

SECTION F – REPORTS OF COLLEGES AND SEMINARIES

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MUHLENBERG COLLEGE

Greetings to the Members of Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod,

I share below a list of activities and events of Muhlenberg College, one of the 26 ELCA affiliated colleges and a partner in ministry with the SEPA Synod. I give thanks for the work of the synod and look forward to growing in partnership during my time at Muhlenberg. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me at janelleneubauer@muhlenberg.edu.

Grace and peace,

Rev. Janelle Neubauer, Chaplain

Report of Activities from March 2021-March 2022

- As part of continued efforts to support students' mental and emotional well-being, Muhlenberg began a partnership with The Jed Foundation (JED) and its JED Campus Initiative. This strategic four-year collaboration will focus on increasing accessibility and opportunity for students to access resources to support their mental and emotional health needs. JED helps to partner especially through the lens of cultural competence, equity and inclusion in mental health education and care.
- A successful virtual Baccalaureate service was led by Chaplain Claire Burkat and the College returned to an in-person graduation at the PPL Center for Class of 2021.
- With gratitude for Rev. Claire Burkat who faithfully served as the interim chaplain through June of 2021, we welcomed Rev. Janelle Neubauer to serve as college chaplain. Janelle began her service in mid-July.
- We returned to in-person classes and fulltime campus activity for the Fall of 2021, requiring all students, faculty, and staff to be vaccinated or to receive exemption. This led us to a 98% vaccination rate as a campus community.
- Continued monitoring of COVID allowed for the return of usual activity during the semester with mindfulness around distancing and masking. This included but was not limited to religious services, sports games, theater and music performances, and in-person family, alumni, and Class of 2020 weekends (with all visitors to campus fully vaccinated). We also returned to hosting our Candlelight Carols Advent Services in-person at Egner Memorial Chapel (3 services at reduced capacity) and offered livestream viewing as well as a produced version for later viewing. Hybrid events (events offering both in-person and virtual options) became more common in order to accommodate varying levels of availability and comfort.

- To continue to prioritize all-around well-being, the College offered special events for students, faculty, and staff to attend to mental and emotional health during the challenges of reorienting to full-time campus life in the midst of the continued pandemic. These efforts included offering a day to “Restore and Reconnect.” Students and faculty were given a day off of class and offered community building activities and opportunities for individual restoration during a period of noticeable campus fatigue.
 - Muhlenberg welcomed many beloved supporters and community members to campus for the successful inauguration of President Kathleen Haring, the thirteenth president of the College and the first woman president. President Haring is a decades long member of the Muhlenberg faculty and has served in the capacity of professor, Provost and interim President prior to her appointment. President Haring is a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Lansdale, PA.
 - During the inauguration weekend, Muhlenberg also publicly launched the Boundless Campaign having already raised \$71 million of the \$111 million campaign goal. As of March 2022 we have reached \$77 million.
 - Building of the new Parkway Boulevard building is underway, a new facility that will house the the Innovation and Entrepreneurship program, the Muhlenberg Institute of Public Opinion, the Office of Community Engagement and the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education.
 - The President’s Diversity Advisory Council, led by the Associate Provost for Faculty and Diversity, produced the first annual Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Report (linked [here](#)). The report outlines work completed across the College to support and advance DEI initiatives in 2020-2021.
 - The spring semester began in the midst of the Omicron surge and with careful consideration and consultation with health professionals we moved forward with in-person classes and student activities with additional safety measures.
 - Muhlenberg announced the promotion of 11 faculty to tenured associate professor positions - you can find more information about each promoted faculty [here](#).
 - Muhlenberg continues to adjust policies and safety measures regarding the COVID-19 pandemic at the recommendation of medical professionals, in consultation with our local health network partners, and with both campus and local data on hand. At this point in time, we expect to have an in-person honors convocation as well as a completely in-person senior week including a student focused Baccalaureate service, a family day on campus, and graduation at the PPL Center in Allentown.
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UNITED LUTHERAN SEMINARY



United Lutheran Seminary (ULS) is one of seven seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). ULS is comprised of two physical campuses, Philadelphia, and Gettysburg, and distributed online learning. ULS is a Reconciling in Christ seminary. The ULS Community is a welcoming and diverse learning community equipping people to proclaim the living Gospel for a changing church and world. The seminary offers six graduate degree programs, with flexible learning options, and lifelong learning programs that equip rostered and lay leaders to serve with deep faith and excellence—in congregations, social ministry agencies, campus ministries, military settings, and global missions.

The Rev. Dr. R. Guy Erwin was appointed president of United Lutheran Seminary and Ministerium of Pennsylvania Chair and Professor of Reformation Studies on August 1, 2020. Prior to this appointment, he was fourth bishop of the Southwest California Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

United Lutheran Seminary is blessed to be able to offer financial support, in the form of scholarship awards, to all students who are enrolled in degree seeking programs. First level professional degrees include the Master of Divinity (MDiv) and the Master of Arts in Ministerial Leadership (MAML). Academic first level degrees are the Master of Arts in Public Leadership (MAPL) and the Master of Arts (MA). Second level theology degrees include the Master of Sacred Theology (STM) and the Doctor of Ministry (DMIN). In the fall of 2021, United Lutheran Seminary has a total of 356 enrolled students.

In addition to the general curricular offerings, there are other learning opportunities that directly and indirectly support the pedagogical tasks of unifying, learning, and serving. The Urban Theological Institute enables engagement with African American theology, preaching, and church history throughout the curriculum. The Town and Country Church Institute offers students the possibility of honing ministry to meet the needs of rural and small-town churches in a time of profound change. The annual Asian Theological Summer Institute enables mentorship of Asian and Asian-American doctoral students.

Contributions to the seminary provide hope for the future of our church. Your gift empowers seminary education for our future faith leaders. These leaders will take what they have learned at ULS and apply it to where God calls them in their future ministry contexts, continuing what God has started during their time at the seminary. A variety of giving options are available. Contact us at advancement@uls.edu to learn more or give online at uls.edu/give.

United Lutheran Seminary is a place of rich history and excellent theological education. Explore a brief history of the two predecessor bodies at our website. Contact us today at info@uls.edu to learn more or explore how we can help you live out your call as a servant of God and neighbor. If you have ideas that we can share in our expanding continuing education program, send them to us at learningwishlist@uls.edu.