

# **BOARD MANUAL**

**2011**

**Western Reformed Seminary  
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# WESTERN REFORMED SEMINARY

## BOARD MANUAL

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### History

It was determined that a Presbyterian, Reformed seminary was needed in the Pacific Northwest. Consequently, the board of Western Reformed Seminary was formed in 1982. Dr. John Battle traveled to Tacoma, and was put in charge of organizing the new seminary. The initial board consisted of Ross Bentson (president), Cliff Robinson (treasurer), Bob Mullen (secretary), Dr. John Battle, Ron Shane, and David Sinding. Within the next year professors Ron Bergey and the Rev. Christopher Lensch moved to Tacoma, and were added to the board. Dr. Battle was appointed seminary president and Dr. Ron Bergey became academic dean. The Rev. Chris Lensch, having moved west in 1983, was appointed registrar and dean of students.

The first commencement exercise was held on May 27, 1986, with two graduates.

### Mission

“The mission of Western Reformed Seminary is to assist the church of Jesus Christ and in particular the Bible Presbyterian Church and other conservative Presbyterian and Reformed churches:

- By providing graduate education and training for their ministers, missionaries, lay leaders, and other Christian workers, to produce spiritually grounded, knowledgeable, capable, and dedicated servants of Christ.
- By providing leadership in these churches and among the public in understanding, declaring, and defending Reformed theology and its current application in the church and the world.”

Professional training and education is provided from the doctrinal position of the Westminster Confession of Faith, in the form adopted by the Bible Presbyterian Church in 1938.

## **Affiliation**

The main affiliation of the seminary is with the Bible Presbyterian Church. While being independent, the seminary is an approved agency of the General Synod of the Bible Presbyterian Church as well as of the Northwest Presbytery of the denomination. Current policy is that at least 80% of the board members must be members of the Bible Presbyterian Church.

Also, the seminary is a Certified Training Center for the National Association of Nouthetic Counselors. Training in biblical counseling at Western Reformed Seminary is approved by NANC, and can lead to NANC certification.

Western Reformed Seminary is a member of the Puget Sound Area Libraries of Theology. This is a consortium of the libraries of three conservative Tacoma seminaries.

As an affiliated agency with the American Council of Christian Churches the seminary makes public, in one way, its conservative ecclesiastical stance.

## **Philosophy**

Western Reformed Seminary desires to train Christian leaders in an atmosphere of devotion and scholarship. Established particularly to serve the Bible Presbyterian Church, the seminary welcomes the opportunity of assisting students from other denominations in their preparation for fruitful Christian lives and ministries.

The seminary has developed several basic degree programs: the master of divinity, three other daytime masters programs, and the evening master in religious studies. A bachelor of divinity degree is identical to the M.Div. program in curriculum and policy.

## **Organization and Qualification**

The governing board of directors is self-perpetuating and consists of not less than five and not more than fifteen members. Members are normally elected to three-year terms. Approximately one third of the board members are elected or reelected each year. Officers are elected by a majority vote of the board, and serve for one year.

Newly elected or reelected board members must answer affirmatively the following questions:

1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

2. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?

A director must be:

1. A believer in Jesus Christ who has exhibited spiritual maturity.
2. A person whose godly testimony is demonstrated in his Christian life.
3. A person who is not a novice in the faith, and who has understanding of God's holy Word.
4. One who is free from all worldly addictions.
5. One who is willing to invest time and resources for the furtherance of the seminary's work.

The board meets at least twice each year, during the months of May and November. Special meetings of the board may be called by a vote of the board itself, by the president of the board, or by any two members of the board. At least one half of the members of the board must be present at a meeting for business to be conducted.

The executive committee consists of all the board officers plus any other members designated by the board. Members of the executive committee serve for one year. The executive committee meets as needed at the call of the board president or administration to deal with matters requiring immediate attention. Actions of the executive committee are subject to review by the full board.

## **Duties and Responsibilities**

The board assures doctrinal integrity of the seminary position by setting overall policy and goals. The board sets up and approves auxiliary agencies related to the seminary. The board appoints all members of the administration and faculty, and sets their terms of employment. New faculty appointments are made by the by the board after consultation with the administration and appropriate seminary faculty. Graduates of the seminary must be approved by the board.

Besides staff compensation, the board is responsible for all budget matters. Also, board approval is required for new programs, dispersal of scholarship funds to qualified students, tuition rates, travel to scholarly meetings, and travel for public relations purposes. Additionally, the board oversees seminary investments and various accounts.

## **WRS Legal Documents**

## **Articles of Incorporation**

### ***Incorporation details***

- Date of incorporation: February 10, 1983
- Registered agent: John Battle
- Incorporators: Ross Bentson, Clifford Robinson, Robert Mullen, David Sinding, Ron Shane, Robert Anderson
- Corporation Number: 2-329557-9, State of Washington

### ***Article 3: Purposes of the Corporation***

“The purposes for which the corporation is organized are as follows: This corporation is formed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a theological seminary for the post-collegiate training of ministers, missionaries, Christian workers, and Christian laymen. The seminary is to provide professional training and education from the doctrinal position of the Westminster Confession of Faith, in the form adopted by the Bible Presbyterian Church in 1938. The seminary also may engage in educational or literary activities directed to the public at large, in keeping with its position and purpose.”

Amendment to Article 3 (September 1, 1983): “Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from Federal income tax under section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.”

### ***Article 6: Dissolution***

“In the event of the dissolution of the corporation, the net assets are to be distributed as follows: Tacoma Bible Presbyterian Church, 5 South G Street, Tacoma, WA 98405.”

Amendment to Article 6 (September 1, 1983): “Upon winding up and dissolution of this corporation, after paying or adequately providing for the debts and obligations of the corporation, the remaining assets shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation or corporation which has established its tax exempt status under section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.”

## **By-Laws**

### ***Article 1. Name***

The name of this organization will be Western Reformed Seminary.

### ***Article 2. Purpose***

The seminary is to provide post-collegiate training for ministers, missionaries, Christian workers, and Christian laymen. The seminary is to provide professional training and education from the doctrinal position of the Westminster Confession of Faith, in the form adopted by the Bible Presbyterian Church in 1938. The seminary also may engage in educational or literary activities directed to the public at large, in keeping with its position and purpose.

### ***Article 3. Board of Directors***

The seminary shall be governed by a self-perpetuating board of directors, consisting of not less than five and not more than fifteen members. Charter members of the board shall have terms ranging from three to five years; thereafter members shall normally be elected to three-year terms. Approximately one third of the board members should be elected or reelected each year. The board of directors may, for reasons sufficient to itself, dismiss a board member. A dismissal vote requires a two-thirds majority of board members present and voting. All newly-elected or reelected board members must answer affirmatively to the following questions:

1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
2. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?

Board members must be officers from Presbyterian or Reformed church bodies. No less than 80% of WRS board members will be from the Bible Presbyterian Church, General Synod. Board members may participate in meetings either in person or via electronic means, if necessary.

### ***Article 4. Board Activities***

The board shall meet at least twice each year, during the months of May and November. Special meetings of the board may be called by a vote of the board itself, by the president of the board, or by any two members of the board. At least one half of the members of the board must be present at a meeting for business to take place. There must be at least 21 days' notice for regularly stated meetings and seven days' notice for special meetings.

The board of directors shall set over-all policy and goals for the seminary. The board shall set up and approve auxiliary agencies related to the seminary. The board shall appoint all members of the administration and faculty, and set their terms of employment. New faculty appointments shall be made by the board after consultation with the administration and appropriate seminary faculty. The board must approve all graduates of the seminary. The board must approve any encumbrance against seminary property by a two-thirds vote.

### ***Article 5. Officers and Executive Committee***

The officers of the seminary board shall consist of the president, the vice-president, the secretary, and the treasurer. Any two offices, except that of president, may be held by the same

person. Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the board during the November meeting, and shall serve a term of one year. Officers may be reelected.

The president shall preside at meetings of the board of directors, and may call special meetings. The vice-president shall fulfill the duties of the president, in the event of the president's absence or inability. The secretary shall keep and maintain the official minutes and documents of the board, and shall carry out the board's correspondence. The treasurer shall chair the finance committee, which is charged with preparing an annual budget and other finance matters not assigned other committees. Furthermore, the treasurer shall oversee the work of the bookkeeping staff, consult upon all matters that pertain to financial practice and policy, and present financial statements to the board on a quarterly basis. The treasurer shall arrange independent audits, review, or compilations on behalf of the board.

The executive committee shall consist of all the board officers plus any other board members designated by the board. The members of the executive committee shall be elected at the November meeting, and shall serve for one year; they may be reelected. The executive committee shall meet at the call of the president or of two members. The executive committee may act for the board within limitations established by the board. All actions of the executive committee are subject to review by the board of directors at its next meeting.

Board members shall excuse themselves from any portion of a meeting that deals directly with themselves or any family member, except for purposes of discussion at the invitation of the other members.

### ***Article 6. Amendments***

These by-laws may be amended by the board of directors by two two-thirds votes taken at two meetings at least ninety days apart. Written notification of the proposed amendment must be given to each board member at least fourteen days before the second meeting.

### ***Article 7. Dissolution***

The seminary may be dissolved only by following the same procedure as that required for amending the by-laws. In case of dissolution, assets of the seminary will be distributed in accordance with the seminary's articles of incorporation.