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From the Publisher: Introduction and Invitation

Rev. Lamont Anthony Wells

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LAMONT ANTHONY WELLS

FROM THE PUBLISHER

Introduction and Invitation



Grace and peace be unto you each of you. I wanted to take a moment and introduce myself, I am Lamont Anthony Wells. I am ready and humbled to serve as the new executive director for the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities. I along with many of you have been committed to vocation and call

within higher education for over 25+ years of my life, having served most recently serving as the program director for ELCA Campus Ministry/ LuMin Network. I am blessed and honored to succeed the Rev. Dr. Mark Wilhelm, a pioneer in Lutheran higher education who has helped to bring unity and organized mission within the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities (NECU). It is my hope to build upon this firm foundation and lead NECU into an even more impactful season. Firmly believing that we do this together and not alone, I look forward to being challenged to find new strategies, pathways, and designs to achieve the historic mission of Lutheran Higher Education.

The flourishing of educators matters a lot to me. For the years I served as an administrator in campus ministry programs, I would often remind chaplains and campus religious leaders to become more inclusive in the populations they served by caring for the needs of staff, faculty, and other higher education professionals along with a key focus on students. Finding ways to show kindness and support for the entire higher education community must become an integral

part of a renewed strategy for mission and ministry within each institution. In fact, so that faculty, staff, and administrators, too, may flourish in these shifting and disruptive times, we must pay closer attention to the stresses and anxieties rapidly developing at every juncture within the education profession. Academic freedom of expression is under severe attack in the courts and political sectors, and is threatening flexibility, innovation, and creative license, all of which are tools used to make the learning environment more effective.

So what shall we say to these things? Well, this Spring issue of *Intersections* entitled “Vocation [in] Disruption” is a passionate response to the crises many of us face daily. Please spend quality time reading and reflecting on the powerful thoughts of each contributing author, and be inspired to become more understanding, supportive, and encouraging to educators and other higher education professionals in your local contexts. We have this treasure of Lutheran Higher Education that cannot be hidden by the crises we face. Let us not lose heart but grow more boldly and deeper in our faith as we teach through adversity and educate learners to be more loving and compassionate in the world.

I would also like to invite you to register and attend the 2023 Vocation of Lutheran Higher Education Conference: “So that we (faculty, staff, and administration), too, may flourish” in Minneapolis, Minnesota at Augsburg University- July 10-12, 2023. Each year, we gather to explore the many unique roles we lead in higher edification. I pray for your resilience and continued strength to show up in the gifted ways that each of you have been called to share.

Rev. Lamont Anthony Wells (he, him, his) is the Executive Director of the Network of Evangelical ELCA Colleges and Universities (NECU). Wells also serves as Strategic Advisor for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Wartburg Theological Seminary, and is currently National President of the African Descent Lutheran Association (ADLA). Previously, he served as Program Director for Campus Ministry in the ELCA (LuMin). lamont.wells@elca.org