

# leadership+

top 12 things you should know  
about our seminaries



“Seminary gave me room to develop my beliefs, dialogue with people who are different and tend to practical ministry.”

Dave Koehler

**1** We have 10 Presbyterian seminaries nationwide, plus two that are closely affiliated.  
As Presbyterians, we place a high value on an educated clergy. It is a hallmark of our denomination – indeed, a source of pride. To continue this tradition of excellence, we have entrusted 10 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seminaries, and two theological institutions related to the denomination by covenant agreement, with the responsibility of educating and equipping persons of faith for pastoral leadership.

**2** Seminary students come in all shapes and sizes.  
The 3,100 students who attend our PCUSA seminaries are black and white, Asian and Hispanic, Native American and Middle Eastern. While some are fresh out of college, ministry is a second or subsequent career for others. These women and men of faith come from varying socio-economic backgrounds, and from urban, rural, small town and suburban settings. In short, they reflect the diverse nature of the Presbyterian church.

**3** Our seminaries are graduate schools serving the church.  
Seminary is designed to provide tomorrow's pastors with a solid biblical foundation, historical perspective and understanding of Reformed theology. In the classroom, on site in local congregations and in courses conducted over the Internet, students learn how to lead worship, preach, teach, pray and provide pastoral care. Earning the Master of Divinity, or M.Div. degree, is a prerequisite to becoming an ordained pastor in the Presbyterian church.

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## Special seminary programming for a vibrant church

Dozens of partnerships and special programs enrich the learning experience at our Presbyterian seminaries. Among them are:

- Project Burning Bush, where high school students explore vocation and the call to ministry, Union Theological Seminary & Presbyterian School of Christian Education
- Recruitment Conference for African American Presbyterian Youth, Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary
- The Farlough Institute, supporting African-American church leadership San Francisco Theological Seminary
- Institute for Youth Ministry, Princeton Theological Seminary
- World Mission Initiative, with New Wilmington Mission Conference, PCUSA, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
- The AADVENT Project (Asian American Discipleship for Vocational Empowerment, Nurture and Transformation), McCormick Theological Seminary
- Partnerships with AME, CME, AME Zion and United Methodist churches to train their clergy, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary
- Distance Master of Divinity degree, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary
- The Doctor of Educational Ministry degree, Columbia Theological Seminary
- A dual-degree program leading to the M.Div. and Master of Science in Social Work (MSSW), Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary and the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work
- Program for Presbyterian Students at Union Theological Seminary, New York, Auburn Theological Seminary
- Certificate Program in Theology for church lay leaders, Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico

## 4 A seminary education is as much about spiritual formation as it is book learning.

Time and time again, students say that living and worshipping together in Christian community is what seminary is all about. They grow as leaders by discussing their beliefs and questions with other students and faculty. Books, lectures, online discussions, paper-writing and classroom presentations are certainly important, but mentoring, chapel services and friendships made at seminary are essential to pastoral formation.

## 5 Resourcing the church of the 21st century requires wide-ranging seminary programs.

To meet the needs of an increasingly diverse people of God, our seminaries partner with business and law schools, universities and other theological institutions at home and abroad to deepen and broaden seminary learning. Our seminaries also host centers that address the needs of racial/ethnic groups, and they offer media training, urban ministry programs, church conferences, online journals and other special curricula.

## 6 Seminaries prepare students to serve congregations.

Our seminaries report that 85% of graduates go into parish ministry. Others feel called to serve the church as missionaries, Christian educators, chaplains, spiritual directors, youth leaders, academics and other kinds of religious professionals. To help ensure talented, faith-filled leaders are well educated, our seminaries grant masters degrees in such disciplines as theology, Christian education, church music and marriage and family therapy.

## 7 Seminaries care about the church.

Presbyterian seminaries are renowned as centers of research and theological discourse. They work with congregations, presbyteries and other educational institutions on issues and concerns of the church. They offer continuing education and other opportunities for lifelong learning along with doctoral coursework leading to the Ph.D. and D.Min degrees. And they assist in educating commissioned lay pastors to serve congregations that do not have the resources but need regular pastoral leadership.

## 8 It takes seminaries and churches together to “equip the saints for the work of ministry.”

Seminaries can't grow leaders by themselves. Leadership development requires a congregation-seminary partnership that begins in the parish with meaningful worship, mission trips, small groups, youth programs – and more. It continues as the congregation nurtures one of its own who identifies a call to ministry. While students are in seminary, congregations offer prayer, encouragement and on-site opportunities for service and experiential learning. As seminary graduates become pastors, they count on their congregations for greater understanding of faith, hope, peace, justice and love.

## 9 Your congregation has a stake in our seminaries.

You may be getting along just fine right now... But where will your next pastor come from? Who will lead the church in 10 years? 20 years? Tomorrow's leaders need our prayers and support today, along with our encouragement to attend the PCUSA seminary that will provide the educational foundation they need to develop Christian disciples among our children, grandchildren and future generations.



“Three of my best years were at seminary. I got a taste of the world.”

Jin S. Kim

**Our seminaries need your help!** There's no other way to put it: our seminaries need your congregation's financial support to be able to continue educating tomorrow's pastors and spiritual leaders. Today.

The students are real. Their educational needs are real. The seminary's financial needs are real. And your congregation's future needs for well-educated Presbyterian pastors are real.

Won't you invest in the future of our church? All it takes is an annual contribution of 1% of your congregation's local operating budget to the Theological Education Fund (TEF), the only denomination-wide source of financial support for PCUSA seminaries.

Give more. Give less. The important thing is that your congregation makes a contribution this year and includes the TEF in your budget next year – and every year after!

For more information about our Presbyterian seminaries, please visit [www.pcusa.org/seminaries](http://www.pcusa.org/seminaries). Or call 1-800-752-6594 and we'll put you in touch with a local representative of the Theological Education Network.

## did you know...?

- Annual enrollment at PCUSA seminaries totals more than 3,100 students.
- The median age of candidates and inquirers seeking ordination as Minister of Word and Sacrament in the PCUSA is 41.
- The female-to-male ratio of candidates and inquirers is 1 to 1.
- Almost 1/3 of candidates and inquirers identify themselves as African American, Asian, Hispanic, and from other racial ethnic groups.
- The Theological Education Network is a group of more than 150 Presbyterian volunteers who work with local congregations, presbyteries and synods to raise awareness of the power of theological education, our Presbyterian seminaries and the TEF (Theological Education Fund).



“At seminary, I’ve been prepared by the academic work, but mostly by the task of living together in a worshipping community.”

Laura Cheifetz

### 10 Seminary students cannot be expected to pay the full cost of a seminary education.

It costs our Presbyterian seminaries an average \$78,600 to educate a Master of Divinity student for three years. To pay their way, students rely on financial gifts from their congregation and presbytery. Many also depend on seminary scholarships or work/study programs, and some draw on personal savings. Others take out loans. Recent studies show that the average Master of Divinity borrower graduates with more than \$25,000 in debt.

### 11 Our seminaries count on YOU for financial support.

Tuition covers only a small portion of what it takes for a seminary to offer a quality education. Most of the funding needed to operate our schools comes from endowments, individual contributions, grants and an annual contribution from the Theological Education Fund (TEF), which is comprised solely of monies contributed each year by PCUSA congregations.

### 12 The only denominational support our seminaries receive is from the TEF.

Churchwide funding of PCUSA seminaries is possible as congregations like yours commit a portion of their annual budget to the TEF. A 1%-per-year gift to the TEF is considered a congregation’s proportionate share of educating church leaders. Once TEF monies are collected each year, the Committee on Theological Education (COTE) – with 13 members elected by the General Assembly from across the denomination, plus a representative from each seminary – proportionately allocates the TEF funds to ensure each school receives a fair share.

...for generations to come...

seminaries and churches together