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# IWU University Chapel Hour Promotes Diversity

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## **IWU University Chapel Hour Promotes Diversity**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--Seven ecumenical and educational services--with topics ranging from Hinduism, Protestantism, Buddhism and Judaism--will be presented at Illinois Wesleyan University as part of the University Chapel Hour and Special Services and Events Program.

"Religion plays a crucial role in a liberal arts education. It is one of the most enduring, integrating and intimate activities," said Dennis Groh, university chaplain and professor of humanities and archaeology. "Chapel is not a lecture or an observation. It allows individuals to experience religion."

Past University Chapel Hours this semester have included: 'Id al-Fatir, a feast to celebrate the end of the Islamic fasting period, Ramadan; a festival of spirituals in honor of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; a presentation by James Tabor, professor of religious studies at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte; and a program of dance and religion by dancer and choreographer Jane Nygood Plum and Abram Plum, IWU retired associate professor of music theory and composition.

The chapel hour is sponsored by the IWU University Chaplain's Office and the Evelyn Chapel Advisory Board. The University Chapel Hour seeks to provide interesting, informative and aesthetically satisfying religious worship and programming for a university community of all religions.

"Learning different religions is very important," said Groh. "Once students enter the 'real world' they find out the world is full of different religions. Because there is so much diversity on campus, it is good to experience, understand and appreciate other religious perspectives."

Chapel programs are planned by the Evelyn Chapel Advisory Board, a diverse group of IWU students and faculty formed from a variety of religious and educational disciplines. The advisory board works together to create an atmosphere where students from each religious group can worship and learn from others in a multi-faith community.

Chapel Advisory Board members include: Katie Brokaw, a sophomore theatre arts major from Bloomington; Nikki Carnevale, a junior music education major from Elmhurst, Ill.; Harold Gauthier, a senior political science major from Lynwood, Ill.; Inna Kagan, a senior history major from Skokie, Ill.; Kendra King, a junior English major from Aledo, Ill.; Haneef Omar, a junior diplomatic studies major from Rockford, Ill.; Lauren Sopocy, a senior music major from Glenview, Ill.; Gary Thompson II, a junior theatre arts major from Normal; April DeConick, assistant professor of religion; Ruth Ann Friedberg, associate professor of accounting; Narendra Jaggi, professor and chair of IWU's physics department; Monica Taylor, director of Multi-Cultural Affairs; and W. Michael Weis, professor and chair of IWU's history department.

Approximately 700 IWU students representing nearly 20 different Christian denominations and 10 other religions are involved in some form of religious activity on campus. IWU offers a number of avenues where students can feel comfortable in their religious beliefs such as Bible studies, prayer groups, religious services, club meetings and special events.

"Religion helps to nurture and stabilize students while their chief concern is academics," said Rabbi Theodore Gordon, IWU associate chaplain. "Religion keeps students in touch with their values and connected with their spiritual roots while they are engaging an ever-expanding intellectual."

Unless otherwise noted, all events will be held on Wednesday at 11 a.m in Evelyn Chapel, 1301 N. Park St., Bloomington. The University Chapel Hour is:

- o **Feb. 23**, "Making Friends with Oneself," IWU University Chaplain Dennis E. Groh. Groh will discuss the increasing gap between the "person" portrayed in resumes and the real-life person. With so many religious and cultural options encouraging people to misrepresent and betray themselves, it is time for people to give some thought to learning how to become their own best friends.
- o **March 1**, A Worship Tradition in the Hindu Tradition, The IWU Hindu Student Association.
- o **March 8**, University Ash Wednesday Service, Rev. Howard Bruce Bowlin, Rector, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Bloomington and IWU University Chaplain Dennis Groh. Ash Wednesday marks the official start of the season of Lent. The ashes are a symbol of penance to humble the recipient's heart and remind him of his mortality on Earth.
- o **March 22**, Sacred Music, Sacred Dance for World Healing, Tibetan Lamas of the Drepung Loseling Monastery.  
The music is composed of two forms of multiphonic singing known as *zok-kay* (low tone) and *bar-da* (high tone). In both forms, each of the main chantmasters simultaneously intones three notes, thus individually creating a complete chord. The Tibetan monks are the only group in the world to cultivate this vocal ability. Sacred dance is also included in the presentation.  
Sponsored by Richard Gere Productions and the Loseling Institute, an affiliate of Emory College in Atlanta, Ga., the monks have shared the stage with Paul Simon, Sheryl Crow, Michael Stripe, Patti Smith, Natalie Merchant and the Beastie Boys.
- o **March 29**, Faculty Credo, Norm Eash, IWU associate athletic director and head football coach.
- o **April 5**, Illinois Wesleyan Organists: Past and Present, a Musical Celebration in Anticipation of Illinois Wesleyan's Sesquicentennial, David M. Gehrenbeck, IWU emeritus professor of music, and J. Scott Ferguson, IWU associate professor of music and director of choral activities.  
Chapel attendants will have the opportunity to hear J.S. Bach's Prelude and Fugue in b minor and French composer, Olivier Messiaen's Communion, *Les oiseaux et les sources* and *Sortie, Le vent de l'Esprit* from *Messe de la Pentecôte*.

o **April 12**, Hymn Singing and Praising God in the Protestant Tradition, Rev. Paul Newhall, Pastor of Evangelical and West Olive United Methodist Churches and advisor to IWU Methodist Student Fellowship.

Throughout history, many religious groups have used music as an active component of their faith. Music has been used in times of celebration and in times of grief. The service will examine the effect of music and how it is used in worship. Chosen hymns and special requests will be performed.

Requests for the service may be submitted to Rev. Paul Newhall at (309)828-7052.

o **April 18**, (Tuesday, 5:30 p.m.), Main Lounge, Memorial Student Center, Jewish Seder/Passover Service and Dinner, IWU Associate Chaplain Rabbi Theodore Gordon.

The dinner initiates Passover, the Jewish festival of freedom, and the spring planting festival. The Seder dinner helps students of all faiths relate to the cycles of nature.

For information on the University Chapel Hour and other religious services held on the IWU campus, contact Evelyn Chapel at (309) 556-3005.