

# Nachrichten aus Wittenberg

A NEWSLETTER FOR SUPPORTERS OF ELCA MISSIONARY REV. BRIDGET GAUTIERI



October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025 marked the 508<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. It was on this day in 1517 that Martin Luther posted his 95 *Theses* to the Castle Church in Wittenberg. The ELCA Wittenberg Center and the LWF (Lutheran World Federation) Center Wittenberg lead an annual Reformation worship service together in English for the local and international community who gather in Wittenberg to celebrate.

The Rev. Dr. Sámuel Nánási (front row, right), Director of Studies at the LWF Center Wittenberg, preached on John 8:31-36, and Vicar Dr. Anna Krauß (front row, middle), Director of the LWF Center Wittenberg, and I (front row, left) presided over the liturgy. Philipp Spielmann (back row, far right), Cantor of the Castle Church, was our organist. The other five men in the back row are German vicars who are completing their pastoral internships before becoming ordained. They served as lectors, thurifers, and crucifers.

This was my third ELCA-LWF Reformation service in Wittenberg – how the time flies! This year, we decided to have a **5-senses woship service**. Incense was lit and accompanied us on our procession and recession (**smell**); the readings were read, hymns sung, and the Word preached (**hear**); bread and wine were distributed during Holy Communion (**taste**); water was poured into the baptismal font and the Bible was processed to the center of the congregation for the reading of the Holy Gospel (**see**); and water was sprinkled on the congregation from the baptismal font during the Thanksgiving for Baptism (**touch**). Lutherans worship in many different ways around the world, and we had a fun time creating a liturgy that incorporated these different elements. For many, it was their first time experiencing incense or aspergilla, the liturgical instrument used for sprinkling water, being used in a Lutheran service. We received a lot of positive feedback about how special the service was. I'm excited to see what we come up with next year!