

• ANNUAL REPORT FROM GUSTAVUS CHURCH RELATIONS — DECEMBER 2020 •

Greetings to you from your partners in ministry at Gustavus Adolphus College! The definition of community at Gustavus has always included the wider ELCA community. The network of institutions and relationships which holds our Lutheran congregations, synods, camps, colleges, seminaries, and social agencies together plays a vital role in nourishing and advancing our collective and important contribution to the world. We all make a greater impact because of this diverse network to which we belong.

The past year has presented challenges that relentlessly moved across our country (and world) while at the same time significantly stretching our respective communities in unprecedented ways. Yet, like no other time have we shared in such an experience as church and college. Common to each of us has been a season of serious grappling with issues ranging from a global pandemic and community health concerns to rising social unrest and concern for equity and unaddressed racial justice to a very contentious election cycle and concern for unity and the wellbeing of our nation.

Through the Gustavus Association of Congregations the Office of Church Relations at Gustavus is connected to over 500 congregations from across the country. These relationships are an important source of Christian faith inspiration and ministry encouragement for the college. This has especially been true during these tumultuous times. As we have looked to you our ministry partners, you are a source of inspiration for how you have creatively adapted to faithfully continue your ministry in your context. *Thank you.* You are a source of encouragement to us for the humble and genuine ways you have courageously engaged racial justice concerns in your community. *Thank you.* The Christian love you share to all people and the healing presence of love you seek to embody in a divided community is an inspiring witness and source of hope to us. *Thank you.*

As you gather for congregation annual meetings and synod assemblies, we hope you are inspired by the reminder of the many others who walk alongside you in mission. We sincerely hope we can be a source of Christian faith inspiration, encouragement, and hope for you as well. The Office of Church Relations at Gustavus exists because as a college we live from our Christian faith and desire to be in service to the wider community within which we are rooted. We seek to be a place you might consider as a ministry partner and resource for your congregation's educational goals and growth.

MARK YOUR 2021 CALENDARS AND JOIN US FOR THESE SPECIAL EVENTS:

• **Annual Gustavus Association of Congregations Business Meeting Luncheon — APRIL 24, 2021**

The Annual Business Meeting of the Gustavus Adolphus College Association of Congregations will gather virtually and feature updates from the Gustavus President and Chair of the Board of Trustees as well as inspiration from Gustavus students. For more information: gustavus.edu/businessmeeting

• **The Gustavus Academy for Faith, Science, and Ethics — JUNE 19-25, 2021**, an exciting resource for high school youth interested in exploring creative alliances between faith and science. The theme for the 2021 Academy is *"Who am I? Media, Technology, and Me."* For more information and to nominate a high school student: gustavus.edu/chaplain/academy

• **Annual Nobel Conference® — OCTOBER 5-6, 2021** *"Big Data REvolution."*

• **Christmas in Christ Chapel — DECEMBER 2-5, 2021**

For more information about these events and the many resources we offer congregations, please contact the Office of Church Relations or visit us on-line at: www.gustavus.edu/churchrelations. Thank you for your partnership and prayers!

Rev. Grady St. Dennis
College Chaplain/Director of Church Relations