



Synodical Report 2026

Office of the Pastor

With inspiring new leadership and exciting forward momentum, Wittenberg University continues to stand firm in its Lutheran heritage and mission, as it challenges students to become responsible global citizens, to discover their callings, and to lead personal, professional, and civic lives of creativity, service, compassion, and integrity.

In the last year, the University welcomed Dr. Christian M. M. Brady as its 16th president on June 1, 2025. A transformational administrator, Dr. Brady was inaugurated on October 17, 2025, with Bishop Suzanne Dillahunt of the Southern Ohio Synod serving as an officiant and the Rev. Cathy Schibler-Keegan providing the Invocation. Dr. Brady holds a bachelor's degree from Cornell University, a master's degree from Wheaton College Graduate School in Illinois, and a graduate diploma and doctorate from the University of Oxford. Additionally, he is an Episcopal priest and Canon Theologian in the Episcopal Diocese of Lexington in Kentucky.

Since joining Wittenberg, Dr. Brady has made an immediate impact, including launching a strategic planning process, partnering on new recruitment pipelines, securing leadership-level gifts, re-engaging alumni, championing the liberal arts, and instilling a renewed sense of hope in the University among alumni, faculty, staff, students, and families. He has also built a strong senior team with new leadership in enrollment management, finance and administration, and philanthropy and alumni engagement.

While changes have occurred at the top, Wittenberg's primary focus remains squarely focused on students and their success. Toward that end, the faculty are working diligently to restructure the University's academic program into a dynamic four-school model to ensure students have a unique, fully integrated experience across the Wittenberg Way of learning, leading, and living with light, all within the liberal arts tradition. Each school will unite a series of majors and concentrations ranging from logic

and science to arts and cultural foundations to health and ethics, among other areas. In addition to each school serving as an incubator for cross-disciplinary learning, the restructure ensures innovative academic experiences, while improving operational efficiency, expanding potential fundraising opportunities, and prompting even greater collaboration for student success.

This academic restructuring along with the current strategic planning process and brand refresh Dr. Brady commenced last fall are all garnering significant excitement and support among faculty, staff, and students. At the same time, investments in athletics, which include the launch of donor-funded programs in men's and women's ice hockey, competitive cheer, men's bowling, women's flag football, and men's and women's wrestling, are also encouraging more students to consider Wittenberg.

With regard to the Office of the Pastor, Wittenberg is in the midst of a search for the next Matevia University Pastor. Those interested in being part of Wittenberg's forward-facing future are encouraged to apply online through the University's website at www.wittenberg.edu. Moreover, the University has relaunched its Martin Luther Scholar Award, given to first-year Lutheran students who are nominated by their pastor. The amount is \$5,000 per year or \$20,000 for four years at Wittenberg.

Another cornerstone of the Wittenberg experience is service, which the University continues to require of all its students. Thanks to Wittenberg's Susan Hirt Hagen Center for Civic and Urban Engagement, community-based learning experiences in collaboration with faculty, staff, and community partners are also advancing the common good and empowering students to be active, engaged citizens, as well as catalysts for change.

Lastly, alumni engagement is bearing more fruit as President Brady hits the road and skies for an 18-stop tour. From California, Georgia, Pennsylvania, up and down the East Coast, throughout Ohio, and more, Dr. Brady's tour is encouraging many alumni to re-engage with their alma mater again. He also recently returned from a brief trip to Germany to learn about the University's longstanding Witt in Wittenberg study-abroad program in Lutherstadt Wittenberg. While there, he connected with key partners and alumni in the region. The positive sentiment being shared across the United States and now internationally is further increasing pride in Wittenberg while continuing to re-energize the campus community.

For more on Wittenberg, please visit www.wittenberg.edu.