



*Lutheran Campus Ministry at West Virginia University, Morgantown, Va., led by Tony Setley, campus pastor, offers students a spiritual home and space to explore vocation.*



# A SPIRITUAL HOME FOR FUTURE LEADERS

Stuck in traffic at West Virginia University (WVU), when seemingly all of Morgantown's 28,000 students are trying to get to class, you'd be hard-pressed not to notice the fire engine red Lutheran Campus Ministry Chapel with its curved roof, just south of the main crosswalk.

"The building was very interesting; that was probably my first impression," sophomore Lilly Simmons said.

The architectural oddity might draw students for a brief chat with Tony Setley, campus pastor, but however they come, he said, "they are comfortable enough to ask questions, and that can always lead to something bigger."

Graduate student Nathan Blake recalled his first visit. "I was at a really rough place spiritually, and the time for normal Sunday services had already passed, and I was like, 'I need something, but I don't know what.' I remembered that 6 p.m. service time, and I wandered up the hill, snuck in the back [pew] and I just kept coming. It was exactly what I needed."

In and beyond worship, Setley encourages students to set the tone for campus ministry. Simmons said she's loved leading monthly social activities such as ax-throwing or miniature golf. The gatherings make a difference. "I can't overstate the importance of having a place where you can experience spirituality, but also having a group of people you can experience it with," Blake said.

In addition to serving as students' spiritual home, Lutheran Campus Ministry at WVU plans this fall to offer a literal rent-free

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home for some people discerning calls to ministry. The student housing, called Luther House, is located behind the chapel in a building that was formerly the parsonage for St. Paul Lutheran Church of Morgantown. Luther House students will lead chapel and explore seminary through a partnership with Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. **Both the seminary and campus ministry are funded by Mission Support.**

"Hopefully out of that, students will have some of the financial burden taken off, but also to have that ability to discern and engage with their faith in a way that will give them more answers to the questions about what God is calling them to do in this world," Setley said.

To watch a video of this ministry, visit [ELCA.org/SOFIA](https://www.elca.org/SOFIA).

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