The Office of University Chaplain at Evelyn Chapel offers spiritual growth opportunities to students, faculty, and staff; promotes awareness and appreciation of religious diversity; assists in the exploration of ethical questions, issues and values; and provides spiritual care to members of the campus community. The University Chaplain also participates in the ceremonial life of the University; oversees the use and operations of Evelyn Chapel; and coordinates Alternative Break programs in cooperation with IWU’s Action Research Center.

All students—of all religious and non-religious traditions—are welcome at Evelyn Chapel.

Explore Faith and Spirituality

ReligiosiTEA: Facilitated by the University Chaplain and student leaders, ReligiosiTEA is a Tuesday 4:00pm gathering (complete with caffeine and cookies) that encourages lively, honest conversation about a variety of topics…in a multireligious context. On any given afternoon, 15-20 students representing a variety of Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, and non-religious perspectives share their faith (or non-faith) convictions and questions. Themes—determined by students themselves during the 2013-2014 academic year—have included: religion and violence, practices of prayer, the role of women, the LGBT community, the place of animals in religious traditions, understandings of love and compassion…and more.

Text Talks: A new Monday lunchtime gathering led by the University Chaplain for any students interested in reflection on and dialogue with interesting, inspiring, difficult, and/or demanding biblical texts. Special attention will be given to texts that deal with issues of peace and justice, diversity and environmental sustainability, spiritual practices and interfaith hospitality.

First Wednesday Multifaith Hours: Each first Wednesday of the month (October through April), the Chapel hosts gatherings in either the Sanctuary or Fellowship Area at 11:00am that engage a variety of topics and traditions, facilitated by the University Chaplain, the Multifaith Ambassadors, the University Organist, student musicians, and various faculty and staff.

Student-Led Organizations: In partnership with the Council on Religious Life, Evelyn Chapel supports all student religious RSOs and the broad diversity of religious life on campus. A Spiritual Life Fair—with representatives of our spiritual and religious Registered Student Organizations (RSOs)—will be held at Evelyn Chapel on Sunday, August 24th from 4:00pm – 5:30pm, and we look forward to meeting your student then! Active RSOs include: DRL (Death, Resurrection, Life); IWU Hillel; IWU Interfaith; Intervarsity Christian Fellowship (including Greek IV); Secular Student Alliance; and Titan Catholic.
Engage in Multifaith Conversation and Friendship

Multifaith Ambassadors Program: Facilitated by the University Chaplain, MAP is a student leadership program for students interested in: deepening their appreciation for and friendship with people from different religious and non-religious traditions; creating bonds of compassion and cooperation on this campus; and, exploring what it means to be a person of faith in a pluralistic society. Highlights of the 2013-2014 school year included:

- “Light the Night: A Multicultural Celebration of the Season of Light” with significant student participation as service leaders and attendees
- Recognition in the Inaugural Report of The (U.S.) President’s Interfaith and Community Service Campus Challenge due to our interfaith engagement and service commitments at Illinois Wesleyan
- Participation in the Center for Human Rights and Social Justice’s Student Research Workshop in religion and human rights
- An inaugural IWU Interfaith Journal, soon to be published!
- Leadership of ReligiosiTEA and IWU Interfaith

Discover Ways to Serve

As University Chaplain, I also work with IWU’s Action Research Center to facilitate opportunities for students to serve locally and nationally and explore issues of diversity and social justice through our Alternative Break program. In Fall 2013 and Spring 2014, a total of four trips were offered, giving students the opportunity to engage with local communities in West Bloomington (A Local Service Break), Chicago (Interfaith Engagement and Service Trip), Mission, South Dakota (Tree of Life Relief Agency at Rosebud Reservation), and Albany, Georgia (Habitat for Humanity’s Collegiate Challenge). Three trips will be offered in 2013-2014 and an Alternative Break Information Session for all students will take place on Wednesday, September 3rd at 7:00pm in the Hansen Student Center.

Finally…

Evelyn Chapel is also a place to just come and be. During the school year, the Chapel is open seven days a week from 8:00am to 11:00pm. There are always spaces available to study, gather for conversation, or make a cup of coffee, tea, or hot chocolate. And I am available to students, faculty, and staff for conversation, support, and spiritual care. Students may call or email me to make an appointment, or just stop by. The Office of University Chaplain is a Safe Zone.

You are welcome to contact me this summer at enelsonw@iwu.edu or 309-556-3179. You may also visit the Evelyn Chapel website at www.iwu.edu/chaplain.

Welcome to Illinois Wesleyan University!

Rev. Elyse Nelson Winger
University Chaplain