



*Prepared to serve and  
lead in a global context*

SUMMER 2021

CENTRAL DISTRICT CONFERENCE

EMU ANNUAL REPORT

## Greetings from President Huxman

Greetings to our many congregational communities across the Church. I write these reflections in the last week of January. Winter is on the wane. Light is replacing darkness, and our Spring Semester has begun with signs of health, beauty and wonder.

Last week dozens of students, faculty and staff responded to the question: “*What is your greatest hope for 2021?*” Their heart felt words, accompanied by beautiful photos of the EMU campus, can be found [here](#). Enjoy this reflective and spirited anthem of hope from our EMU community.

We are blessed with some key indicators of good health in 2021:

- Our COVID antigen testing of all residential students was a tremendous success two weeks ago-- 99% tested negative on successive move-in days. And yet we are ever mindful and humbled by the ability of the virus to change course in a moment's notice. Our basketball teams are taking a 10-day pause in games as per NCAA guidelines due to some new positive cases this week. All 19 sports are in action this spring.
- Our student retention rate from fall to spring is exceptionally strong (91%). Students have voiced great enthusiasm to be returning to campus after 7 weeks away.
- Our sense of community and care for one another in spring and fall 2020 was rated well ahead of many of our peer colleges and universities on a recent national student survey that measured campus connectedness.
- Our calling as a peace and justice university is on display in robust ways. We hired our first executive director of diversity, equity and inclusion, Dr. Jackie Font-Guzman. You can learn more about her [here](#). Our MLK Day activities were robust (12 events) and well attended by the campus community and beyond. Next week, as we enter Black History month, we continue our important education around racial justice.
- Our fundraising efforts are running ahead of last year-- 4% overall and 3% annual fund—and we had a good year last year! This is just amazing in the midst of a pandemic. We are so thankful for our many generous supporters who choose to invest in us with joy and enthusiasm. I invite you to check out our [Forward Together campaign](#).

Indeed, “*hope springs eternal*,” as poet Alexander Pope first penned. The holiness of hope can be found in the courageous call of the Magi—our theme for Opening Convocation. It is an enduring story of light over darkness—of God's inbreaking love for us—if we just pay attention. It is a counter-cultural story as relevant to our day as to the day wise stargazers followed a bright light to worship the Christ child and chose another path home.

May the God of hope fill you with joy and peace.

### How can EMU serve you?

Contact the church relations office to schedule the president or a faculty guest speaker:  
540-432-4597 or  
[ChurchRelations@emu.edu](mailto:ChurchRelations@emu.edu)

### Connecting to EMU

- ▶ **Susan Schultz Huxman**,  
*president*
- ▶ **Kirk Shisler**, *vice president for advancement*
- ▶ **Jasmine Hardesty**, *director of development & planned giving*
- ▶ **Braydon Hoover**, *director of development & annual giving*
- ▶ **Matthew Ruth**, *director of admissions*

### Our Vision

*EMU envisions a learning community marked by academic excellence, creative expression, professional competence, and passionate Christian faith, offering healing and hope in our diverse world. To this end, we commit ourselves to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God.*