

**Presbytery of the Northern Plains  
UNIVERSITY OF JAMESTOWN LIAISON REPORT  
Fall 2022**

I am pleased to share this report from University of Jamestown's President Polly Peterson:

*Everything good comes from God. Every perfect gift is from Him. James 1:17*

**Over the past many years, I have grown accustomed to beginning each fall with a theme that frames our year. More often than not, such themes have been a single word or short phrase that casts inspiration on the culture, stewardship and commitment of our work and each other. As my tenure as President began, Joy filled my heart as together - alumni, faculty, staff, trustees, and community, we built a strong strategic plan that was both practical and inspirational. As we phased the plan into what needed to be done immediately, what needed a few years to consider, and those ideas that needed longer to research, accredit, or finance our team was joyfully prepared to begin the work. Joy was followed by Gratitude as we began the fall of 2019. How grateful we were for this place we love so deeply, and the work we were committed and prepared to do. And, although we faced a spring that forced us to think differently, we were indeed grateful for the incredible efforts of all who are UJ for their swift readiness to forge a path forward under a united We Can, We Will, We Must!**

**As we move forward in the aftermath of the global health pandemic, we read and listen daily to the dispiriting reviews of an economy in turmoil. Hence, we begin 2022-23 with a message of Goodness and Grace. As a University committed to Christian faith, our hearts and minds turn to Him as our source of renewed passion for the work that we do, the students we serve, and the vision we share. Higher education continues to be challenged by questions of value and worth. As a result, students are listening with their feet, and although we felt some of this in our recruitment and retention efforts this past year, I am truly inspired by the relentless commitment of our faculty, staff and coaches who helped to recruit a tremendous new class of students. The fall class of 2022 may not be our largest, but I am proud to report that overall enrollment is the second highest in the University's history. Recent efforts to add graduate programs in Education, Leadership and Clinical Counseling, as well as the Doctor of Physical Therapy program and most recently a Ph.D. program in Clinical Research, have resulted in substantial growth for our University. At the Undergraduate level, our Engineering Department successfully received ABET Accreditation this summer allowing us to add Civil Engineering to a rapidly growing Mechanical Engineering Program. This program has quickly become one of the University's top 5 majors among our current student body. We were extremely proud to announce the opening of an office and classroom facility in downtown Phoenix this summer as well. Through this location we will begin offering online certificate programs that will allow learners of all ages access to short-term, work-force aligned credentials through which all earned credits can be stacked into associate, bachelor or masters level degrees. Each program will bear the seal of excellence we all expect from a UJ experience while allowing learners the flexibility to achieve an education with the focus and pace they need and want.**

**Athletics and the performing arts are off to a terrific start this fall with many teams finishing up their fall seasons with the opportunity to continue into the post season. The fall musical, Big Fish, is set to open November 3<sup>rd</sup> with a full cast of incredibly talented student performers under the leadership of Director Mike McIntyre and Music Director, Dr. Richard Walentine. The musical is a fall favorite among the community of Jamestown allowing us to showcase the numerous opportunities our students have to live out the holistic educational mission of UJ.**

**You will be especially pleased to hear that our commitment to providing a faith-filled Christian environment is alive and well. As we begin the second half of this first semester, I am so proud to share with you that the average attendance at weekly Chapel service approximates 220 students, faculty and staff. Our Director of Campus Ministry, Kirstie Dobson, is outstanding in her efforts to engage and inspire all students to experience the Love and Grace of Jesus, our Lord. We have continued to offer program activities in what we have identified as a team approach whereby all students are able to engage in Campus Faith and Life by participating in any one of ten unique teams. Examples include the Care Team, Prayer Team, Music Team, Social Media Team, and Jimmies4Jesus. God's handiwork is alive and active on our campus! Next up is a much needed renovation and expansion of our existing Vorhees Chapel. I look forward to sharing additional details about this beautiful project as plans are finalized. We would be so grateful for your prayers and support as we begin the work of reimagining the possibilities that this renovation can provide to our growing student body of believers.**

**I conclude with an expression of Goodness and Grace. As we look to the future, I am confident that it is the will of Board of Trustees and the support of our alumni and friends that inspires each of us to see the beauty in every good day and bad. We are engaged in challenging work, but work that brings joy to our hearts accompanied by gratitude for the opportunity to do so. We appreciate that together, and only together, could we say WE DID to a time of unprecedented forces to the contrary. We know now more than ever we need to recognize the goodness and grace that has been given to us from on high as we extend the same goodness and grace to those around us.**

**Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10**

**Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to share with you this annual update of our amazingly resilient and growing University of Jamestown.**

**And thank you, President Peterson!**

**Bill Weispfenning, PNP/UJ Liaison**