



Report to the 2026 Synod Assembly North Texas-North Louisiana Synod

As we move into the next three years with our new strategic plan, Boldly Forward, we are excited about the many opportunities we'll have to partner with you to further the mission of Lutheran higher education.

Highlights of the 2025–26 year at Texas Lutheran University include:

- Successfully launching the new initiative of TLU Sunday, a day of giving in partnership with the bishops of the synods of Texas and Louisiana. This special day celebrates the strong connection between TLU and our congregations as we work together to prepare faithful, educated leaders for the church and the world. Many thanks to all of our participating churches!
- Successfully completing our previous strategic plan, *TLU2025*, and launching our new strategic plan, *Boldly Forward: TLU 2026–28*.
- Maintaining healthy enrollment, with just under 1,400 students enrolled in the fall semester. Our largest majors this year are Business, Education, Kinesiology, Nursing, and Psychology.
- Looking forward to the graduation of our first Doctorate in Interdisciplinary Leadership (EdD) cohort in Spring 2026.
- Continuing to see growth in our accelerated nursing programs in Houston and New Braunfels, with 120 students enrolled at our New Braunfels campus and 137 students enrolled at our Houston campus. We are also one step closer to opening a nursing program in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.
- Being named one of the top ten Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (ABSN) programs in Texas by Nurse.org.
- Appointing Chris Mueller as interim Chief Financial Officer in addition to his role as Vice President for Development while we mount a national search for a new Vice President for Finance.
- Celebrating the opening of our Verne Lundquist Student Athletic Center, a nearly 10,000-square-foot addition that includes a state-of-the-art strength and conditioning center for student-athletes, as well as locker rooms for the women's soccer and softball teams and a visitor center featuring Lundquist's amazing sports memorabilia collection.
- Appointment of four new members to the TLU Board of Regents: Dr. Sandra Harper, Lori Swann, the Rev. Leslie Price, and Sarah Metzger.

- Appointment of four new members to the TLU Corporation Board: the Hon. Donna Dodgen, the Rev. Stephen Shortess, Kerri Sturm, and John Roalson.
- Three new tenure-track faculty members were added in August 2025, bringing our total tenure-track faculty number to 75.
- TLU continues to strengthen its future through generous external support. Fiscal year-to-date, TLU has raised \$5.6 million in gifts—an increase of nearly 8% over last year—primarily supporting annual scholarships, endowments, capital projects, and unrestricted needs.
- Along with ongoing fundraising, we are excited to be preparing for the public launch of our focused Comprehensive Campaign. A campaign committee has been formed to lead what is anticipated to be a multi-year \$80 million campaign to support all aspects of our university.
- TLU had another strong year in athletics, with many of our athletic teams moving on to regional and even national competitions.
- Once again, TLU was singled out by *U.S. News and World Report* and the Princeton Review.
- All of these efforts and highlights align with and reflect the priorities identified through the four pillars of our strategic plan, *Boldly Forward*:
 - 1) Financial Sustainability
 - 2) Commitment to Students
 - 3) Campus Vibrancy
 - 4) Community Connections

We are in the midst of a challenging time within the realm of higher education, so we are more grateful than ever for another strong year at Texas Lutheran University—something we do not take for granted. More than ever, we are thankful for your ongoing support and prayers. Our commitment remains, as it has always been, to serve our students well, honor our faith and our diversity, and ensure a strong and certain future. We are proud to be part of the ELCA's life and ministry, and we welcome your support across our efforts. Thank you for your partnership with us in our mission of faith-based, independent higher education.

Debbie Cottrell
President
Texas Lutheran University