

A COVENANT BETWEEN BELHAVEN COLLEGE AND THE SYNOD OF LIVING WATERS

A. Purpose of the Covenant

In order that the mission of the College and the mission of the Synod in higher education may be fully and effectively performed, Belhaven College and the Synod of Living Waters of the Presbyterian Church (USA) make the following covenant as the basis for mutual understanding and trust, and as a proper agreement which shall contain the details of the relationship, understanding and procedure between the College and the Synod.

This Covenant is entered into by Belhaven College, through its Board of Trustees, and the Synod.

The life of both the Church and the College may be enriched, made more dynamic and relevant by the understanding of the unique role of the Church, as the Church, and the College, as the College, and the mutual exchange of ideas, resources and support of the mission of each other.

B. Historical Perspective

Belhaven College, whose history dates back to 1883, was established by the merger of three separate institutions of higher learning: the Mississippi Synodical College founded in Holly Springs, MS in 1883, the McComb Female Institute of McComb, MS and Belhaven College, founded in Jackson, MS in 1894.

Dr. Lewis T. Fitzhugh, former president of Whitworth College, established Belhaven in 1894 as a private school for women and served as its president for ten years. Dr. J. R. Preston operated the College from 1904 until it was destroyed by fire in 1910. Belhaven was re-established at the present location on Peachtree Street in 1913 and given to the Synod of Mississippi, Presbyterian Church, U. S. at that time. The College operated as a four-year liberal arts college for women until July 1, 1954, when the institution became coeducational.

On October 31, 1972, the Synod of Mississippi passed a resolution which, under a 1973 amendment to the Charter of Incorporation, provided a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees. In addition, the Synod deeded Belhaven College and its property to the Belhaven Board of Trustees. The institutional relationship was transferred to the Synod of the Mid-South from the Synod of Mississippi by resolution on June 31, 1973, and the Synod of the Mid-South accepted this relationship by resolution on August 1, 1973. The college entered into a covenant relationship with the Synod of the Mid-South on June 24, 1974, which covenant relationship was transferred to the Synod of Living Waters in January, 1988.

Belhaven College is a coeducational, four-year, liberal arts college located in Jackson, Mississippi, with an original charter of incorporation in 1894 and amended in 1911, 1916, 1954, and 1973.

The Charter and Bylaws of the College place ownership and control of the institution in a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees consisting of no more than thirty-six members, one-third elected each year for three-year terms.

Ownership of Belhaven College, as established by deed of conveyance dated June 12, 1972, rests in the Board of Trustees of the College. This deed is recorded in the land deed's record in the Hinds County Chancery Clerk's office in Book 2032 at pages 402-403.

If Belhaven were to cease operation as an institution of higher learning, the Board of Trustees would determine the disposition of property, unless certain donors had imposed binding and restrictive reversion clauses on their particular gifts to the College.

C. Statement of Purpose and Role of Belhaven

Belhaven College and the Presbyterian Church have worked together with the intent to be faithful to Jesus Christ and His mission as set forth in Scripture and revealed as a gift of the Holy Spirit. Historically, the Presbyterian Church has recognized the values and necessities of higher education for both clergy and lay persons.

Belhaven is a Christian liberal arts college. Its mission is to prepare men and women to serve Jesus Christ in occupation and career, in human relationships, and in the world of ideas.

The College draws from its Presbyterian heritage a commitment to the Lordship of Christ over all aspects of life, the authority of the Bible as foundational for the development of a world-and-life view, and each individual's vocation as a calling from God. Its historic commitment to a curriculum of liberal arts and sciences at the core of vocational and pre-professional programs fashions the sensitivity to human values and capacity for critical thinking which are necessary for genuine Christian service.

This unique blend of Christian faith, the liberal arts and career-specific training is designed to produce people of character and ability who creatively respond to the demands of today's workplace and the needs of our society. The College seeks to develop men and women who will give distinctive leadership and service as they give witness to the leading of the Spirit of Christ in their own time and place. It intends to fashion people of integrity, compassion, and justice who incorporate those qualities in their work. It aims to contribute to society "people who seek to serve, not to be served."

D. Statement of Purpose and Role of the Synod

The Synod of Living Waters is a governing body of the Presbyterian Church (USA) as defined in the Book of Order, Chapter XII, and is incorporated under the laws of the State of Tennessee. As a governing body of the Church, the Synod is committed to and expresses the mission and unity of the Church as stated in the Book of Order, Chapters III and IV.

The Synod of Living Waters has responsibility "To develop, .. , a broad strategy for the mission of the Church within its bounds in accord with BO G-3 ,0000;" and "To establish and superintend the agencies .. necessary for its work."

E. Responsibilities Under the Covenant

Belhaven College and Synod of Living Waters hereby enter into a covenant relationship for mutual concern and support.

1. Responsibilities of the College

Belhaven College affirms its commitment to:

- offer a program of quality education in the liberal arts and sciences with the concept of the wholeness of life as interpreted by the Christian faith;
- prepare students for Christian service in all walks of life;
- maintain standards of excellence and accreditation by appropriate academic associations and agencies;
- develop professional and lay leadership for the Church, i.e., inquirers for the ministry, directors of Christian education, choir directors, organists, Sunday School teachers, and teachers for elementary and high schools;
- make available supply ministers and special programs of sacred music and drama to church groups;
- serve as host for church governing bodies and their agencies;
- provide leadership and facilities for youth groups for conferences, retreats, and rallies;
- sponsor workshops and conferences for church laymen, ministers and directors of Christian education;
- provide for all of our students an educational experience which intends to fashion people of integrity, compassion, and justice who incorporate those qualities in their work;
- work toward the recruitment at every level of the college's life of persons who meet the academic and spiritual qualifications established by the Board of Trustees without regard to racial ethnic background.
- maintain a vital role of service to all churches in Synod and to provide resources in Christian education, business needs for the Church, and other areas such as data processing and research;
- provide a report of the campus ministry program and activities of the College which the College chooses to share in its Annual Report to Synod, and such other reports as may be deemed mutually beneficial;
- clearly and accurately state in its catalog and other appropriate publications its relationship to the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the College's philosophy of higher education. (*See Attachment.)

2. Responsibilities of the Synod of Living Waters

Synod of Living Waters affirms its commitment to:

- undergird the College spiritually;
- promote understanding of the educational opportunities offered at the College;
- promote attendance by encouraging youth to enroll as students at the College;
- consult, when requested, with the College in planning for major financial campaigns with governing bodies. The College is free to approach churches and individuals for gifts;
- offer a source of ministers and laity as speakers for regularly scheduled chapel services, retreats, and conferences at the College;
- encourage individuals to support the scholarship program of the College;
- provide to Belhaven the Minutes of Synod.

F. Formal Approval and Review

This Covenant replaces the existing covenant relationship between Belhaven and Synod dated March 20-21, 1985. This Covenant becomes effective upon approval at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Synod of Living Waters and signing by the Synod Executive and Stated Clerk and by approval at a regularly scheduled Belhaven College Board Meeting and signing by the President of the College and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

This Covenant recognizes the possibility that Belhaven College may develop other covenant relationships as the College fulfills its mission in Christian higher education. It is understood, however, that no provision of such covenants or agreements will be in conflict with the provisions of this Covenant. In the event Belhaven College undertakes to develop other relationships, it is understood that the President of the College will inform the Synod of any formal action by the Board of Trustees.

This Covenant will be reviewed by Belhaven College and the Synod of Living Waters as needed through a joint task force. This task force will have responsibility to review the Covenant and recommend possible changes in the statement to the Belhaven Board and to Synod. Appropriate to this review will be discussion of other matters pertaining to long-range goals and objectives. If recommended changes from the task force are acceptable to both the College and the Synod, each group, through appropriate action, will endorse the Covenant for an additional period. However, if recommendations from the special task force are not acceptable to both the College and the Synod, representatives from the College, as approved by the Board, will work directly with the Synod with the purpose of developing an acceptable covenant.

A special review of the covenant relationship can be initiated by the officers of the Board of Belhaven College and/or the Synod if major decisions by the College or the Synod are anticipated which could change the nature of the covenant relationship.

This Covenant and any appendices shall be filed in Synod's office and the Covenant document printed in the Minutes of Synod.

The Synod Executive shall be responsible for seeing that all provisions of this Covenant regarding Synod's responsibilities are fulfilled.

This Covenant shall be summarized in appropriate college publications and made Available to members of the college faculty and staff and other constituencies as Appropriate. (See attachment)

The President of the College shall be responsible for seeing that all provisions of This Covenant regarding the institution's responsibilities are presented to the Board of Trustees.

The Synod of Living Waters and Belhaven College do so covenant and agree:

REPRESENTING
BELHAVEN COLLEGE

President



REPRESENTING THE SYNOD OF
LIVING WATERS

Synod Executive



Date:

10-8-09

Date:

9/2/2009

Statement to Appear in Catalog

Belhaven College has a long and rich history of relationship with the Presbyterian Church. Until 1972 the College was owned and operated by the Synod of Mississippi, Presbyterian Church in the United States, through a Synod elected board of trustees. In 1972 the Synod gave ownership of the college to a self-perpetuating board of trustees. The college has a covenant relationship with the Synod of Living Waters of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and seeks to deepen its relationship with various other Presbyterian bodies. Faculty and staff members are drawn from various denominations, with the primary Presbyterian denominations represented being the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Presbyterian Church in America, and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. The college receives both financial support and students from these three denominations.

The college draws from its Presbyterian heritage a commitment to the Lordship of Christ over all aspects of life, the authority of the Bible as foundational for the development of a world-and-life view, and each individual's vocation as a calling from God. Its historic commitment to a curriculum of liberal arts and sciences at the core of vocational and pre-professional programs fashions the sensitivity to human values and capacity for critical thinking which are necessary for genuine Christian service.

This unique blend of Christian faith, the liberal arts and career-specific training is designed to produce people of character and ability who creatively respond to the demands of today's workplace and the needs of our society. The college seeks to develop men and women who will give distinctive leadership and service as they give witness to the leading of the Spirit of Christ in their own time and place. It intends to fashion people of integrity, compassion, and justice who incorporate those qualities in their work. It aims to contribute to society "people who seek to serve, not to be served."

APPENDIX:

STATEMENT OF CHRISTIAN COMMITMENT AND CHURCH RELATIONSHIP

Belhaven College intends to be distinctively Christian. It *is* this feature which distinguishes Belhaven College from other public or private institutions of higher learning. As do other Christian liberal arts colleges, Belhaven emphasizes the importance of integrating Christian faith and scholarly learning. But at Belhaven the issue is pushed one step farther. How does Christian faith impact life in the career paths, family relationships, and community settings into which students are headed? Challenging students to answer this question and to wrestle with the issues it touches lies at the heart of Belhaven's distinctive mission.

Fundamental to this purpose is the effort to fashion in students a Christian world-and-life view. Through a diversified curriculum and a carefully chosen faculty, the college's program of instruction nurtures the understanding that there is perfect harmony between the things of God, who is the source of all truth" and the world of science and nature as it is encountered in the classroom and in life. The program is governed by the conviction that there is no final conflict between the truth of God and the facts of life in the things He has created and ordained. An education based on this approach not only moves the student deeper into the body of knowledge accumulated by our civilization but gives genuine wisdom for interpreting such knowledge. It produces: an appreciation for values that provide a basis for decision-making. Biblical principles woven into fabric of the instruction find application among all the decisions of life. They equip the student with a reliable basis for making choices, setting priorities and living a happy, useful and fruitful life.

An emphasis upon such principles and "Values is in no way separated from an emphasis on good scholarship. Excellence in scholarship is required of each teacher and is sought as a goal, from each student. At Belhaven, scholars are commissioned to do two things: to tap the rich resources of the liberal arts tradition and to facilitate experience-based learning.

The college emphasizes the importance of a practical education which equips a person for specific job and career goals. Programs such as "internships" sharpen both skills and perspectives by placing students in contexts and roles which give relevance to classroom instruction. Programs such as "mentoring" (provide continuing contact with people who daily translate academic issues into life patterns.

At Belhaven, this practical education is cast within a strong liberal arts frame of reference. The college is determined to provide a liberal arts education which fashions and prepares the whole person for well-rounded, responsible leadership in a complex and

fast-changing world. The development of essential skills for critical thinking and communication, the study of human life and experience and the cultivation of an appreciation for the dignity and creativity of the world's people receive priority attention because the college believes that it is a liberal arts education which best prepares people for profitable service in the work place and for a wider range of possible vocational options and career paths.

Belhaven is committed to the Lordship of Christ in its academic program, its administration, and its campus life. It does not require every student to embrace personal Christian faith but offers to all an education and environment based on such faith. The college cares for the whole person as one made in the image of God and capable of growth in mind and spirit. The faculty and staff give individual attention to each student by offering counsel regarding personal development, academic performance, and career and vocational choices. The college provides a holistic learning environment in which each student can develop emotionally and physically within a Christian context. It is the goal of the college that its graduates would make effective and responsible contributions in their vocational roles and would embody in their lives the Christian ideals of the college.

Belhaven is guided by an independent Board of Trustees composed of men and women of evangelical Reformed faith. While the college was established and owned in its early history by the Presbyterian Church and continues to maintain ties of common commitment with the Presbyterian Churches from which it has come, the current Board is drawn from several denominations and the college welcomes students from all churches and from all racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds. The administration and faculty have been carefully selected by the Board for their ability to perform and communicate in their chosen fields and for their commitment to the college's Christian purposes.

Belhaven's motto is expressed in the words and example of Christ: "not to be served, but to serve." It is the mission of Belhaven to produce graduates who embody this principle in all aspects of life.