing that have not yet figured out how to do that. We can’t do that. The church can’t do that. But what the church can do is the simplest thing—show up for people. Literally just show up. And in that way, all of this comes back to Word and Sacrament. It’s being present with people so they can tell the story of what God is doing in their life and so that we can be fed together. And if that’s all Table of Mercy ends up being—and we never have a huge budget and we never have a building or a shower trailer and we never have whatever—maybe those things will come eventually, I don’t know. But at the end of the day, if we can just be present with whoever we encounter, then I think it’s worth it.”

It’s important to Grant to really listen to the needs of the community he serves. Often, simply listening

brings life to new ministries within Table of Plenty, such as “Laundry with Love.” On Thursdays, Grant wanders and meets with people on the street. One day he started asking them, “What would make your life physically better? What is one thing that you really need, but more importantly, really want?” And so many of the people he met with simply wanted a way to wash their clothes. To feel clean again. So, Grant started working with the partner churches in his area and made it happen. Now, once a month, at a laundromat in Fargo, people can show up and do three free loads of laundry—washed and dried. They also have the opportunity to partake in a good, hearty meal and receive pastoral care while they’re there.

When asked how his education at Wartburg prepared him for this line of work, Grant didn’t hesitate: “It wasn’t just one class. There was no one class that makes anything that I do, especially with Table of Mercy, easier or make more sense. Rather, it was that we as students were taught not just by lecture, but by genuine human relationship and listening. That’s made all the difference. Our professors modeled listening and collegiality.”

Grant went on to say, “Of course I could go on and on about Zoom and being a collaborative student, and about how the technology we were using to be innovative actually forced us to listen more. We had to be intentional about giving space to people in different modes, and there was a huge amount of value in that as a collaborative learner. I always felt that there was room for me to participate and be heard. I’d absolutely go back and do the CL program again. Learning in the midst of congregational ministry—I just wouldn’t be the pastor that I am today had I not been able to practice what I was learning immediately. Having the ability to not just practice, but to embody the learning that we were doing as we were doing it with God’s people where they are, that just made all the difference in the world.”

Making It Happen: International Students

AN INTERVIEW WITH KELLIE LISI AND JEANETTE PERRAULT

Would you explain Wartburg's commitment to international students? Why is this outreach important for the good of the seminary?

KL: We see this as being a really important element of our community because of the mutual learning that can happen. On the one hand, we as Wartburg want to be in partnership and mutual ministry with the global church and this program comes out of that call to partnership. But also, we recognize that our community is positively impacted and formed by the presence of international students. So, our international student program is a way to partner globally and to impact locally, as well as globally.

JP: Our international students bring unique theological perspectives, personal experience, and cultural identity that enriches our entire life and serves the greater church's needs as well.

Will you provide an overview of your approach to recruiting international students?

JP: Recruiting is such an interesting word in the work of admissions because a lot of it is building relationships, networks, and partnerships with people instead of trying to get students to come to us.

For example, we are committed to partnering with the International Leaders Program (ILP) in the ELCA. The ILP accompanies the ELCA's global companion churches and institutions to equip leaders for mission and ministry in a global context. This is a partnership where the ELCA is also committed to this work of building global partners and networks for the sake of the church and the gospel. We specifically partner with them in scholarshiping students who feel called to go to seminary. The ELCA ILP supports individuals to pursue academic degrees that equip them for leadership in their churches.

What partnerships or collaborations have you developed with educational institutions, agencies, or organizations to enhance international student recruitment?

JP: One of our current students, Zo Rabearivelo, is here with an ILP scholarship. He is a student in our one-year Master of Arts program and is an ordained pastor in the Malagasy Church of Madagascar. His purpose in being here is both to participate in more theological education, as well as to focus on the diaconal classes Wartburg offers. He will then return

home with that education and, as Kellie pointed out, we at Wartburg also benefit greatly—because we get to learn from him and his experiences as well.

KL: Partnerships are so important in our work.

JP: Exactly. One neat thing about Zo is that one of his references for his application, Toromare Mananato, is the vice-general secretary of the Malagasy Lutheran Church, and she is a 2009 Wartburg international student graduate. She graduated from Wartburg Theological Seminary with her Master of Arts in Theology, Development, and Evangelism. Having that partnership with someone who is now in leadership in the church of Madagascar and is now supporting another student to come to Wartburg just shows this rich history and our commitment to global partnerships and education.

What kind of support or resources do you provide to help international students navigate the application process and meet the required criteria?

JP: Again, it goes back to our partnerships with people. I received a reference from a pastor in California saying he knew of someone in the Holy Land, Jamil Zoughbi, who would be a great pastor and should come to Wartburg. At the same time, Wartburg had invited the Rev. Khader Khalilia who is the program director for Arab and Middle Eastern Ministries in the ELCA, as a Learning for Life speaker in the fall of 2022. He loved his brief Wartburg experience so much that the same day he came to talk to me about some students he had in mind whom he wanted to come to Wartburg. We had just started this partnership, but he really loved the community and what he saw was happening in our academics. While here, Rev. Khalilia experienced serenity, community, and great academics and he wanted to be a part of it. So, I said, "Khader, I have this reference that was just sent to me, and I know you're going to the Holy Land; I'm going to give this to you, as the program director of Arab and Middle Eastern Ministries, and I will leave it in your hands." Khader went over to the Holy Land in January and met Jamil, and said, "He needs to come to seminary, we need to make this happen." And we said, "OK!"

Khader was so committed to us at Wartburg, we were trusting him, we were building networks and partnerships with him and his ministry, so we started



Deacon Kellie Lisi and Jeanette Perrault

having conversations with Jamil. We told him that if he was going to pursue the Master of Divinity degree at Wartburg he had to have a partnership with a synod. Khader made that happen and next thing you know we had a meeting with Jamil and his synod and Khader and Kellie and Barb talking about how all of this would work, specifically financially. Not one of us doubted that Jamil would be a good fit for Wartburg because the minute we met him we knew he would be great within our community. But one of the greatest challenges we face with welcoming international students is the funding. It costs a lot of money. And sorting out who supports what and how is a big part of being able to welcome international students here. We are continuing to navigate that and working interdepartmentally and across the ELCA to create systems of support for these students.

What challenges do you encounter when recruiting international students, and how do you address these challenges?

KL: There's a very beautiful Holy Spirit movement that happens and that has happened with every single one of our international students. There is a truly massive amount of infrastructure that goes into the space between identifying the student and getting them here, and then even more that takes place in between their arrival and having everything in place for them to thrive on-campus in Dubuque. We are very committed to that part of it because we care deeply about these people as human beings. We care



Jamil Zoughbi and Zo Rabearivelo

deeply about their families, their children, and we want them to feel wholly supported and held here. We continue to discern systems and supports that are needed for right now, as well as what can be put in place for future students.

JP: I think that's the difference: we are not recruiting international students for the sake of just saying we have international students. That's not the point of this at all. If we cannot support them well, it's moot. These two students are prime examples of the beauty that comes of mutual discernment and of creating sustainable partnerships. I just think of how the Holy Spirit led with Zo, having historical partnerships with people who are working in his church and building new partnerships with ILP, as well as the partnerships being created to get Jamil here and creating new systems and partnerships to make sure they are taken care of once they are here. There are a lot of growing pains in the process, which are healthy and good and hard.

KL: Within all of this, I really want to lift up our residential community, along with members of the faculty and staff. These people, the way they come alongside our international students to provide transportation, to take them grocery shopping, to get washers and dryers installed in their homes, to donate furniture, host them for meals and activities—it's thanks to our

generous Dubuque community that our international students' first three days are full of campus tours, shopping trips, meals, info sessions, tours of Dubuque, hiking trips—and that is all 100% our residential and local community and it is beautiful. Supporting folks well is absolutely a team effort, which we could not do without our local and residential community. So for all the systems and logistics that we create and figure out, it's our on-the-ground community that opens arms and provides hospitality, without which, we wouldn't be able to welcome folks here.

JP: Our academic advisors are also a really important part of our international student success. They are pivotal in making sure that students have a strong academic experience in addition to their strong communal experience.

How do you measure long-term success?

JP: The relationships that students are creating—they know that they'll always have connections to us at Wartburg, that if we are traveling or they are traveling that we can connect. That they are our colleagues in ministry now. They were our classmates, and now they are our global colleagues. That's also just the culture of Wartburg. Wartburg is a community where people will find a piece of home, or a sacred place, a place that they can identify, come back to, and belong within.

Are you or is someone you know considering seminary?

Attend an upcoming **Online Open House**,
Considering Your Call Weekend, or
start a conversation with the
Wartburg Seminary Admissions team!
We can't wait to meet and walk with
you in your discernment journey.

WARTBURGSEMINARY.EDU/EVENTS | ADMISSIONS@WARTBURGSEMINARY.EDU

Introducing Carrie Greenquist-Petersen

DIRECTOR FOR TEEM AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS



My journey with Wartburg began with one small step almost ten years ago. I wasn't at all sure that seminary was for me, and wanted to dip my toe in before committing to anything. It had been a while since I'd walked the path of formal education, and I wondered if I was up to the challenge. But I loved learning and the certificate class process looked simple. I just signed up.

That one step changed my life. I took one class, then another, and before long I was a candidate for rostered ministry and pursuing a Master of Divinity degree in Wartburg's Distributed Learning track. My story is just one of many. People come to leadership and theological education from many circumstances and along myriad roads. No one way is the right way for everyone. We are created in diversity to uniquely reflect the love God has for all of creation, and the same is true for leaders in the church.

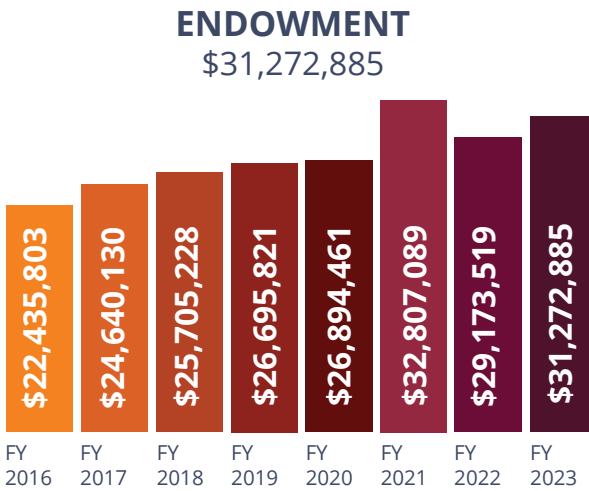
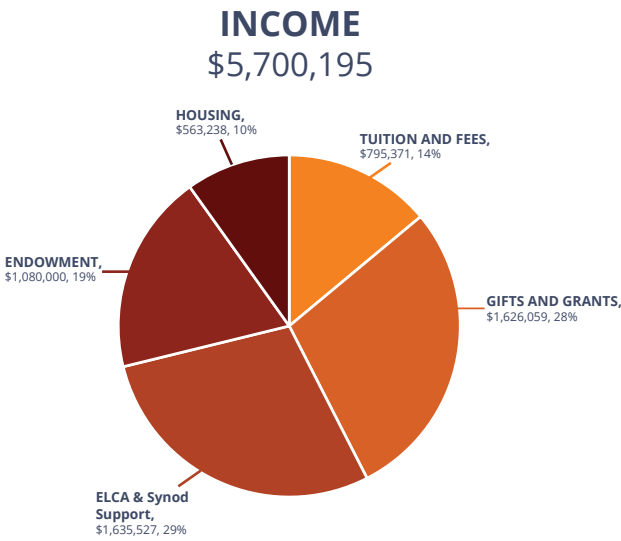
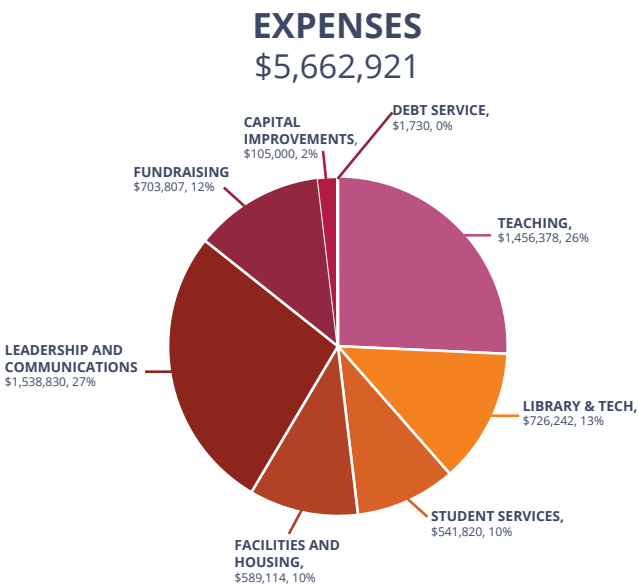
This is why I couldn't be more pleased to begin this new position as Director for TEEM and Certificate Programs. Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) is a leadership formation process in the ELCA designed for those who meet the established criteria, simultaneously serving in an emerging ministry site identified by a synod bishop and participating in formal theological learning. Wartburg offers two tracks of TEEM academic preparation for rostered ministry in an emerging ministry site. The Classic TEEM program is class-based, combining in-person and online instruction. The Journey Together and Caminemos Juntos TEEM program is an online competency-based educational model that is also offered in Spanish. Then, for those not currently pursuing rostered ministry, Wartburg also offers classes in its certificate program that can be taken one by one or in a combined curriculum to earn a certificate designation in several ministry fields.

Having lived in four states over the last several years, my husband Matt and I are thrilled to settle down in his home state, just across the river from Wisconsin where I grew up, and closer to our daughter Ellie, who attends Luther College in Decorah. Our two finicky French bulldogs aren't so sure about the move yet, but they do love watching the deer in the backyard.

Fiscal Year 2022-23 by the Numbers

Annual I

“Blessed
They shall be li
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These verses
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2024–2026. I
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As I review the
Report, this in
strongly with me, as I see your fac
roots. Your generous support and
sion of Wartburg Seminary provid
and allows us to continue to bear fr
the world.

For many individuals, congregatio
of fear and anxiety in the church.
future seems unclear; we know G
forms of congregational life, new
ways of forming church leaders, b
clear, and the path is not always s

IMPACT Report

are those who trust in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD.
like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream.
not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green;
f drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit.”
Jeremiah 17:7–8

from Jeremiah have shaped our
Wartburg Seminary this past year in
ment of a new Strategic Plan for
n this process, it has become clear
used we are, and you are a primary
at!

e long list of names in this Impact
image of a fruitful tree resonates
es among the leaves and in the
ongoing participation in the mis-
e the nourishment that sustains us
ruit for the sake of the church and

ns, and institutions, this is a time
So much is uncertain, and the
od is calling us to move into new
expressions of ministry, and new
ut those forms are not always
traight.

Yet, even in these fearful, anxious times, Wartburg Seminary is
leaning into God’s call with hope and confidence, grounded in our
trust in the Lord, nourished by partners like you. With your support,
we are:

- Removing financial barriers for ministerial candidates and providing increased funding for student scholarships
- Revitalizing our seminary campus with a renovated Fritschel Hall to undergird the educational formation of residential and distance learners alike
- Renewing our commitment to form diverse, culturally competent rostered leaders for the church of the 21st century

We could not do any of this work without you, and I give thanks to
God for your commitment to Wartburg Seminary. God has blessed
us through you, enabling us to be a blessing to others.

Blessed are we who trust in the Lord!



The Rev. Dr. Kristin Johnston Largen
President, Wartburg Theological Seminary

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210-325-3496

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tim.urness@elca.org
331-444-3120

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mike.klinefelter@elca.org
402-943-7272

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scallahan@lutherangiving.org
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mschmidlin@lfsf.org
440-785-3363

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(210) 618-7067

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cynthia.halverson@elca.org
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“

IAN HESSELTINE, MASTER OF DIVINITY STUDENT

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“

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“Coming together as final-year students during Prolog Week is a wonderful opportunity to reflect with our classmates, appreciate the strong sense of community, and witness how our individual callings unite each of us as the body of Christ.”



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Faculty & Staff Updates



Jennifer Agee, Adjunct Faculty, published her poem "Woolly Aphid" in the September 2023 issue of *Christianity & Literature*.



Susan Ebertz, Director for the Reu Memorial Library & Associate Professor of Bibliography & Academic Research Emerita is enjoying her retirement by being elected as Vice President of the Board of Directors for Atla (formerly known as American

Theological Library Association). She will be serving on an Evaluation Committee for an Association of Theological Schools reaccreditation visit to a seminary in the fall. Prof. Ebertz continues to guide the return to the remodeled library.



Rev. Dr. Norma Cook Everist, Distinguished Professor of Church and Ministry, emerita, has received the 2023 Distinguished Alumni Award of Valparaiso University. She also is among the 2023 Bicentennial Notable Alumni of Yale Divinity School. The classes she has

taught at North Iowa Area Community College this year are "Religion and Government" (spring) and "Communication, Communication, Communication" (fall). She attended Diakonia of the Americas and the Caribbean in August.



Rev. Dr. Nathan C.P. Frambach, Professor of Pastoral Theology, concluded his service as the Interim Academic Dean at Wartburg Seminary on June 30 and is currently on sabbatical, returning to teach in January of 2024. The first part of his sabbatical Nate (and

his spouse Diane) helped to move his mother from Charlotte, NC, to Luther Manor in Dubuque. For the remainder of his sabbatical, Nate has an interesting and challenging reading list to work through and will be teaching in a number of congregations, most recently Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Iowa City, IA. (If you



would like to see the sabbatical reading list, Nate is willing to share. Send an email to nframbach@wartburgseminary.edu.)



Rev. Dr. Samuel Giere. Expanding on his recent book, *Freedom and Imagination* (Fortress, 2023), Prof. Giere looks forward to engaging rostered leaders from the Northeastern Minnesota Synod and East Central Wisconsin Synod on the intersection of faith

in Jesus Christ and the challenge of (Christian) Nationalism. He also has the pleasure of addressing the topic specifically with regard to preaching at the "Nourishing the Preaching Life: A Fellowship of Preachers" event at St. John's Episcopal Church, Dubuque, Iowa, on Saturday, October 14, 2023.



Dr. Samantha Gilmore, Assistant Professor of Homiletics, and her husband Lance moved into their new home in Dubuque over the summer. Amidst the boxes and many, many trips to Menards, she wrote four Working Preacher commentaries on psalms for

the upcoming four Sundays of Advent. She also completed two book reviews for *Currents in Theology and Mission*. Samantha is currently co-writing a grant entitled "Integrating Body, Mind, and Spirit in the Classroom: Holistic Being for Holistic Teaching and Holistic Preaching." In October, she will preach and offer a workshop at an ecumenical continuing education event entitled "Nourishing the Preaching Life: A Fellowship of Preachers."



Rev. Dr. Kristin Johnston Largen travelled to Krakow, Poland for the 13th Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation.



Rev. Dr. Martin Lohrmann,
Associate Professor of Lutheran Confessions and Heritage, co-led a workshop with Deacon Kellie Lisi on food theology at the 2023 ELCA Rostered Ministers Gathering this past summer. He currently has research and writing projects in the topics of Lutheran spirituality, food theology, and American Lutheranism.



Rev. Winston D. Persaud, PhD,
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, through his 2023 25-day visit to Guyana, has been reminded profoundly how

WTS' global contribution to the church is tied to WTS' worship-centred life rooted in the doctrine of justification: the sinner is made right before God by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. Stories from the ministries of graduates from the global church are encouraging re. WTS' offer of competency-based theological education (CBTE).



Rev. Dr. Troy Troftgruben,
Associate Professor of New Testament and The William A. & John E. Wagner Professor in Biblical Theology, in July appeared in a First Lutheran Church (Cedar Rapids) podcast on Luther's translation of the Bible and represented

Wartburg at a Western Iowa synod candidacy retreat. On top of Wartburg courses, he is teaching a course for the Lutheran School of Theology St. Louis with his book *Rooted and Renewing* (2019). This past summer Troy finished drafting most of a book project on bearing witness as a theme in Acts (Wipf & Stock, 2024). He will give a paper on Luke's Gospel in November at the Annual Society of Biblical Literature conference in San Antonio.





Upcoming Events

October 28, 2023

Considering Your Call Saturday

November 13, 2023

This Is Wartburg: Live!

November 28, 2023

Giving Tuesday

March 15-17, 2024

Considering Your Call Weekend

April 2-4, 2024

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