Wittenberg University | WEAVER CHAPEL

THE INSTALLATION OF
The Rev. Dr. Nathan Esala as the David P. and Carol Matevia Pastor to the University

Sunday, November 1, 2026
1:30 p.m.



OUR MISSION

Wittenberg University provides a liberal arts education dedicated to intellectual inquiry and wholeness of person within a diverse residential community. Reflecting its Lutheran heritage, Wittenberg 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.

OUR VISION

Wittenberg will be the model of a liberal arts university in the 21st century, creating the sparks that will light the world.

THE GATHERING

Prelude
Prelude and Fugue in E-flat "St. Anne" - J.S. BACH (1685-1750)

Processional Hymn
"For All the Saints" - ELW 422

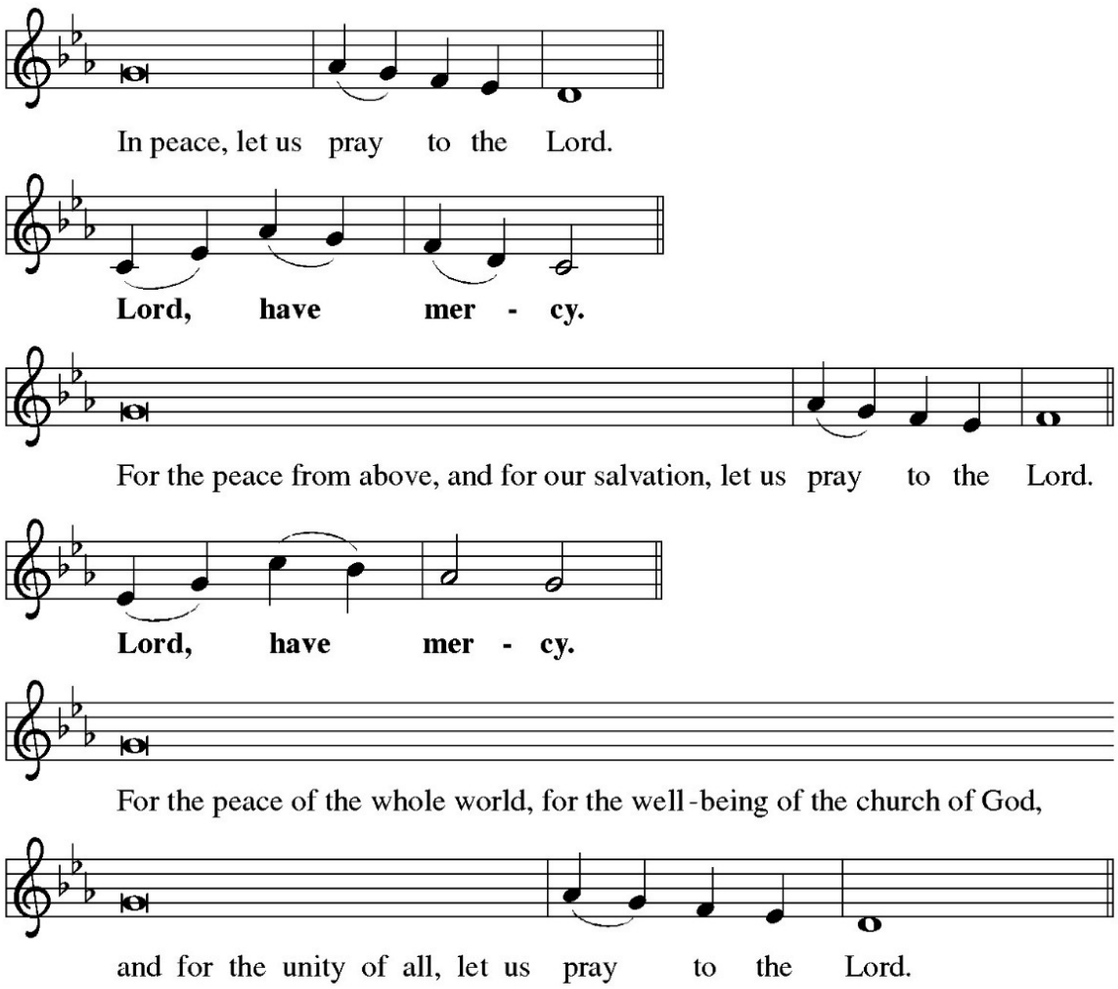
(The congregation stands and faces the processional cross in the rear of the sanctuary with their gaze following the cross as it processes forward.)

Welcome
Dr. Christian M. M. Brady
Wittenberg University's 16th President

Greeting
The Rev. Suzanne Darcy Dillahunt
Bishop, Southern Ohio Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
C: And also with you.

Kyrie (ELW Setting One)





Prayer of the Day

P: Almighty God, you have knit your people together in one communion in the mystical body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant us grace to follow your blessed saints in lives of faith and commitment, and to know the inexpressible joys you have prepared for those who love you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Almighty God, through your Son Jesus Christ you gave the holy apostles many gifts and commanded them to feed your flock. Inspire all pastors to proclaim your word diligently and your people to receive it willingly, that finally we may receive the crown of eternal glory; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**.

(Congregation is seated.)

THE WORD

The First Lesson

Revelation 7:9-17 - Mrs. Sarah Esala
L: The Word of the Lord.
C: Thanks be to God.

Responsive Reading

Psalm 34:1-10, 22 - The Rev. Joel Esala

1 I will bless the Lord at all times;
the praise of God shall ever be in my mouth.
2 I will glory in the Lord;
let the lowly hear and rejoice.
3 Proclaim with me the greatness of the Lord;
let us exalt God's name together.
4 I sought the Lord, who answered me
and delivered me from all my terrors.
5 Look upon the Lord and be radiant,
and let not your faces be ashamed.
6 I called in my affliction, and the Lord heard me
and saved me from all my troubles.
7 The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear the Lord
and delivers them.
8 Taste and see that the Lord is good;
happy are they who take refuge in God!
9 Fear the Lord, you saints of the Lord,
for those who fear the Lord lack nothing.
10 The lions are in want and suffer hunger,
but those who seek the Lord lack nothing that is good.
11 O Lord, you redeem the life of your servants,
and those who put their trust in you will not be punished.

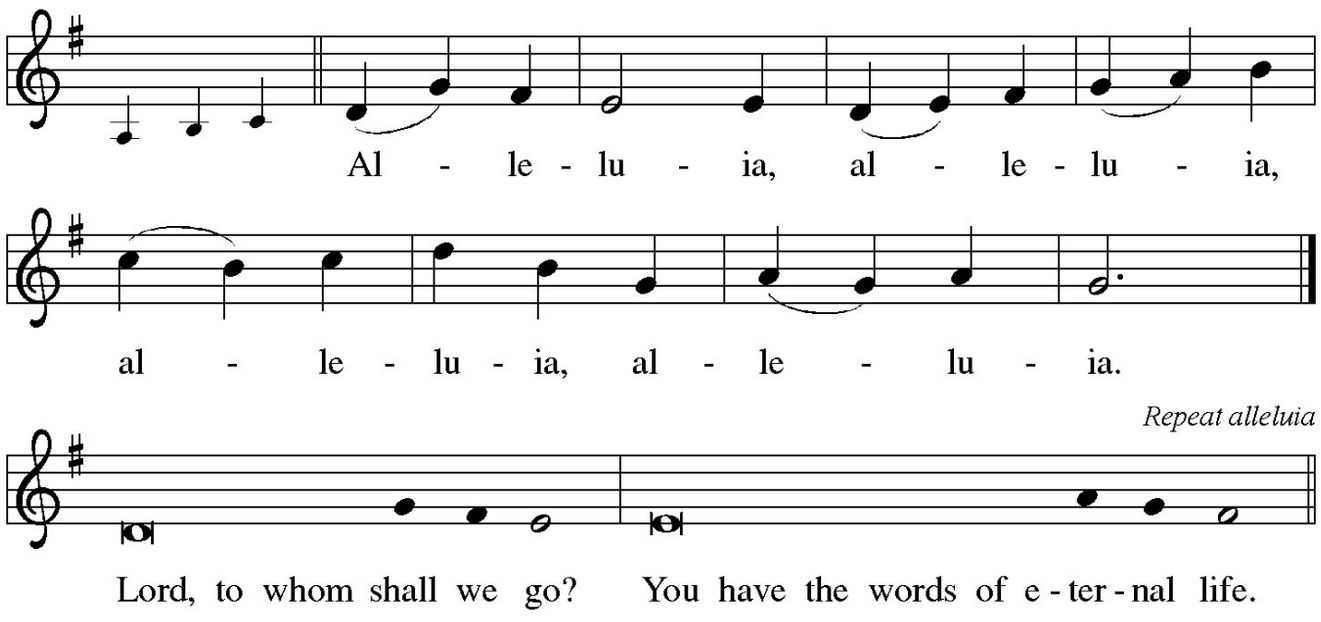
The Second Lesson

1 John 3:1-3 - The Rev. Dr. Philip J. Esala

L: The Word of the Lord.
C: Thanks be to God.

(Congregation stands.)

Alleluia Verse



Holy Gospel

Matthew 5:1-12 - Bishop Suzanne Darcy Dillahunt
P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the fifth chapter
C: Glory to you, O Lord.

(The reading of the Gospel)

P: The Gospel of the Lord
C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(The congregation is seated.)

Sermon

Bishop Suzanne Darcy Dillahunt

Hymn of the Day

"Give Thanks For Saints" - ELW 428

(The congregation remains seated for the hymn but should rise for the reading of the Nicene Creed.)

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

(The congregation is seated as Pastor Nathan approaches the chancel.)

INSTALLATION OF THE PASTOR TO THE UNIVERSITY

Presentation of the Pastor

Bishop: Having been authorized by the church to install *Pastor Nathan Esala*, our co-worker in the Gospel, as *the David P. and Carol Matevia Pastor to the University*, I now ask for certification of this call.

A representative of the calling body addresses the presiding minister.

President Brady: After prayerful deliberation, on behalf of *Wittenberg University* and in my role as President, I have called *Pastor Nathan Esala* to serve as a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the position of *Matevia Pastor to the University*. I present *Pastor Nathan Esala* and this letter certifying the call.

Address and Questions to the Pastor

The presiding minister addresses the Minister of Word and Sacrament.

Bishop: *A reading from John*: Jesus said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you. Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." *(John 20:21-23)*

A reading from Matthew: Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." *(Matthew 28:18-20)*

A reading from First Timothy: Set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Attend to the public reading of scripture, to exhorting, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you through prophecy with the laying on of hands by the council of elders. Put these things into practice, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; continue in these things, for in doing this you will save both yourself and your hearers. *(1 Timothy 4:12-16)*

The presiding minister addresses questions to the Minister of Word and Sacrament.

Bishop: *Pastor Nathan Esala*, in the presence of this assembly will you commit yourself to this new trust and responsibility, in the confidence that it comes from God through the call of the church?
Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.
Bishop: Will you preach and teach in accordance with the holy scriptures and with the confessions of the Lutheran church? Will you carry out this ministry in harmony with the constitutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America?
Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.
Bishop: Will you be diligent in your study of the holy scriptures and faithful in your use of the means of grace?
Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.
Bishop: Trusting in God's care, will you love, serve, and pray for God's people, nourish them with the word and sacraments, and lead them by your own example in faithful service and holy living?
Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.
Bishop: Will you give faithful witness in the world, that God's love may be known in all that you do?
Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.
Bishop: Almighty God, who has given you the will to do these things, graciously give you the strength and compassion to perform them.
Assembly: Amen.

The assembly stands.
The presiding minister addresses the assembly.

Bishop: People of God, will you receive *the Rev. Dr. Nathan Esala* as a messenger of Jesus Christ sent to serve all people with the gospel of hope and salvation? Will you regard *Pastor Nathan* as a servant of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of God?

Assembly: We will, and we ask God to help us.

Bishop: Will you pray for *Pastor Nathan*? Will you help and honor *Pastor Nathan* in carrying out this ministry? In all things, will you strive to live together in the peace and unity of Christ?

Assembly: We will, and we ask God to help us.

The presiding minister addresses the Minister of Word and Sacrament.

Rev. Dr. Nathan Esala, the office of *the David P. and Carol Matevia Pastor to the University* is now committed to you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Blessing

The newly installed pastor kneels as the Presiding Minister proclaims God's blessing.

Bishop: The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, make you complete in everything good so that you may do God's will, working in you that which is pleasing in God's sight; through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. **Amen.**

The Charges

(The Pastor stands. The Bishop escorts the Pastor and the University representatives to the place of baptism.)

Alex Combs '29, Weaver Chapel Association Student Representative: You have been called to be among us baptizing, teaching, and forgiving sins. Whether we are in the classroom, playing sports, participating in clubs, or enjoying free time, remind us that our primary identity flows from God's love for all of us, no matter who we are, no matter what.

Joi Garett Scales, Vice President and Dean of Student Engagement: In that beloved identity, remind us that all of our vocations are dignified. Whether we are students, faculty, or staff, encourage us to serve our neighbors in our various professional and personal roles with integrity and care.

(They proceed to the place of the Word.)

Travis Proctor, Dean of the School of Arts, Communication, and Cultural Foundations: You have been called to be among us to proclaim the good news that God's grace is freely given to all, regardless of race, gender, class, creed, or no creed.

Mary Jo Zembar, Interim Provost: Integrate faith and critical thought by honoring the learning that comes from the rigor of our various disciplines and help us to dialogue across differences as we pursue collective learning, truth, and justice.

(They proceed to the place of the meal.)

Martha Ogden, Pastor Esala's former member, Rockway Lutheran Church: You have been called to preside at the Lord's Supper, proclaiming and sharing the bread of life among us, as inscribed on this altar.

Kristen Collier, Director of the Susan Hirt Hagen Center for Civic and Urban Engagement: You have been called to morally and spiritually equip and encourage our campus to provide nourishment for the community, to use our gifts to serve others with humility, courage, and compassion.

President Brady: You have been called to be the David P. and Carol Matevia Pastor to Wittenberg University. This includes our students, staff, faculty, and community. We are your parish. Practice the love of the triune God among us in a manner that is rooted in our Lutheran identity and open to the diversity present among us.

Address and Acclamation

Bishop: People of God, I present to you the *Rev. Dr. Nathan Esala*, your *University Pastor*. Let us welcome *Pastor Nathan* in the name of Christ.

Words of Thanks

Rev. Dr. Nathan Esala

Perspective of the President

Dr. Christian M. M. Brady

Collective Prayer for the Installation

All: Almighty God, through your Son Jesus Christ you gave the holy apostles many gifts and commanded them to feed your flock. Inspire all pastors to proclaim your word diligently and your people to receive it willingly, that finally we may receive the crown of eternal glory; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

The Prayers

The response following each petition:
L: God, in your mercy,
C: Hear our prayer.

The Greeting of Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you.
C: And also with you.

(The congregation is seated.)

Special Music and Offering

"Litanei auf das Fest Aller Seelen" ("Litany for the Feast of All Souls")
Text: Johann Georg Jacobi (1740-1818)
Music: Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
Performed by William Mattox '08 accompanied by Joshua Brodbeck

Ruhn in Frieden alle Seelen,	May all souls rest in peace;
Die vollbracht ein banges Quälen,	those whose fearful torment is past;
Die vollendet süssen Traum,	those whose sweet dreams are over;
Lebenssatt, geboren kaum,	those sated with life, those barely born,
Aus der Welt hinüber schieden:	who have left this world:
Alle Seelen ruhn in Frieden!	may all souls rest in peace!
Liebevoller Mädchen Seelen,	The souls of girls in love,
Deren Tränen nicht zu zählen,	whose tears are without number,
Die ein falscher Freund verliess,	who, abandoned by a faithless lover,
Und die blinde Welt verstiess:	rejected the blind world.
Alle, die von hinnen schieden,	May all who have departed hence,
Alle Seelen ruhn in Frieden!	may all souls rest in peace!
Und die nie der Sonne lachten,	And those who never smiled at the sun,
Unterm Mond auf Dornen wachten,	who lay awake beneath the moon on beds of thorns,
Gott, im reinen Himmelslicht,	so that they might one day see God face to face
Einst zu sehn von Angesicht:	in the pure light of heaven:
Alle, die von hinnen schieden,	may all who have departed hence,
Alle Seelen ruhn in Frieden!	may all souls rest in peace!

A freewill offering basket has been placed in the narthex as you depart today. A QR code to give is also available in the back of the program should you wish to support Wittenberg's mission and campus ministry efforts electronically.

THE COMMUNION

The Great Thanksgiving

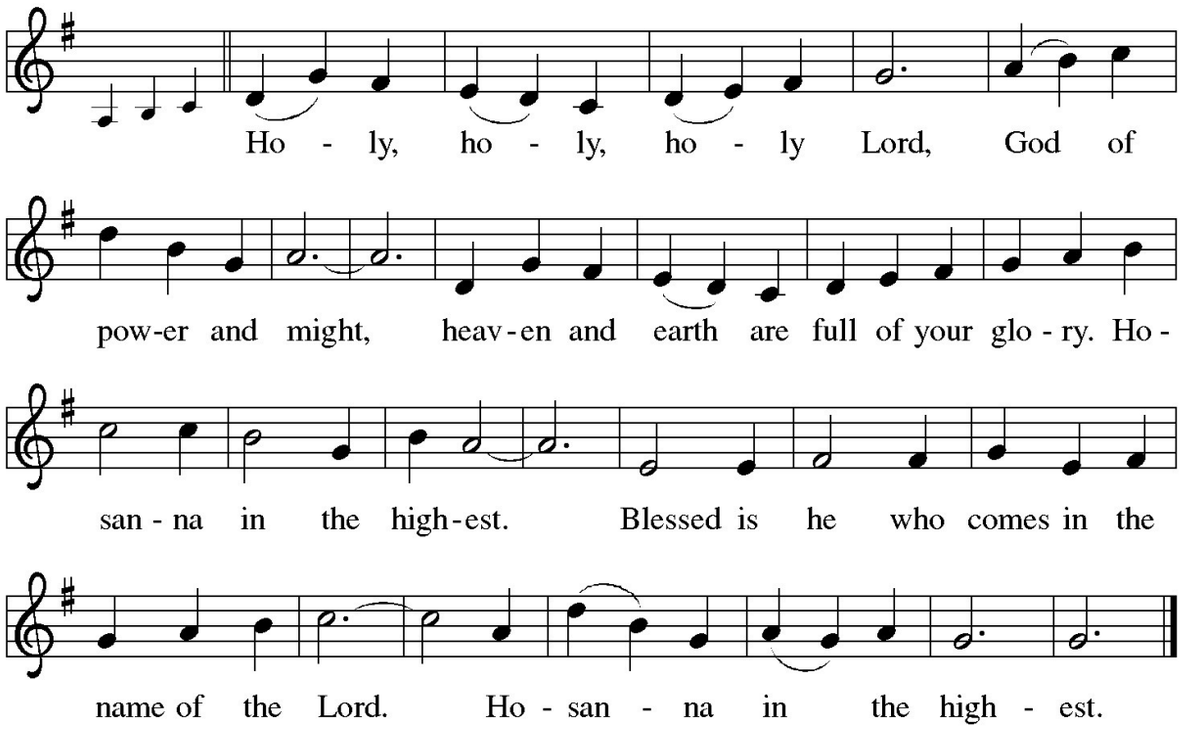
(The assembly stands.)

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right and salutary ... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



The Words of Institution

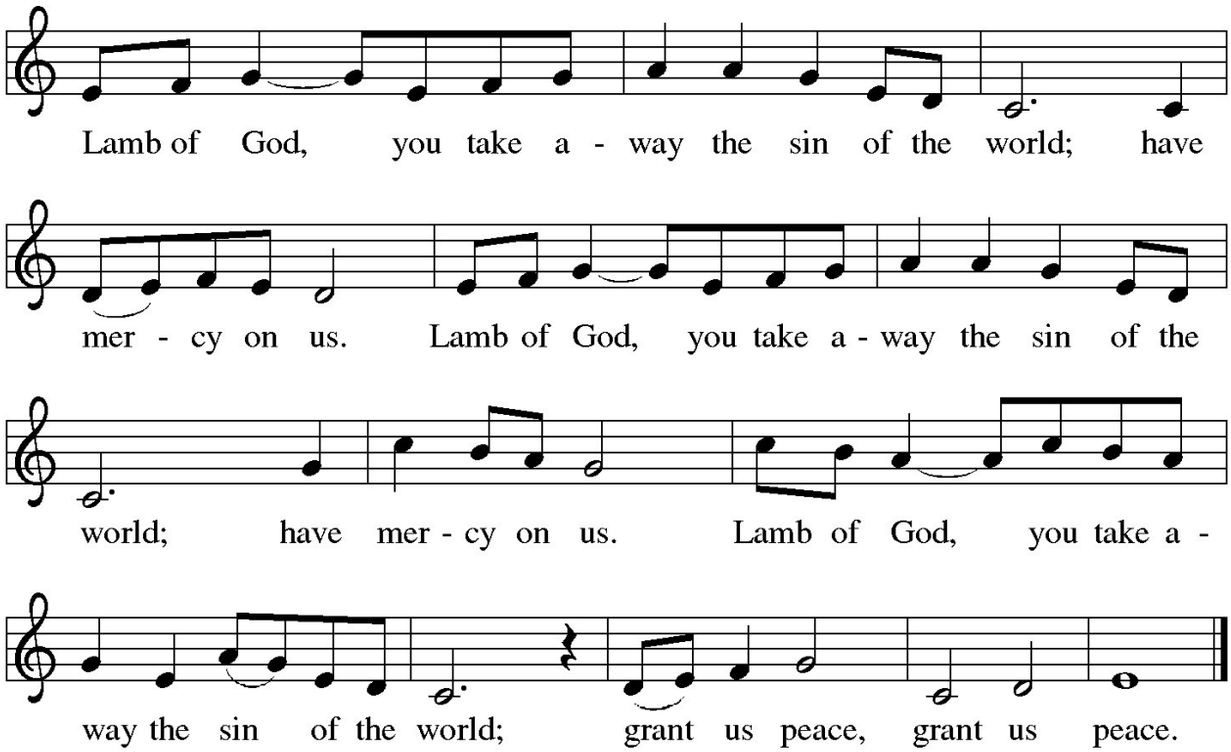
The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

(The congregation is seated.)

Communion

(Communion will be by intinction in which the bread is dipped into the chalice. Distribution is continuous. Please approach down the center aisles and return down the side aisles. Gluten-free wafers available upon request. The second chalice in each line is non-alcoholic.)



Communion Hymn

"Thine the Amen" - ELW 826

Post-Communion Prayer

(The congregation stands.)

Let us pray. O God, we give you thanks that you have set before us this feast, the body and blood of your Son. By your Spirit strengthen us to serve all in need and to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE SENDING

Blessing

P: Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.
C: Amen.

Closing Hymn

"O God, Our Help in Ages Past" - ELW 632

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude and Recessional

Improvisation on "A Mighty Fortress" by J. Brodbeck

(Please stand, as you are able, and face the cross as the cross processes out of the sanctuary. Once the Bishop has left the sanctuary, you may remain or exit at your leisure.)

Join us for a special reception at the Benjamin Prince House, the president's home, immediately following today's installation. All are welcome.

SPECIAL THANKS TO THOSE SERVING TODAY

Presiding and Installing Minister and Preacher
The Rev. Suzanne Darcy Dillahunt, *Bishop, Southern Ohio Synod of the ELCA*

Assistant to the Bishop
The Rev. Dr. Tim Mentzer, *Southern Ohio Synod of the ELCA*

Assistant to the Bishop for Discernment, Formation, and Digital Ministries
The Rev. Rebecca Grate, *Southern Ohio Synod of the ELCA*

President of Wittenberg University
Dr. Christian M.M. Brady

Issuing Charges to the Matevia Pastor to the University
Dr. Christian M. M. Brady, *Wittenberg President*
Kristen Collier '92, *Director of Wittenberg's Susan Hirt Hagen Center for Civic and Urban Engagement*
Alex Combs '29, *Weaver Chapel Association Student Representative*
Joi Garett Scales, *Vice President and Dean of Student Engagement*
Martha Ogden, *Rockway Lutheran Church*
Dr. Travis Proctor, *Dean of Wittenberg's School of Arts, Communication, and Cultural Foundations*
Dr. Mary Jo Zembar, *Wittenberg's Interim Provost*

Guest Organist
Joshua Brodbeck

Lectors
The Rev. Dr. Joel Esala, the Rev. Dr. Phillip Esala, and Mrs. Sarah Esala

Crucifer
Christian Helton '27

Banner Bearers
Jeff Mefford '27, *President, Gender and Sexual Diversity Alliance*
Anna Monroe '26, *Interfaith Senator*
Sydney Werner '27, *Student Senate President*

Assisting Ministers
The Rev. Dr. Rachel Wrenn, *Interim Dean, Trinity Lutheran Seminary*
The Rev. Keith L. Monroe, *First Lutheran Church, Springfield, Ohio*
Vicar Don Humphreys, *Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Springfield, Ohio*
Mr. Keith Ward '07, *Synodically Authorized Minister at Zion Lutheran Church, Springfield, Ohio*

Sacristan
Alex Combs '29

Notes of Thanks

The family of the late Dr. Richard P. Veler, beloved professor of English and University administrator, has given a dozen roses in memory of his many years of service to Wittenberg University.

Alan ’69 and Pamela Jackson Stewart ’69 graciously donated the flowers for today’s Installation. Alan currently serves on the Wittenberg Board of Directors, and he and Pam are the proud parents of six children, all of whom also graduated from Wittenberg.

The middle altar and baptismal font were donated by Rockway Lutheran Church, Pastor Nathan Esala’s former congregation.

Upcoming Chapel Events

Lessons & Carols for Advent and Christmas
December 4, 2026, 7:30 p.m.
(Pre-service music begins at 7 p.m.)
Free and open to the public

Supporting Wittenberg’s Mission

Please scan the QR code should you wish to give electronically today.

BIOGRAPHY OF REV. DR. NATHAN ESALA

The Rev. Dr. Nathan Esala joined the Wittenberg community on Aug. 17, 2026, following a national search. Pastor Nathan brings decades of experience in pastoral care, cross-cultural understanding, and a commitment to innovative campus ministry.

In announcing Pastor Nathan's hiring, Wittenberg President Christian M. M. Brady shared that he understands the impact, interconnectedness, and importance of campus ministry at Wittenberg. He also noted Pastor Nathan's innovative, creative pedagogies for teaching biblical and translation studies to diverse student populations as a missionary, pastor, and scholar, and his interactive approach to preaching. In his first few months at Wittenberg, Pastor Nathan has already created a new Office of Campus Ministries, which aligns with the University's strategic planning efforts in regard to cross-campus partnering in the development of an exemplar program for supporting student discernment.

A member of President Brady's senior staff, Pastor Nathan brings considerable insight and perspective, having served for 10 years as a missionary, along with his wife Sarah, in northern Ghana through Lutheran Bible Translators, a global nonprofit that "partners with local leaders to create translation programs for the many communities who do not have access to God's Word in their native language," notes the organization's website. Serving among the Komba people starting in 2002 helped Pastor Nathan understand the art of living in community and navigating differences despite challenges. In 2014, he took the lead as translation coordinator for the organization, and in 2016 he became a member of the Scholars Seminar in the Network of Biblical Storytellers. In the same year, he joined a steering committee for networking scholars interested in Biblical Performance Criticism at the Society of Biblical Literature's Annual Meeting.

In 2021, Pastor Nathan earned a Ph.D. in biblical studies from the University of KwaZula-Natal in South Africa. A year later, he began parish ministry as the congregational pastor to Rockway Lutheran Church in Springfield, while teaching as an adjunct professor of religion and Bible at Capital University from 2021-2023. In that time, he also began Clinical Pastoral Education, where he learned to translate cross-cultural skills to serve diverse populations across the United States, and joined Seed Company, a partner with Lutheran Bible Translators, to "work with Lutheran church bodies (and others) who want to pursue Bible translation as a ministry of the church," as per the organization's website.

In reflecting on his experience to date and in considering the David P. and Carol Matevia Pastor to the University position at Wittenberg, Pastor Nathan began to see where he could use his gift of translating and facilitating pastoral care across differences at this crucial and transitional time in Wittenberg's history. Today's students, he shared, "live in a world where the collective spirit of caring has been deeply wounded," so the opportunity to help students discern their light, while passing it on to others through the development of relevant practices of care in community continues to resonate with him.

Along with his doctorate, Pastor Nathan holds a Master of Divinity from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, a B.A. in speech communication from Concordia University in Mequon, Wisconsin, and a Certificate in Applied Linguistics from Dallas International University. He and Sarah, who is now Lutheran Bible Translators' regional director for East Africa and Pacific, currently reside in Dublin, Ohio, and are the proud parents of five children.

HISTORIC WEAVER CHAPEL

Opened in 1956, Weaver Chapel, which Best College Reviews included on its list of "The 30 Most Beautiful College Cathedrals," has been the site of thousands of campus events, frequently featuring world leaders, famed performers, and thought leaders. Among the most recognizable features of Weaver Chapel are its spectacular stained-glass windows, which include graphics of solid lead, with glass used only as background. The 24 panels at the north entrance, which have been featured in National Geographic, depict the history of Wittenberg, from Luther's Wittenberg in Germany to the present institution. The last pane displays Wittenberg's Seal and the University's motto, "Having Light We Pass It On To Others." Outside the chapel, the statues on the 212-foot tower represent John Milton, Gottfried Leibritz, Johann Sebastian Bach, St. Paul of Tarsus, St. Augustine, and Martin Luther.


HAVING LIGHT WE PASS IT ON TO OTHERS
WITTENBERG
Founded
1845
UNIVERSITY
SPRINGFIELD, OHIO