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## Winter 2009-2010 Letter

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From the Presidents's Desk

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The end of the semester and approaching holidays provided an unusual number of opportunities to witness the dedication and creativity that characterizes the faculty and students at Illinois Wesleyan. My wife, Pat, and I are privileged to attend senior music recitals, like the recent one by voice major Sarah Kedzie, and talk with Alexandria Sawyer, a member of our national champion women's track team, about her plans for graduate study in physical therapy.

We also attended a fantastic performance of Pippin in McPherson Theatre and celebrated the official arrival of the holidays with the annual Christmas Choral Concert at Holy Trinity Church performed by the University Choir, Collegiate Choir and Chamber Singers. During the same weekend, a marvelous program was held at Evelyn Chapel, entitled "Christmas Around the World," in which faculty, staff and students read lessons, sang and shared musical pieces in their native languages, all while sharing in a common story of light illuminating the darkness in our world.

Perhaps the highlight of the season was the graduation dinner for the 44 students who completed their degree requirements this semester. Each student may invite a member of the faculty or staff to the dinner and share a story about the impact that person has had on his or her life. The intimacy of the evening and the insights gained from the stories make this one of our favorite nights of the year.

Our society has been presented with many challenges over the past 12 months, and a casual review of the latest news calls attention to the problems that persist. We find it useful to balance this perspective with the youthful enthusiasm and excitement that permeates Illinois Wesleyan. Our students are both realistic and idealistic. They know that the world has changed. They also want to play meaningful roles in making the world a better place, something that can be achieved through careful development of their interests and talents. That spirit inspires all of us who have the privilege of working each day on the Wesleyan campus.

Pat and I send you our best wishes for the holidays and New Year.

*Richard B. Wilson*