

Bethany Theological Seminary A Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

Our Mission:

As an innovative learning community grounded in an Anabaptist and Radical Pietist witness, Bethany Theological Seminary empowers every student to lead through spiritual engagement, faith-filled thought, and transformative practice so that the world flourishes.

Our Commitment:

Bethany Theological Seminary affirms that all people are created in the image of God and that all are precious in the eyes of the Creator. Our Radical Pietist and Anabaptist heritage informs our work to promote both the uniqueness of distinct individuals and the importance of those individuals belonging together in an educational community enhanced by differences that enrich us all. We believe we are called to live out the eschatological vision of God's future in the present, celebrating the diversity represented among the people of God (Revelation 7:9) and advocating for a reality based on equity, justice, and belonging (Galatians 3:28).

Bethany acknowledges and laments the Church's and society's patterns of systemic injustice, racism, discrimination, and oppression that undermine this biblical vision for equity, justice, and belonging. Bethany also acknowledges and laments times when the institution has been complicit in such patterns whether by action or by inaction. Bethany is committed through its educational mission to confront and denounce unjust practices of the Church and world so as to embrace and promote greater equity and belonging leading to peace and justice.

Bethany promotes an environment that includes and equitably serves people from a wide range of backgrounds and perspectives. We view the diversity of our students, staff, faculty, administration, and board as a strength and resource that benefits our mission. Our community becomes more vibrant when it welcomes people with differing abilities, ages, socioeconomic statuses, geolocations, national origins, ethnicities, races, cultures, genders and gender identities, sexual orientations, theological persuasions, and political perspectives. As an innovative learning community, we seek to increase our diversity and the creativity that it fosters. Such diversity enhances our community, bringing a wider range of perspectives and questions into conversations that shape, refresh, and challenge our educational contexts.

Bethany commits to living out the values of diversity and equity into our hiring practices, student and employee recruitment and retention, student support services, curricular and co-curricular activities, our educational programs and curricula, opportunities and contexts for personal and corporate growth, budgets, and policies and daily processes of the seminary. Also, as we engage with others outside our immediate community, we will advocate for these same values, as these interactions contribute to our educational contexts. This extends to how we work with community partners, campus and community events, building rental and space usage, vendors, contracted partners, donor and alumni relations, academic partnerships, and guest speakers. We will clearly express values and expectations that promote our educational mission.

Bethany resolves to affirm and protect the dignity and rights of each person and to address issues and systems of explicit and implicit bias, discrimination, and exclusion where they exist. We celebrate and value these various types of diversity and strive to promote an inclusive community that is welcoming and supportive of all who journey with us in this endeavor "so that the world flourishes."

This Statement will be reviewed after two years with reaffirmation or adjustment in the third year (2026-2027) as we continue to live out our commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Approved by the Board of Trustees, September 2024