



Dear Friend in Christ,

I'm thankful for the opportunity to write to our neighboring synods and to reflect on the past year at Carthage College. It is a chance to step out of the fast lane of activities on campus and slow down to examine the work we have been doing at the Center for Faith and Spirituality. It was a good year that included celebrating our Lutheran heritage and our growing diversity.

Lutheran Heritage

Last fall, we put on several events to conclude our celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

Highlights included:

- A trip to Carthage, Illinois, with the Wind Orchestra, new Carthage president John Swallow, and his wife, Cameron. I was invited to preach at Trinity Lutheran Church as part of its Reformation celebration.
- A concert/hymn sing titled, "From Chants to Hymns: Singing our Faith." It was a wonderful event featuring the voices of the Carthage Choir and organist Christopher Berry.
- The world premiere of "From Heaven Above to Earth You Come," a piece commissioned specifically for the annual Christmas Festival based on Luther's hymn of the same name.

Growing Diversity

This spring has a strong focus on religious diversity. Highlights include:

- A visit by Bishop Emeritus Munib Younan from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Land and Jordan, who spoke to us about religion's role in creating peace in Israel and Palestine.
- Presentations and workshops led by Kenosha Interfaith Scholar in Residence William Cavanaugh, Ph.D., who spoke about "The Myth of Religion and Violence."
- An amazing Faith Dialogue Dinner we hosted as part of our Better Together Week, celebrating our religious diversity.

Finally, great things continue to happen around campus. Carthage continues to grow and change to meet the demands of an evolving world, while keeping a liberal arts education at the core.

- Carthage was named a top producer of U.S. Fulbright Students for the third year in a row. This year's Fulbrighters are in South Korea, Thailand, the Czech Republic, and Taiwan.
- A new residence hall informally nicknamed "the Tower" will open in fall, promising improved community spaces.
- The Nursing Learning Laboratories opened as our first nursing majors entered the clinical phase.
- A Master of Science program in business design and innovation started last fall.
- Carthage was awarded a \$1.2 million Noyce grant for scholarships and mentoring to help recruit more STEM teachers. Participants commit to teach two to four years in a high-need school.

Thank you for your continued support of Carthage. Please continue to keep us in your prayers as we strive to prepare students to use their gifts and skills for the greater good of all.

Peace,

Pastor Kara Baylor