

COVENANT BETWEEN THE SYNOD OF LIVING WATERS AND COLUMBIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

I. Purpose of the Covenant

The purpose of this Covenant is to define the nature and scope of the relationship between the Synod of Living Waters and Columbia Theological Seminary.

II. History of the Relationship

Columbia Theological Seminary's Covenant relationships with synods is deeply rooted in the history of the Presbyterian Church in this country. Established in 1828, Columbia has furnished the Presbyterian Church in the Mid-South with pastors and teachers for over 165 years. As early as 1857, the Synod of Alabama adopted Columbia Seminary as "our own, placing its name among those of the institutions in the region which we called 'ours', and which we are to cherish and care for, support, help and encourage as our own." Mississippi joined this covenant with Columbia in 1925.

Until now, the force of these original agreements have continued uninterrupted through our present covenant, with a strong and continuing sense of shared mission between seminary and synod. Columbia graduates have faithfully served the church in this region, with several of its graduates being instrumental in the founding of Rhodes and Stillman College, and numerous other church-related educational, conference, and social service institutions throughout this part of the country. The mutual partnership between Columbia and the Synod of Living Waters is fundamental to the history of both.

III. Parties to the Covenant

The parties of this Covenant are the Synod and the Seminary through its Board of Trustees.

- A. The Synod of Living Waters is a governing body of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America as defined in the Book of Order (BO), Chapter G-12.0000, with jurisdiction as set forth in BO Chapter G-9.0000. As a governing body of the Church, the Synod is committed to and expresses the functions of the Church as stated in the BO Chapter 1 and in the "Articles of Agreement."

The current Primary Mission Initiatives of Synod are to:

1. Promote global partnership and ecumenical fellowship.
2. Develop effective models of campus ministries.
3. Support the life and ministries of smaller membership churches.

4. Strengthen racial ethnic congregations and leader recruitment.
 5. Communicate and interpret the mission and news of the Church.
- B. Columbia Theological Seminary is a Post-Graduate Institution providing Theological Education for the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. IT specifically provides for the Synod educational curriculum and experiences which will:
1. Prepare good ministers of Jesus Christ for service in the Presbyterian Church, USA and throughout the world;
 2. Nurture ordained ministers and other Church leaders with continuing education;
 3. Serve as a theological resource center for the Church and the Community.

The formal relationship between the Synod and the Seminary is described in the Charter of Columbia Seminary and the Plan of Government of Columbia Seminary which documents have been approved by the Synod and which require action by the Synod prior to any amendment or alteration.

IV. Responsibilities under the Covenant

It is the intention of both parties that the relationship between the Seminary and the Synod be strong and mutually supportive.

- A. The mission of the Synod in the world of higher education as it applies to the Seminary is to inform, stimulate, coordinate, and channel the commitments of Presbyterians in the Synod's region, to encourage their more active involvement in all the many expressions of the church's traditional concern for educational quality and wholeness. In carrying out this mission, the Synod will seek to:
1. Have the Synod's Nominations Committee consult annually with the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees concerning the nomination and election of Board members. Terms of Trustees from the Synod shall be three-year terms and no one shall serve more than two full successive terms. The filling of an unexpired term for two years or more shall be considered a full term.
 2. Encourage financial support for the Seminary by promoting an awareness that theological education in the broad sense is the mission of the whole church and education for ministry involves the whole church and properly trained leadership is crucial for such education for ministry.
 3. Work with the Seminary to insure common understanding of the Synod's partnership with it in the work of the institution.

4. Encourage sound educational and fiscal planning by the Seminary, respecting its unique role in the theological education of its particular student body, and maintaining continuity with the historic values which have informed Presbyterian educational endeavors.
 5. Support presbyteries in recruiting candidates for the Seminary.
- B. In fulfilling its responsibilities to this Covenant, the Seminary summarizes its commitments in three basic categories and agrees to provide support and encourage to the mission of Synod in two specific areas:
1. Commitment to Biblical Authority. Its constant appeal is to the Scripture as it is attested to be the word of God by the inward witness of the Holy Spirit.
 2. Commitment of Doctrinal Fidelity. Ordinarily, members are ordained officers in the Presbyterian Church and students study the major creeds and confessions of the Reformed tradition.
 3. Commitment to Ecclesiastical Loyalty. The Seminary was founded to provide leadership for the Presbyterian Church and its programs. Its teaching and ministry seek to be loyal to the Presbyterian Church, USA.
 4. Provide the intellectual and spiritual stimulus to the Church through research, publications, library facilities, and leader development for Church education conferences.
 5. Provide services to the Church such as preachers for pulpit supply and leadership for Synod School course offerings.

V. Mutual Understandings and Accountability

A. Property

1. "The Board shall hold in trust for the Synods the property of the Seminary, both real and personal, with the right, however, to sell, bargain, alienate, and convey any part of same for re-investment or for other purposes. It shall have the power to take title to the property so sold." (Plan of Government, Chapter 2, Section 5.)
2. "In the event of the dissolution of this corporation, all assets of the corporation of every kind and description shall be distributed to such one or more corporations, funds or foundations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, education or religious purposes, which shall be selected by the controlling Synods, whose selection shall be conclusive." (Charter, February 2, 1967)

B. Reporting

1. The Seminary consulting with Synod about campaigns with judicatory bodies. The Seminary is free to approach individuals for gifts, trusts, wills and bequests.

2. The Seminary providing an annual report to Synod's Institutions Committee.
3. The Synod providing its annual audit, Minutes of Synod meetings and Minutes of the Institutions Committee to the Board of Trustees of the Seminary.

VI. Review and Amendment of the Covenant

A special review of the covenant relationship can be initiated by the officers of the Board of Trustees of the Seminary and/or the Division for Synod Ministries of Synod if major decisions by the Seminary or the Synod are anticipated which could change the nature of the covenant relationship.

VII. Formal Approval

A. By the Synod

This Covenant shall be entered into upon its approval by the Synod in a regular Stated Meeting and attested by the Moderator and Stated Clerk of the Synod.

B. By the Seminary

The Seminary shall enter into this Covenant upon its approval by the Board of Trustees and shall be attested by the Chairman and Secretary of the Board.

C. Implementation and Recognition

This Covenant shall become operative when approved and attested by both parties. This Covenant and any appendices shall be printed in the Minutes of Synod. This Covenant shall be summarized in the Seminary catalog and made available to members of the Seminary faculty and staff and other constituencies as appropriate. The Synod through its Division for Synod Ministries and the Seminary through the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees shall seek other appropriate ways to give recognition to this Covenant.



Terry Newland
Synod Executive
Synod of Living Waters
October 18, 2007



William E. Scheu
Chair, Board of Trustees
Columbia Theological Seminary
October 18, 2007