

2011 New Student Newsletter

Greetings from Wartburg! My name is Brian Beckstrom and, along with my colleague Pastor Ramona Bouzard, I serve as campus Pastor at Wartburg. Our office is called "Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry" (SLCM). Along with student leaders we organize worship services, Bible Studies, and other events. We also provide support and a listening ear to students, teach classes, and try to get to as many campus events as possible.

We'll tell you more about the specific opportunities for you to deepen and/or explore your faith at Wartburg, but in this column I want to tell you a little bit about what kind of community you'll be joining.

Wartburg is a College of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). About 30% of our students are Lutheran but we have students from lots of other Christian and non-Christian backgrounds. Some of our students are very active in their faith, others aren't totally sure what they believe, and there are plenty that fall somewhere in between.

What that means practically is that our students are a diverse bunch in terms of their beliefs and practices. We value this diversity because it means that our campus reflects the world in which we live. Although going to College with a group of people who are just like us would perhaps be more comfortable it would also allow us to stay in our comfort zones. We don't think that's what Jesus had

in mind. Although Jesus was compassionate and caring, he also challenged people to grow and change.

As a College of the Church our mission statement reflects this philosophy. It says that Wartburg College is committed to both challenging and nurturing its students. You will see that throughout your experiences here. Coaches, professors, conductors and staff will push you beyond what you thought possible. But they will also be there to encourage and console you when things are tough. We promise to do the same thing.

See you soon!

Pastor Brian & Pastor Ramona