

WHAT MAKES US DISTINCT

The passion of Bethel Seminary is to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ among all people in culturally sensitive ways. As a Spirit-empowered, biblically grounded community of learning, Bethel strives to develop and equip whole and holy persons to serve and lead so that churches and ministry agencies can become all they are called to be and do all they are called to do in the world for the glory of God.

Academic Rigor and Excellence

Qualified faculty with earned doctorates and pastoral or missions experience teach courses at the graduate level. Very well-qualified faculty teach in all disciplines to ensure academic quality and to interact with students. Educational programs, following adult learning principles, are centered on the learner, enabling students to assume responsibility for advancing their own educations. Student-faculty interaction is frequent and collegial.

Alumni

Graduates of the seminary now number more than 5,750. Those in active service fill important ministry roles as missionaries, pastors, teachers, marriage and family therapists, administrators, chaplains, denominational servants, and directors of Christian education and youth ministries around the world. Seminary alumni are members of the alumni association, representing graduates of all schools of Bethel University.

Ministry Involvement

Students are encouraged to be actively involved in church or parachurch ministry throughout their seminary program. Students choose ministries and churches in line with their sense of call to ministry.

Transformative Education Model

At Bethel Seminary, we're preparing well-rounded ministry leaders using our Transformative Education Model, which ensures all programs and courses incorporate:

1. **Biblical and theological foundations:** As an evangelical seminary, Bethel Seminary is grounded in Scripture. It is the basis for all that we do, and it informs our approach to personal and professional development.
2. **Spiritual and personal formation:** We're never done growing and are constantly being formed. As a student at Bethel Seminary, you'll discover more about who you are and who God is calling you to be, so that you can guide others to do the same.
3. **Leadership development:** We incorporate principles of proven leadership practices to empower you to lead effectively and ethically, in ministry, in the workplace, and beyond.

All seminaries teach Bible and theology, and most teach spiritual formation—but Bethel Seminary is unique in the way it takes both elements and infuses them with robust leadership development. This ensures graduates leave equipped to effectively lead people and faith communities toward all God is calling them to be.

Strategic Alliances

While Bethel Seminary's primary strategic partnership is with Converge Worldwide, it also works closely with nearly 50 denominations represented by the student body. Additionally, Bethel Seminary has strategic partnerships among other Christian organizations and churches.

Bethel Seminary offers credit for specific courses taught by the staff of these select partnership organizations:

What Makes Us Distinct 2

- Cru
- Gateway Church (Austin, TX)
- Young Life
- Wooddale Church (MN)

More details and information can be acquired through contacting the office of the registrar.

Additionally, Bethel Seminary is in strategic partnership with MN Adult and Teen Challenge, and the Fellowship of Evangelical Churches. Those who are interested in more information on these specific partnerships may contact the office of admissions.

Small-Town and Rural Ministry

As one of five seminaries of the Minnesota Consortium of Theological Schools, Bethel students may take courses and other learning experiences offered annually through consortium partner schools with a focus on ministry in small towns and rural areas.

Bethel Seminary St. Paul also partners with the Rural Home Missionary Association's Town and Country Training Program. The program offers summer courses focused on contextualized training in small towns and rural settings. Courses of study include ministry, ministry leadership, pastoral care, faith communication, and a seminar in small-town and rural ministry.

History

Bethel University is a leader in Christian higher education. Under its banner, Bethel Seminary continues as a world-class evangelical institution of theological education offering a variety of master of arts degrees, a master of divinity degree, a doctor of ministry degree, and several certificates. Accreditors have praised the seminary's approach to developing whole and holy Christian leaders through an emphasis on biblical/theological foundations, transformational leadership, and spiritual and personal formation. With a campus in St. Paul, as well as a model distance learning program, Bethel Seminary is breaking new ground in effective ministry training.

Our history dates back to 1871, when founder John Alexis Edgren responded to the need for an educated ministry among the Baptist churches of Swedish immigrants. Except for 1884-1888, when the seminary was located in St. Paul, Minnesota, and then in Stromsburg, Nebraska, its first half century was spent as the Swedish Department of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago and its predecessor, Baptist Union Theological Seminary.

In 1914, the churches of the Baptist General Conference (now Converge) assumed full support of the seminary, moving it back to St. Paul. There it joined Bethel Academy to become Bethel Academy and Seminary of the Swedish Baptist General Conference. Accredited in 1944, the seminary offers theological education in accordance with the standards established by the Association of Theological Schools.

With the offering of college degrees, the institution became Bethel College & Seminary in 1947. Following a period of rapid growth, especially in master's programs, the school became Bethel University in 2004.

Swedish Pietism left its mark on the seminary. The current vision seeks to keep the curriculum Bible-centered, to emphasize the building of a vibrant spiritual life, and to embody a spirit of tolerance in areas of evangelical disagreement. At the core of the program is an unwavering loyalty to the Orthodox-Reformed formulations of the Christian faith. Bethel's graduates have played a significant role in advancing the worldwide mission of Converge.

God blessed the seminary with scholarly teachers, some of whom achieved fame in wide circles of influence. Scholars of former years, such as Edgren, a philologist and biblical scholar, and Carl G.

Lagergren, a theologian, laid a solid foundation on which well-trained scholars of the present continue to build.

Because Converge is a small denomination, the seminary has maintained a close relationship with the churches through the years. A significant portion of each seminarian's education is underwritten by tithes and offerings from the conference. The school is dependent on this constituency for support in prayers and financial assistance. In turn, the seminary is committed to the ministries of the denomination.

Bethel Seminary is mindful of its founder's original purpose: "The instruction will be so conducted that above all the spiritual life may gain strength and, secondly, that knowledge may be gained and understanding developed." Edgren amplified this principle by stating its intended result in the life of the graduate: to "go forth in the Master's service with an increased faith and a deeper insight in the Christian life, and thus be the better prepared by example and teaching to lead others."