

WITTENBERG DOOR  
--- CAMPUS MINISTRY ---

# HISTORY INTEGRITY TRUTH SCRIPTURE

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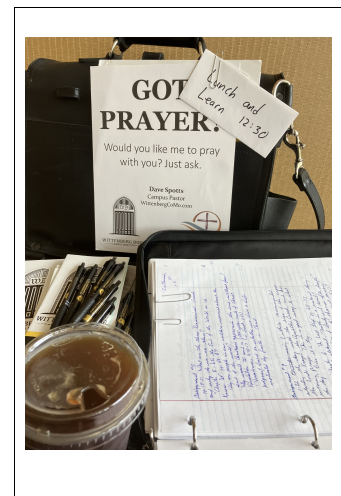
## October 2023 What Does A Campus Chaplain Do?

Most of us have a pretty clear picture, at least in our imagination, of what a parish pastor does. But what does a campus pastor do? My call document specifies that I am a “campus chaplain.” I don’t often use that term because few people are familiar with it. They assume that a campus chaplain would be someone who is on the staff of the university and who holds chapel services. In fact, as I have pointed out many times in this newsletter, I am not on university staff and we don’t have chapel services on campus. The secular institutions here don’t support Christian activity in any sort of active manner. As a chaplain, my goal isn’t to plant a church congregation. While we have a goal of holding occasional historic liturgical worship services for the university community, that’s different from gathering a church congregation. Rather, I try to funnel new Christians and those who are already Christians when they come to campus into existing church congregations that I can endorse, and there are several of those in the greater Columbia Missouri area. Meanwhile, I provide the front-line Christian witness and care that is needed in a community that is hesitant about, and sometimes hostile toward Christianity.

So what am I busy with? I spend a significant amount of any given week with my “mobile office” on campus somewhere. I try to be particularly visible, and the feedback I receive says that is successful. Last week, one young man (who is a Christian but who has been hesitant to become involved in a local congregation), told me he had been worried because he hadn’t seen me around campus. Yes, I had a flu-like bug the week before and had not been visible much. We took a little while to look at Scripture and pray for some concerns he had. In most weeks, a few people I have never met before will approach me and ask questions. I help them as I am able, I gather contact information if the person is comfortable with that, we pray, and they go on. Other people I have interacted with before come by as well. In this regard, my work is much like that of a parish pastor who is available in his office in the church building, but my office is at a table in a public space.

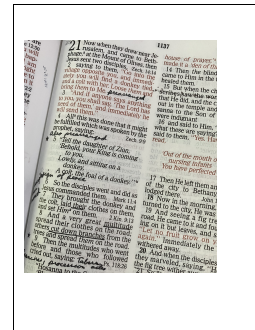


When I was installed as a campus chaplain, the presiding pastor of The AALC, who installed me, emphasized the work of the campus chaplain is to bring God’s Word to all in need on campus, and to pray for the community and the individuals in the community. So what do I do at that table that serves as my office? In addition to bringing God’s Word and prayers to those who come to me, I regularly pray for many others. For the university community, that it will be a place of peace and where honest inquiry shows people that all truth comes



from the God of all. I pray for the Wittenberg Door supporters. I pray for the pastors of my church body, The AALC. I pray for our congregations, as well as local church congregations we are in fellowship with. How do I keep that all straight? If you receive our newsletter, you are prayed for, because I keep a copy of the newsletter mailing list in a notebook that goes with me to campus.

I also spend a good deal of time in reading, meditating on, and carefully studying Scripture. If someone has asked me a question that requires more research, I will research it and get back with the person. The University of Missouri has an extensive library collection that includes many good (and many bad) resources for biblical and theological studies. I also keep my computerized resources available to me on campus, though some questions draw me to the study in my home.



Along with this work, devoting myself to the Word of God and to prayer, our other activities are becoming more and more active. I am persuaded this is related to the life of prayer I and some supporters have for the spiritual life of people on campus. I don't take many pictures in our more formal Bible discussions. But they happen! Our Savior is using me to engage people about their hopes, their fears, the source of their confidence, and the power of God's Word.

The permanent congregation isn't expected to develop here. I'm a chaplain. That means I am a steward of God's Word and a caretaker of the souls of those on campus for as long as they are here. I don't expect most of them to be here permanently, though some of the faculty and staff members are. Yet we are building a community of Christ's people, gathered out of sin and evil, learning to walk in the newness of life given by the hope in the resurrection of Jesus. He makes us walk in newness of life. It's an honor to work as a chaplain, guiding people along this path.



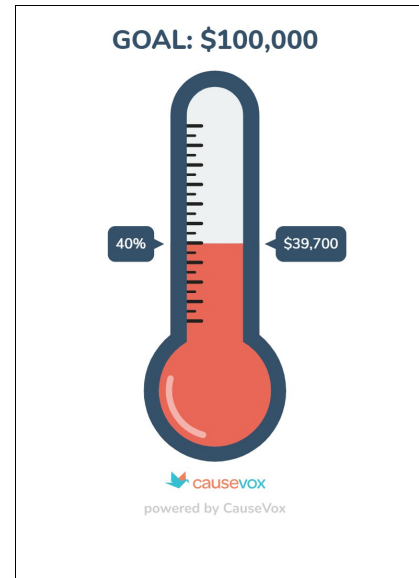
## Wittenberg Door Financial Update

I promised in February to keep speaking very specifically about the Wittenberg Door finances. This month, we reach the last of our normal budget categories, one which every ministry should strive to have well funded, the library budget. Although in our community there is a fairly substantial academic library, every pastor needs to be reading. Virtually every pastor needs to be reading more than he does. And that reading shouldn't be limited by what an area library has as its budgetary priorities. Every time I turn around, there are more good quality titles that I ought to know about. Sometimes I buy a book to evaluate for use in particular ministry projects, such as a book study. There are always commentaries and studies of different texts that are worth reading closely and having in my library. And, for the past several years, much of my book budget has been dedicated to works that pertain to my doctoral research, and which likewise contribute to my understanding of the Scripture and how God has revealed himself to all generations, including this current one. My doctoral research also lets me have access to countless journals and biblical studies which can help

me bring the hope and help of Christ to the many people I visit with on a weekly basis. The board of directors of Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry agrees with me about the centrality of extensive ongoing reading to enable me for more effective ministry. It's a great blessing to be able to purchase those books which aren't readily available elsewhere, or a personal copy of something that I have previously borrowed from a library and think should be part of my pastoral collection.

As always, thank you for your support! We can always use more individual and congregational regular donors as part of the Wittenberg Door 300! Year to date, with 3/4 of the year completed, we have raised almost 40% of our budget. Giving was a bit low in July and August, but has increased significantly in September. Please join with us and encourage others who value this Christ-centered ministry to include us in your giving. We want to be busy about the Gospel on campus!

Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Checks mailed to us are deposited with no commission paid to any intermediary. Most of our contributions are actually received this way, but we can receive funds sent through Paypal or Apple Pay as well. Giving is easy! Simply visit our website at [www.wittenbergcomo.com](http://www.wittenbergcomo.com) and click on "about" and "support us" to learn more.



### **Special Need Alert!**

A graduate student we have been working with, who is very interested in growing in his knowledge of Lutheran theology, has unexpectedly lost his research grant and is in danger of losing his housing and ability to continue with his doctoral studies. His family is from a nation with a high poverty rate and very high inflation. To give him some breathing room while he tries to get through this semester, he needs to come up with approximately \$2,000. If you are able to contribute to this need, please note it on your donation. We do have a solid structure for accountability.

### **Please Pray**

- for more new contacts and for those people we have connected with so far,
- for us to be able to execute a field trip for interested people – possibly to the Missouri Botanical Garden, where someone generously gave me a membership including multiple adult and child passes,
- for Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry to successfully build a community identity rather than an identity focused on me,
- for safety for all our participants, especially those from places hostile to the Gospel,
- for endurance as my schedule has added teaching seminary courses,
- for increased trust in God's Word and promises,
- for opportunity to build lasting and purposeful relationships, especially with our international scholarly community,
- for God to raise up native English speakers who will assist our international ministry,
- that the Lord will draw people into discipleship relationships,
- for increased ability to care for and bring Christ's mercy to all our community,
- that the church congregations of The AALC will thrive and grow together,

- that we may be diligent about the many vocations the Lord has given us.

### **Upcoming Activities:**

Thursdays at 12:30 pm – Lunch and Learn Bible discussion at the MU Student Center

Thursdays at 7:00 pm “That You May Know” Bible study at Beta Sigma Psi

Saturday, October 7 and Sunday, October 8 – Fish Fry, Movie and Discussion Night, and Mission Festival at St. John Lutheran Church, Pocahontas, MO

Friday, October 13 – Dinner and Conversation Evening 6-8 pm at the Spotts' House.

Sunday, October 15 – Pastor Spotts at Trinity Lutheran Church, Clarks Fork, MO

Wednesday, October 25 – Open Door Research Presentation 5-6:30 pm at The Heidelberg

Friday, October 27 – Dinner and Conversation Evening 6-8 pm at the Spotts' House.

Sunday, October 29 – Pastor Spotts celebrates Reformation Sunday at Ascension Lutheran Church, Waterloo, IA

Monday, October 30-Thursday, November 2 – Pastor Spotts at The AALC Pastors' Conference, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Thursday, November 2-Friday, November 3 – The AALC Clergy Commission meets, St. Paul, Minnesota.

#### **Remember to get your church on my calendar!**

Watch the calendar at [www.wittenbergcomo.com](http://www.wittenbergcomo.com), follow our Facebook page, and friend WDCM Chaplain on Facebook to see times and places where Pastor Spotts can be found around campuses in coffee shops or restaurants!

**We always have something new at the website, the blog, and the activities calendar. Please be a friend on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. If you're in Columbia, let's get together on or near campus. Go to [wittenbergcomo.com](http://wittenbergcomo.com) to provide financial support. The Wittenberg Door 300 needs you!**