



Report to the ELCA Synod Assemblies 2018

Since 1874, St. Olaf College has provided a distinctive education that, in the words of its recently-updated mission statement, *challenges students to excel in the liberal arts, examine faith and values, and explore meaningful vocation in an inclusive, globally engaged community nourished by Lutheran tradition.* Our Fall 2017 first-year class of 786 includes 15% who are international students; 20% who are domestic multicultural students; and 18% who are first-generation students. St. Olaf offers 41 majors in its Bachelor of Arts degree program, five majors in its Bachelor of Music degree program, and 21 interdisciplinary concentrations. All St. Olaf students complete courses in Biblical studies, Christian theology, and ethics, as well as in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences and mathematics. Three-quarters of St. Olaf students participate in one or more of the college's 123 domestic and international off-campus study programs. With support from the Harry C. Piper Center for Vocation and Career and the Collaborative Undergraduate Research and Inquiry program, approximately 85% of Oles participate in an internship, research, practicum, long-term shadowing, or similar experiential learning opportunity. The college is home to seven choirs, two bands, and two orchestras, as well as jazz, handbell, early music, and student-led ensembles. More than 700 student-athletes participate in the college's 27 varsity sports, and many more choose from among 54 other club sport and intramural programs. Other co-curricular opportunities are provided by 220 student organizations ranging from Amnesty International to Women in Science. St. Olaf continues to be among only a handful of U.S. colleges that meet the full demonstrated need of all admitted students. Its academic rigor, vibrant residential life and global reach are animated by Lutheran commitments to community, hospitality, love of neighbor, and public engagement.

Together with Lutheran colleges and congregations around the globe, St. Olaf commemorated the 500th anniversary of the Reformation throughout the past year with a wide array of speakers, events, and exhibits. In Spring 2017, supported by a grant from the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, the college offered a series on *Dissonance and Resolution: Musical and Moral Legacies of the Reformation*, culminating in a Palm Sunday Vespers service performance of Johann Sebastian Bach's *St. John Passion* by the St. Olaf Cantorei and members of the St. Olaf Orchestra. Our Fall 2017 series *Always Reforming: Nourished by the Past, Shaping the Future* featured more than 25 speakers and events examining the ways in which organizations and traditions rooted in the Reformation are still reforming. In addition to talks by current St. Olaf faculty, staff, and students, we welcomed many guest speakers from the ELCA and its partner organizations, including Linda Hartke, President and CEO of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service; Bishop William Gafkjen '79, Chair of the ELCA Conference of Bishops; Kaleb Sutherland '12, Coordinator of the International Leaders Program in the ELCA Global Mission division; Dan Ruth '01, Executive Director of Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry; Mary Streufert, Director of ELCA Justice for Women; Bishop Steven Delzer, Southeastern Minnesota Synod; and Kathryn Lohre '99, ELCA Executive Director for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations. Nearly all events are available in St. Olaf's streaming archives; for links to each event, visit stolaf.edu/reformation-anniversary/.

Registration is now open for the St. Olaf Conference on Worship, Theology and the Arts, July 16-20, 2018 (stolaf.edu/cwta/), offering professional development, spiritual nourishment and networking opportunities for persons engaged in congregational ministry. This year's conference theme, *Living Breath of God*, focuses on the creative, provoking, and empowering action of the Holy Spirit in worship and daily life. Guest faculty will include Donald Saliers, Theologian-in-Residence at Candler School of Theology, Emory University, and Jer Swigert, Co-Founding Director of the Global Immersion Project.

We look forward to welcoming you to St. Olaf. Come to campus to join us at concerts, lectures, conferences, or summer camps, or participate virtually via the St. Olaf multimedia website (stolaf.edu/multimedia/). We encourage you to send students to St. Olaf, we thank you for your prayers and support, and we offer you ours as well.

David R. Anderson '74, President