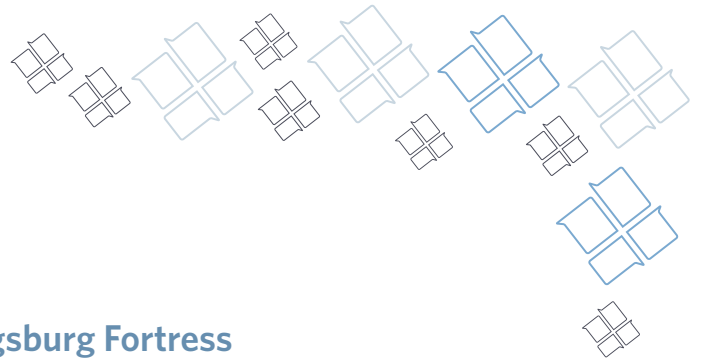




AUGSBURG FORTRESS

800.328.4648 augsburgfortress.org



Ten Things You Might Not Know about Augsburg Fortress

Spring 2016

1. We publish a number of innovative print and video faith formation curricula. Congregations using the Revised Common Lectionary find Whirl to be a perfect fit for connecting education to worship throughout the church year. And, in 2016, we will launch Whirl Classroom for congregations wanting to focus on key Bible stories and themes! wearesparkhouse.org
2. Sunday school planning has never been easier than with Sparkhouse Online, our web-based subscription resource for our children's faith formation resources. Your congregation may subscribe to one curriculum, several, or all with this innovative online resource. wearesparkhouse.org/kids/SHOSS
3. In 2016, we're introducing Frolic—early childhood resources designed to help support the youngest children in your congregation. Stay connected with families through a monthly newsletter that features faith development content for the first three years of a child's life. Frolic also includes a nursery guide, parent classes, board books and picture books, the Frolic First Bible, music CDs, and more. sample.wearesparkhouse.org/frolic
4. Last summer, we launched Collaborate Lutheran Confirmation, a curriculum that invites students to ask their toughest questions and work together to find answers. Pastors, youth directors, and confirmands are reporting back with delightful success stories! wearesparkhouse.org/teens/colaborate/lutheran
5. We know that many young families want their children to know the stories of the Bible and have a vibrant Christian faith life, but they don't always find the time for church or Sunday school. Sparkhouse Family is our newest venture to help young families integrate faith with their busy home lives. sparkhouse.org
6. A popular new series from Fortress Press is *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works: Reader's Edition*. The Bonhoeffer Works content in a more accessible and affordable format for use in small groups or by individual readers. fortresspress.com/dbw
7. *Reformation 500 Sourcebook: Anniversary Resources for Congregations* (June 2016) will provide many resources to assist congregations in observing the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. We also have several new Reformation resources for adults and children. reformation500.instapage.com and lutheranreformation500.org
8. As communities of faith reach out to ecumenical and interfaith neighbors, two new books provide excellent guidance: *Honoring Our Neighbor's Faith: A Lutheran Perspective on Faith Traditions in America*, Revised Edition and *The Fear of Islam: An Introduction to Islamophobia in the West*.
9. We offer free webinars every week on a variety of topics related to congregational life. gatherlearnlead.org
10. Want to learn more? Sign up for our free eNewsletters at:
augsburgfortress.org
wearesparkhouse.org
fortresspress.com

Carthage College 2016 Report

Dear Friends in Christ,

It is an honor to be writing you on behalf of Carthage College and to be able to share with you about the mission and ministry happening on our campus. I have been in the role of Campus Pastor for a little over two years and assumed the role of Director of Congregational Relations in July of 2015. Since arriving we have established the Center for Faith and Spirituality (CFS) around the theme of “Hey, What’s your story?” with the goal of encouraging the students at Carthage to explore their own faith journey stories and to listen and learn from the stories of others. Chapel continues to be on Tuesday and this year marked the second year of both Interfaith Lunch on Thursdays and a Protestant worship service at 4pm on Sunday. The biggest change this academic year for the CFS is the addition of a student ministry leadership staff. We have paid student staff working in the areas of music, service, Lutheran Student Movement, Open Table (Wednesday night ministry), Roman Catholics at Carthage, Better Together (interfaith), Resident Hall Ambassadors, CUMBYA (Carthage Undergrads Making Big Youth Activities), and Public Relations. Student to student ministry is already making a difference as students become more comfortable exploring their faith and learning about the faith of others.

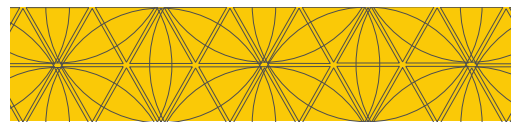
In my role as Director of Congregational Relations, I have been meeting with pastors in the Greater Milwaukee Synod and sharing what is happening at Carthage. It is wonderful to have the GMS Synod Assembly back on campus and I look forward to visiting other synods over the next several years. Part of my responsibility in this role is leading the committee working on our celebration of the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther’s 95 Theses. We are looking forward to reflecting on the Lutheran heritage of the college and to what it means to be a Lutheran in the 21st Century under the theme: Here I Stand.

There are many things to celebration at the Center for Faith and Spirituality and throughout the campus. Here are a few other highlights:

- ❖ 43 Million Dollar Science Center opened on September 9, 2015. Special features include technology-enhanced active learning classroom, a planetarium, an outdoor classroom just feet from Lake Michigan and interactive study space for students right outside faculty offices, so learning continues outside of class.
- ❖ Five students awarded Fulbright Fellowships and are now working towards international understand in Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece, India and Germany.
- ❖ Bachelor of Science in Nursing accepted its first class of students this year with 23 prospective nursing majors. Male students make up more than one-third of the class.
- ❖ Carthage has a record incoming class with approximately 840 students from 19 U.S. states and five foreign countries.
- ❖ Carthage is awarded \$349K grant for internship funding over three years which will provide nearly 200 new, paid internships.
- ❖ Carthage ranks 4th in the nation in study aboard opportunities. During January and June hundreds of Carthage students travel around the world to learn during these short term study aboard programs. Countries traveled too include: Germany, India, South Africa, Costa Rica, Honduras, France and more.
- ❖ Lady Red Volleyball team makes it to NCAA Final Four. It is a great group of young ladies who are a class act on and off the court.

Please keep Carthage in your prayers as we continue to strive towards helping a new generation find their callings in this world.

In Christ, Pastor Kara F. Baylor



Spring 2016

Dear Partners in Ministry,

It's an interesting — and challenging — time to be the church. Ministry leaders are learning to navigate the changing culture by holding on to the best of the past while finding ways to be creative, nimble, and resilient. This is just as true for Portico.

As we navigate the changing landscape, we are guided by two core values: stewardship and collaboration. For us, that means caring wisely for all we are entrusted to manage — time, money, our employees, and the well-being of those we serve — so leaders can access important benefits and resources, today and in retirement. Here are a few ways we're putting those values into practice:

We spend and invest with care. In these times of rising health care costs and tight church budgets, we work hard to follow a lean, carefully managed spending plan with a goal of keeping costs low. As 2015 investment markets dramatically rose and fell, our active investment management strategy and strategic asset allocations helped improve retirement fund returns in an otherwise disappointing year.

We seek opportunities to provide the best health care value. The past two years brought, in some instances, double-digit percentage increases for those employers sponsoring members in the ELCA Health Plan. Although this was in line with nationwide averages, we realize for congregations this is an unsustainable trend. We are committed to keeping administrative expenses below 12% of our health care budget, and are aggressively working with our vendor partners to find new savings opportunities.

We tap technology to reach our leaders more efficiently. By converting our popular pre-retirement seminar into a series of three webinars, we were able to complement the rich educational experience of our in-person seminars with the convenience and cost-effectiveness of online learning. We are also developing new webinars designed to help younger leaders establish a strong financial foundation.

We've raised the bar on top-notch customer service. Our members receive more than just a friendly voice when they call Portico's Customer Care Center. As a BenchmarkPortal-certified 2015 "Center of Excellence," we were recognized as one of the top call centers in the nation in both cost- and quality-related metrics.

We invest in our leaders. Because the future health of our church depends on the health of its leaders, we are leading the ELCA in calling for a wellness reformation — a renewed commitment to well-being that comes from healthy lifestyle choices, reduced health risks, and lower health care costs — for members, congregations, and the ELCA Health Plan. We are encouraging our congregations and church organizations to put the 'we' in wellness by joining in conversation with their pastors and professional staff about creating a culture that supports healthy lifestyles.

Portico is committed to providing a cost-effective, comprehensive benefit program that helps our church's leaders stay nimble, resilient, and confident in these interesting, challenging times.

In Christ,

The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thiemann
President and CEO



ELCA Synod Assemblies 2016

Greetings from St. Olaf College!

Since 1874, St. Olaf College has provided a distinctive education grounded in academic rigor, residential learning, global engagement, and our vibrant Lutheran faith tradition. Students work closely with dedicated faculty who challenge them to grow in mind, body, and spirit. In both the curriculum and the co-curriculum, they explore theological issues and are challenged to choose their vocations in light of this exploration. All St. Olaf students take two religion courses, one focusing on the Bible and the other on Christian theology, as well as a third course introducing Christian and other ethical systems. The Harry C. Piper Center for Vocation and Career assists students in discerning their vocations and preparing for their careers during their four years at St. Olaf.

Over the past year, the college has welcomed several new colleagues to key leadership positions. In May 2015, Jean Strohm Parish '88 was appointed director of college relations for music organizations, bringing more than 25 years of experience in performing arts administration, including her most recent position as general manager of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. In September 2015, Ryan Bowles became St. Olaf's first full-time Athletic Director following several years as associate athletic director for administration at the University of Maryland, where he oversaw 11 varsity sports and managed Maryland's transition from the Atlantic Coast Conference to the Big Ten. Leslie Moore '77 returned to her alma mater in November 2015 to serve as director of the Piper Center, adding to her richly-varied portfolio of professional experiences ranging from faculty member at Yale University to partner and general counsel for Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu in Australia.

St. Olaf has also had a lively year of visioning and engagement. In May 2015, the Board of Regents approved an updated [strategic plan](#) for the college intended to expand and enrich student engagement in high-impact educational practices and residential life, deepen professional development for college employees, enhance internal and external communication practices, and strengthen fiscal sustainability. The current academic year has also included a campus-wide conversation about the college mission statement, now almost thirty years old and ready for revisions that will update the expression of the college's ongoing commitments to excellence in the liberal arts, global engagement, and vibrant community springing from its Lutheran tradition. Finally, the college is in the final stages of planning the upcoming St. Olaf Conference on Worship, Theology, and the Arts, scheduled for July 18-22, 2016 (stolaf.edu/cwta/).

We look forward to welcoming you to St. Olaf. Come to campus to join us at concerts, lectures, conferences, or summer camps. You can also visit the St. Olaf multimedia website (stolaf.edu/multimedia/) to join in a wide variety of live and archived streamed events, including daily Chapel and Sunday morning worship services during the academic year, the weekly Sing for Joy radio program, and vocal and instrumental concerts and recitals. We encourage you to send students to St. Olaf, we thank you for your prayers and support, and we offer you ours as well.

David R. Anderson '74
President



2015 Annual Report to the Synods

Wartburg College is dedicated to challenging and nurturing students for lives of leadership and service as a spirited expression of their faith and learning.

In our daily work to educate young people, Wartburg College strives to live its distinctive mission in bold, new contexts. Our calling is to challenge and nurture students of tomorrow, who come to us from many places, desires, and aspirations.

Enrollment

Like so many sister schools in the region, our most recent incoming classes have been smaller than those we welcomed in the late '90s and early 2000s. Fall 2015 enrollment at Wartburg was 1,537; international students and U.S. students of color total 19 percent. Because so much of our operating revenue comes from tuition, room, and board, we've had to undergo a careful and serious budget review process, and deploy new admissions strategies to build larger applicant pools.

Transforming Tomorrow Campaign

Wartburg's \$75 million comprehensive campaign, publicly launched in 2014, has been enthusiastically received by alumni, parents, and friends. Nearing the total goal a year early, the campaign features three components:

- **People:** Wartburg has awarded new or additional scholarships to more than 120 students, representing \$335,000 in additional aid. Two sizeable estate gifts have created new scholarships for science and education students.
- **Places:** Wartburg broke ground in February 2016 on an \$8 million renovation of Clinton Hall that will create an innovative living and learning environment for students. Fueled by several major gifts, the project includes major interior updates and new academic and social spaces. Other significant gifts have made possible the Knief Outdoor Athletics Pavilion, a new lacrosse field, and a first-of-its kind virtual acoustic system in Neumann Auditorium.
- **Programs:** Generous gifts have enabled the College to elevate the Gerald R. Kleinfeld Distinguished Professorship in German History to an Endowed Chair, create the Baldwin Leadership Fellows program, and establish a German Institute to provide organization and focus for the college's wealth of Germany related programs and relationships.

New Academic Programs

- This past fall, Wartburg launched new programs in actuarial science, neuroscience, criminal justice, and a "4+1" program with Iowa State University to enable students to earn a master's degree in industrial engineering in five years. The College will inaugurate its first master's-level program in music therapy in Fall 2017.
- A new Des Moines internship program will provide another compelling learning opportunity in an urban environment, building on the success of the Wartburg West program in Denver, CO.

Commitment to Vocation and Mentoring

- The College was recently awarded a \$10,000 NetVUE Professional Development Award from the Council of Independent Colleges to fund a one-year initiative to equip faculty and staff to help students explore their vocation.
- The 2015 Graven Award, an annual award for vocation and daily life, was awarded to Yale University's Dr. Elijah Anderson, an award-winning author and one of the nation's leading urban ethnographers and cultural theorists.

Recognition

- Wartburg is Iowa's first private institution – and only the ninth in the nation – to earn a Gold rating from the leading authority on sustainability in higher education.
- Campus Compact named student Jenna Manders of Dubuque, IA, a Newman Civic Fellow for her contributions to community and civic engagement.
- Senior Mullohoji Juraev, a native of Tajikistan, was among the 2015 winners of a \$10,000 Davis Projects for Peace grant to improve learning conditions at a public school in his home country.
- Senior Kwabena Owusu-Amoah of Ghana was awarded a \$6,000 Clinton Foundation Resolution Grant to expand the use of a software app that aims to reduce maternal mortality rates in Ghana.

Many Blessings

We are blessed to work with gifted students who are committed to changing the world. Thank you for encouraging your students to join Wartburg's historic tradition as they share their gifts to enrich our community of learning.

Dr. Darrel D. Colson, President