



ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

# 2023

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2.1

**2023 Strategic Plan, 2.1  
Asbury Theological Seminary**

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# Introduction

## Historical Overview of our Strategic Planning from 2009 to 2019

In 2009 Asbury Theological Seminary began a process of strategic reflection which ultimately led to what became known as the 2023 Strategic Plan. The process began with the Board of Trustees officially authorizing the development of a Strategic Plan in November, 2009. This was followed by a meeting of the entire seminary community in R. J. Corman’s airplane hangar in February of 2010. The process involved extensive discussions throughout the community responding to four strategic questions which President Tennent posed to the community. Then, utilizing the World Café model<sup>2</sup> each area of the seminary (faculty, staff, students, administration and Trustees) were represented on ten vision teams around the following ten areas: Global Christianity; Church Renewal and Revitalization and Church Planting; Community Life; Delivery Systems; Students in the 21st Century; Globalized Faculty; One Seminary, Diverse Campuses, One Mission; Finance and Advancement; Board of Trustees; and Curriculum. The President and Cabinet presented a “charge” to each of the vision teams, along with a series of certified questions which they were invited to respond to.

These ten “vision teams” spent months discussing their theme and, by the Spring of 2010 each team produced a paper with specific, measurable goals, as well as tactical advice and aspirational statements consistent with our mission. From the start, we were committed to focusing on adaptive change, not merely technical change. During the academic year 2010-2011 each paper from the Vision Teams was processed by the Strategic Planning Council, the Cabinet, and the Board of Trustees. The Cabinet finally took all of the goals and consolidated them into a single document with a consistent format. This final document was then received by the staff and received a full vote of the plenary faculty and the Board of Trustees in 2011.

In 2015, it became clear that a re-presentation of the 2023 Strategic Plan was needed. This was evident because of several key factors:

- (1). New faculty, staff, administrators and Trustees who were not part of the original strategic discussions needed to encounter the work in a fresh way.
- (2). The 55 goals in the original 2023 Strategic Plan were presented under the headings of the ten Vision Teams. However, from the outset, we also developed a single page summary of the strategic plan which was organized under “ten core values.” Over time, as the plan was used, the “ten core values” became more prominent and helpful. Increasingly, as the titles of the vision teams receded from memory, it seemed that the 2023 Strategic Plan could be better organized if it was expressed under the ten core values, rather than the names of the ten vision teams.

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<sup>1</sup>The Four Certified Questions are found on p. 6, 7 of the 2023 Strategic Plan (1.0).

<sup>2</sup>The seven principles of the World Café Model for strategic planning can be found on p. 6 of the 2023 Strategic Plan (1.0).

<sup>3</sup>In 2010 this phrase was changed to Community Formation

<sup>4</sup>The Ten Presidential Charges are found on pages 51-54 of the 2023 Strategic Plan (1.0). The Certified questions for each vision team is found on pages 54-56 of the 2023 Strategic Plan (1.0).

<sup>5</sup>For more on the crucial distinction between “adaptive” and “technical” problems as developed by Harvard professors Ronald Heifetz and Donald Laurie, see p. 4, 5 of the 2023 Strategic Plan (1.0).

(3). Because the goals of each of the ten vision teams were preserved in the original 2023 Strategic Plan, there was a natural redundancy since many of the teams identified similar goals for the seminary's preferred future. The re-presentation of the plan would allow us to consolidate 55 goals into 23, thereby making the plan more accessible and marketable (23 goals by 2023).

(4). The original plan started each goal with the phrase, "By 2023 Asbury Seminary will..." However, we decided the plan would be strengthened if each goal was given a specific name. Beneath the name each goal begins with a single summarizing statement as in the original 2023 Strategic Plan.

The 2015 re-presentation of the 2023 Strategic Plan did not represent a dramatic change from the original version. The new plan does clarify some language, consolidates goals (though the original goal #25 was actually separated into two separate goals), and more clearly identifies how the goals are expressions of our ten core values. Three specific items were omitted in the 2023 2.0 Strategic Plan. **First**, the reference in previous goal #14 to a final "residency year" for ExL students. Our Strategic Enrollment Management Process (SEMP) has determined that this is not a viable direction for our ExL program, although ExL students will always have this option through our "clear degree pathways" options. **Second**, the ACE (Asbury Cluster Education) program found in original goal #19 has been omitted in favor of the current strategy for extension site(s). The ACE program was built on an economic model which was not sustainable. The new extension strategy involves extensive financial commitment from the hosting church. **Third**, the goal to re-position current faculty chairs around global regions of the world found in the original goal #21 has been omitted. It has been determined that such a re-positioning of chairs would not be permitted and, more importantly, would not significantly advance the global mission of the institution. The 2023 Strategic Plan, 2.0 will be read and received again by the Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students during the 2015-16 academic year. As a point of reference, at the end of every goal in the new 2.0 version the reader will find a reference to the original 2023 Strategic Plan demonstrating the original goals which the new version consolidates (e.g. under Goal 4, Wesley Theology you will see the note, **SP 1.0 Goals #2, 18, 19, 48**. This is a reference to the Strategic Plan 1.0 and the current goal 4 is a consolidation of previous goals 2, 18, 19, and 48.)

The newly updated Strategic Plan 2.0 also included our newly updated Ethos statement and a better ordering of our ten values on the one-page chart. We also produced an extensive "progress report" on each of the goals. This 71-page document was the fullest interim report since the inception of the 2023 Strategic Plan.

In May, 2019 the President presented a 120 page document entitled "2023 Strategic Plan – Cabinet Progress Report, April 2019." This document represented the most extensive report on each of the 23 goals of the Strategic Plan. In addition, we proposed a range of mostly minor changes to the 2023 2.0 Strategic Plan. The changes were as follows:

- (1). Adding 'church multiplication' to 'church planting' reflecting the most recent literature and practice
- (2). Clarifying the role of Seedbed and New Room in church revitalization
- (3). Clarifying that goal 7 was about our holiness heritage and not to be confused with Goal 8 on "community formation."

(4). Reflecting our desire to not construct a separate building to house Advancement, but to rejoice over the alumni space we have developed within our existing facilities.

(5). Clarifying the language of the Beeson International Center within the now Beeson School of Practical Theology.

(6). Reflecting our expanded commitment to institutes beyond those specifically mentioned in the earlier plan.

(7). A better and clearer definition of “economic viability.”

Beyond these seven changes, it was observed that Goal #18 needed more careful reflection as a community. The President, in collaboration with the Provost, created a Florida Task Force and gave them a Presidential Charge to specifically address Goal #18 and to determine if this goal is the “preferred future” of the Florida Dunnam campus. In 2020 we will submit to the Board of Trustees the final wording of Goal #18 as we close in on our 2023 strategic goal.

The above changes, plus the notation that goal #18 is under further review, is now the official Strategic Plan for Asbury Theological Seminary and it will be known as the 2023 Strategic Plan 2.1.

Special thanks to the Trustees, Faculty, Staff and alumni who dedicated so many hours to helping us in our strategic planning. God has graciously called us to a grand and global mission. We are so thankful for the privilege of being a part of the Seminary during this period in its history. There is a true excitement which is building year by year as we move ever closer to our 100th birthday as a seminary!

## 2023 Strategic Plan, 2.1

### VALUE #1: ASBURY SEMINARY WILL BE COMMITTED TO THE GLOBAL CHURCH

#### **GOAL 1. Church Planting, Remissioning, and Networking**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will serve the global church through strategic church planting and networking.*

Using technology, innovative delivery systems, and faculty deployment, Asbury Seminary will collaboratively deploy resources on every continent for training in evangelism, church renewal/re-missioning, church planting and discipleship, including the implementation of a Church Planting initiative including degrees, certificates, and field based training of new church planters. We recognize that church planting or church multiplication is a slow, nurturing process, but we trust that the spiritual seeds we plant will flourish and be fruitful.

***SP 1.0 Goals #1, 50, 55***

#### **GOAL 2. Global Partnerships**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will build sustained global partnerships for the delivery of theological education in all major regions of the world.*

Asbury Theological Seminary will develop partnerships and affiliate relationships with a wide

range of training institutions and church planting networks who share a common vision, enabling two-way movement of faculty, staff, students, resources, strategies and collaboration between Asbury Seminary and the global church on every continent. We will provide opportunities for learning diverse traditions with the goal of creating intercultural competencies that foster mutual strengthening of a renewal of historic Wesleyan Christianity around the world. Asbury should joyfully collaborate with Lausanne, Overseas Council, ICETE (International Council for Evangelical Theological Education) and other global networks to help fulfill our mission. Other key global relationships would include an International Scholars-in-Residence program, study abroad opportunities as a part of accredited degrees or certificates, collaboration in church planting, and global affiliation sites. We hope to be good global learners and humbly listen to our brothers and sisters from around the world and together discover how we can best engage in God's mission in the world.

***SP 1.0 Goals #4, 13, 20, 21, 23***

### **GOAL 3. Church Revitalization**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will be committed to serving the revitalization and re-missioning of the church around the world, especially those within the broad Wesleyan ecclesial stream. This will be accomplished primarily, but not exclusively, through Seedbed and New Room initiatives.*

Asbury Seminary's Seedbed and New Room platforms will gather, connect, and resource the broad Wesleyan stream of churches, pastors, lay leaders and college campus leaders through its publishing, conferencing and awakening oriented Tours. These platforms will cooperate and where possible converge with the Beeson Center's Lay Mobilization Institute and Asbury Seminary's Church Planting Institutes.

The desired outcomes of these initiatives will be a growing number of churches united in traveling prayer, banded discipleship, the ministry of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, and the bold expansion of God's Kingdom through church planting, newly emerging forms of church and pioneering expressions of theological training and ministry equipping. By 2023, Asbury Seminary will be committed to serving the revitalization and re-missioning of the church around the world primarily through New Room initiatives among those within the broad Wesleyan stream.

The seminary will maintain our historical commitment to homiletical training, mentoring and preparing a steady stream of skilled and gifted pastor-teachers. Our commitment will be evidenced in the axis of classroom teaching of worship and modeled in the praxis of regular chapel worship. We also are committed to bridging the apostolic/evangelistic ministries of the church with the ongoing vital role of the pastor/teacher in leading local congregations. We have much to learn about the Holy Spirit's work in revitalization and we pray for the sensitivity and the humility to be attentive to His work around the world in building and sustaining the community of the redeemed.

***SP 1.0 Goal #5***

## **VALUE #2: ASBURY SEMINARY WILL BE COMMITTED TO GRADUATE LEVEL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION**

### **GOAL 4. Wesleyan Theology**

*By 2023, Asbury will be the flagship institution in the Wesleyan world, upholding the highest standards of academic excellence. Asbury Seminary's globalized faculty will also lead the teaching of Wesleyan theology around the world.*

Asbury seminary, at its core, is a graduate school of education, providing training at the highest level. Faculty members of Asbury Seminary will be fully trained and capable of teaching and training an increasing diverse body of students. We will also grow in our competency to teach in cross-cultural contexts, continually growing in our intercultural competency and contributions to the Global Church. Funding from the Beeson family provides our faculty opportunities to travel and preach widely throughout the world. Increasingly our faculty teach via extended learning (ExL), distance learning (DL), and extension sites (e.g. Asbury in Memphis). We are committed to the global renewal of the Wesleyan movement.

Our founding articles of incorporation state that “the instruction in this seminary will conform fully to the Wesleyan interpretation of the Scriptures.” Asbury is committed to this vision of teaching the full scope of salvation.

Asbury Seminary will also offer a PhD in Theology to prepare future leaders of the global church. The Ph.D. program in theological studies (PHD[TS]) will complement our PHD(BS) and PHD(IS) programs. A Ph.D. in Theological Studies will help to further our commitment to prepare men and women for leadership in the Global Church who are historically orthodox and rooted in the Wesleyan tradition.

***SP 1.0 Goals #2, 18, 19, 48***

### **GOAL 5. Post-Traditional Delivery**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will offer flexible and hybrid delivery systems for the post-traditional and other under-served students.*

Today's graduate students engage in education in different ways than traditional undergraduate students. Asbury Seminary will offer a curriculum which is globally focused and available in a wide variety of formats, including traditional semester system, weekend classes and week- or month-long intensives for mobile and post-traditional learners. Partnerships with other seminaries and Bible institutes will increase so that our curriculum can serve in collaboration with other institutions.

***SP 1.0 Goals #45, 53***

### **GOAL 6. Founding Mission**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will remain committed to our founding mission as a graduate school of theology rooted in our Wesleyan theological heritage committed to God's Word.*

Asbury Seminary is grounded in orthodox Christianity and the Wesleyan tradition and shall be



contextually engaged wherever the seminary exists in its various expressions. We will continue our tradition to teach a strong foundation in Biblical studies, theology and church history which will prepare pastors, teachers, preachers, missionaries, counselors, church planters, and other forms of Christian ministry and leadership.

The administration, faculty and staff of Asbury Seminary will be wholly committed to the mission of the Seminary and the Wesleyan core of doctrine, devotion, and discipline, equipping the church and preparing teachers for theological institutions here and around the world. We will preserve our heritage and steward our mission through the search processes for new faculty and senior staff and annual affirmations which include Trustees, Administration, Faculty and senior staff.

***SP 1.0 Goals #22, 27, 46***

### **VALUE #3: ASBURY SEMINARY WILL BE COMMITTED TO PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY FORMATION**

#### **GOAL 7. Holiness Heritage**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will continue to find dynamic ways to remember and celebrate our holiness heritage and strive to be a generative center for a renewed emphasis on holiness.*

Asbury Seminary will embody and promote an expansive view of holiness because of our belief that the grace of Jesus Christ is transforming for persons, societies, and nations. In the Wesleyan vision, personal holiness is linked to community accountability and obedience to Christ's Lordship over all. Our curriculum and pedagogical methods, content and structures will fuse academic and formational values in the "nuptial embrace" which Wesley envisioned. Asbury Seminary will live into a global Christian community marked by holiness in the classroom, in our work spaces, in worship, in prayer, and in our service to Christ throughout the world. We also strive to faithfully serve those in the surrounding community, especially the poor.

***SP 1.0 Goal #3***

#### **GOAL 8. Community Formation**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will have a vibrant ministry of community formation across all systems and campuses.*

Asbury Theological Seminary students, staff and faculty will enjoy a well-orchestrated formative life in community where all willing participants (students, staff and faculty) in the seminary community share in the ministry of community formation in a spirit of mutual respect and appreciation. The seminary seeks to be a wise steward of all our resources, particularly human resources, in a way which is conducive to community formation. This will be accessed and accomplished, in part, through a cross-institutional team-based leadership structure comprised of faculty, staff and students selected on the basis of giftedness. This formation team will serve as a hub of connection, guiding, empowering, championing and integrating the work of community and formation across faculty, staff and students on all campuses. Students will receive the personal holiness formation training and mentoring needed to thrive as servant-leaders in the

Body of Christ. This cannot be accomplished through the office of community formation alone. It must take place in collaboration with the Faculty, the Chapel Office, Kalas Village mentors and student services, among others. A vibrant Chapel service and daily communion will be essential for our ongoing commitment to be a worshipping community.

The Enrollment Management Team (EMT) will have an evaluative process for admissions applicants in order to foster a student body that is missional and spiritually mature. EMT, in collaboration with our counseling department and the Community Formation team, will assist students toward ministry readiness.

***SP 1.0 Goals #9, 11***

### **GOAL 9. Residential Renaissance**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will be committed to a residential renaissance on our Wilmore campus as well as contextually appropriate ways to promote relational community on the Florida-Dunnam campus and course offerings sites.*

The Wilmore campus will be distinctive as a residential center uniting spiritual formation, living and learning into a holistic theological education, providing sufficient housing, financial assistance, and strong support of family life.

Faculty, or other approved mentors, will enhance the formative aspects of the “Asbury seminary experience” across all campuses. Our residential and housing options should reserve space for mentors to enhance the “Asbury experience.” Theological education, spiritual formation and Christian discipleship will be inseparable.

***SP 1.0 Goals #10, 24, 26***

### **GOAL 10. Global Alumni Center**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will establish a global Alumni center.*

This space will welcome guests and encourage alumni to re-connect with their alma mater. This center will also promote ongoing formation in the lives and ministries of our graduates through “Asbury for Life” programs and resources.

***SP 1.0 Goal #25***

### **GOAL 11. Spiritual Formation**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will have a dedicated space for formation and healing on both of our campuses.*

Dedicated space will be established to serve as a home for formation initiatives for the development of spiritual formation and renewal ministries at Asbury on behalf of its mission. Offerings in this space will include a range of ministries such as the healing, Formation Mentoring, prayer ministries, spiritual direction, retreats, counseling referrals, and restoration ministries for our alumni. Collaboration across all systems, such as Community Formation, the Chapel Office, faculty mentors and Lifelong Learning, will be the testimony of our commitment to spiritual formation for our entire community.

Furthermore, a community house will be established in the residential community to promote family catechesis, community development, renewal, and the fostering of intercultural competencies and relationships.

**SP 1.0 Goal #25**

**GOAL 12. Creation Care**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will develop a range of strategies to promote our stewardship of creation.*

Asbury Seminary will engage in responsible care of creation as stewards of God's good gifts. Initiatives such as campus wide composting, recycling, and establishing a walking renewal path will be undertaken. In addition, a community garden will be established to promote spiritual renewal and creation stewardship for the Asbury community. As founding members of the Seminary Stewardship Alliance, we will support creation care initiatives through our alumni and constituencies.

**SP 1.0 Goal #51**

**VALUE #4: ASBURY SEMINARY WILL BE COMMITTED TO A DIVERSE, MISSIONALLY ORIENTED STUDENT BODY**

**GOAL 13. Student Body**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will have a student body which is ethnically, culturally and experientially diverse, missionally oriented and shaped by vocational giftedness. This diversity shall also be reflected on the Board of Trustees, Faculty and Staff.*

We recognize that this has important implications in how and where we advertise, the scholarships we offer, and our recruitment practices, to name a few. Asbury Seminary seeks to continue being the top choice for students in the Wesleyan tradition and a leader in serving the majority-minority population.

We also recognize the diverse ministries our students are called to, including, but not limited to, pastors, teachers, disciplers, missionaries, evangelists, counselors, administrators, and leaders in a wide range of non-profit organizations.

**SP 1.0 Goal #16**

**GOAL 14. Strategic Enrollment Management Planning**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will execute, measure outcomes and continuously apply a Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (SEMP).*

Asbury Seminary must undergo an extensive, collaborative process which brings together faculty, the enrollment management team, the economic viability team and the marketing team to develop an appropriate and extensive student recruitment and retention plan which integrates

all systems in the seminary. Asbury will be committed to hybrid learning, clear degree pathways, post-traditional students, and the most effective use of the online environment without sacrificing our commitment to spiritual formation and high academic standards. By 2023 we will increase efficiency and productivity of marketing, recruiting, and retention activities that correlate with our missional-centric model, annual recruitment plans and projected size.

***SP 1.0 Goals #14-17***

## **VALUE #5: ASBURY SEMINARY WILL BE COMMITTED TO DISCIPLESHIP AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

### **GOAL 15. Beeson International Center (part of BSPT), Seedbed, and Networking.**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will renew our global Wesleyan vision through an emphasis on catechesis, the establishment of Seedbed publishing and a “New Room” platform for networking, and the ongoing ministry of the Beeson Center.*

Asbury will be the generative center for a rebirth in 21st-century Wesleyan-inspired catechesis for a post-Christendom society. It will be built around deep discipleship models which take seriously the means of grace, shared practices, cultural perceptiveness, personal, social and global holiness, vital piety, historic orthodoxy, active servanthood and small-group accountability. The Beeson International Center (through the Beeson Center Asbury Institutes and other Beeson initiatives) will continue to provide strategic leadership in discipleship and lifelong learning strategies, with a special emphasis on leadership development and biblical preaching.

Asbury Seminary will have a well-established, economically viable publishing and networking enterprise. Seedbed will be the operational name for both Seedbed Publishing and New Room. The gathering and connecting platform will be known as New Room, which includes New Room Conferences and New Room networking. The resourcing platform will be known as Seedbed Publishing. These platforms will work synergistically to cultivate a networked community that initially began with the seminary's alumni base and is expanding throughout the global pan Wesleyan community of churches and extending beyond as far as the Spirit leads. It will be built around in-depth discipleship models which take seriously the call to traveling prayer, the ministry of Word and Spirit, banded discipleship and Church Planting and Multiplication.

These initiatives will have vast potential reach since they will be built with a strategy centered around the seminary's vision to evangelize and spread scriptural holiness throughout the world.

***SP 1.0 Goal #7, 8***

## **VALUE #6: ASBURY SEMINARY WILL BE COMMITTED TO LAY MOBILIZATION**

### **GOAL 16. Lay Mobilization**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will deploy faculty, curriculum and resources to maximize lay mobilization.*

A well-trained lay ministry is at the heart of any serious commitment to church renewal, member revitalization and church planting. Asbury Seminary graduates will learn to be leaders in training and equipping the laity for ministry. The Beeson International Center's Lay Mobilization Institute and other Asbury Institutes initiatives will, along with Seedbed, be key leaders in our commitment to equipping the laity and promoting discipleship. Lay, bi-vocational ministry is also an important strategy for church planting and building support for church planting networks. In addition to our core work of training full-time Christian leaders and pastors, our faculty and curriculum can also be used to develop a well-trained laity. In missional contexts in the global church, and increasingly in North America, the need for equipping leaders who may not be formally ordained will be increasingly important, especially as our role in providing leaders for the global church increases.

***SP 1.0 Goals #6, #52***

**VALUE #7: ASBURY SEMINARY WILL BE COMMITTED TO EQUIPPING PASTORS  
FOR MISSIONAL ENGAGEMENT**

**GOAL 17. Missional Student Body**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will be preparing a missional student body for leadership*

Every student of Asbury Seminary shall be given the opportunity to participate in a cross-cultural immersion experience that includes the practice of as well as the learning about evangelism, church renewal, church planting, and/or disciple-making opportunities. These opportunities will enable our students to learn more about God's work in the world. Our students will be conversant with the tenets of other world religions, new religious movements and secular challenges, and the curriculum will prepare them to articulate the gospel of Jesus Christ in a global and post-Christendom context. Asbury Seminary must prepare students to engage the growing ethnic minorities in N. America, plant churches among them, and to build a strong Christian, Wesleyan witness within these new communities. Asbury Seminary graduates (and alumni through the ministry of the Beeson International Center) must be prepared to serve communities undergoing ethnic or economic transition with effective leadership.

***SP 1.0 Goals #47, 54***

**GOAL 18. Florida Dunnam Campus Facilities**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will acquire land and invest in capital improvements for our Florida Dunnam campus.*

The Florida Dunnam Campus has a long history of training men and women who are already in vocational ministry and creative missional settings. We need improved facilities, creative partnerships, and deepened capacities on our Florida Dunnam campus to better serve the post-traditional student. **Our master plan for the Florida-Dunnam campus envisions the day when we will have a chapel, a self-catering residence hall, a retreat center, and additional classroom and office space for our Florida campus.** The viability of these initiatives must be established, and the enrollment must grow, but we are committed to the growth in the ministry of the Florida Dunnam Campus in fulfilling the mission of Asbury Theological Seminary. **We are also**

committed to exploring the potential operational use of the property adjacent to the campus for the expansion of the Florida-Dunnam campus. Currently the property has been purchased by the endowment and included in our investment portfolio. *(These phrases in red are currently under review by the Florida Task Force).*

**SP 1.0 Goal #32**

## **VALUE #8: ASBURY SEMINARY WILL BE COMMITTED TO SERVING EMERGING ETHNIC CHURCHES**

### **GOAL 19. Hispanic Initiative**

*By 2023 Asbury Seminary will meet the needs of an expanding Latino population through targeted initiatives on the Florida-Dunnam campus.*

The Seminary shall have specific theological programs targeting specific language groups, including the deployment of a Spanish-language degree program on the Florida Dunnam Campus. The current LLSP (Latino/Latina Studies Program) program shall be tailored in such a way as to provide a natural entry point into further academic studies in the seminary. Florida Dunnam Campus will be prepared to meet the needs of the rapidly growing Latino community. In addition, as demands emerge, we will develop programs which are contextually sensitive to other ethnic communities. By 2023 the Seminary shall implement a ministerial master's degree and/or certificate program delivered in a hybrid Spanish and English medium format.

The Florida Dunnam Campus “will serve as a ‘gateway’ community” that engages “a wide array of global visitors for dialogue, continuing education, and academic/missional exchange, thereby assisting the whole seminary in its ongoing work of discerning God’s call into the future. The Justo Gonzalez center and partnership with AETH (Asociacion para La Educacion Teologica Hispana) will be established on the Florida Dunnam campus in order to better facilitate our relationship with a wide array of Hispanic ministries. The Florida-Dunnam campus will also provide the primary connection for any global partnership in Latin America.

**SP 1.0 Goals #12, 30, 49**

### **GOAL 20. Ethnic Training**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will develop strategies on all campuses and sites to embrace innovative training for new emerging ethnic churches, underserved groups, and post-traditional student.*

Every campus (Wilmore or Orlando) and extension site (Memphis and other possible future sites) must develop a strategy for serving emerging ethnic churches. This involves unique program delivery, innovative scheduling and contextual sensitivity to these students, many of whom are post-traditional students. The Florida-Dunnam campus, the Memphis site, or other potential sites shall be free to develop unique course or degree offerings, and/or unique program level learning outcomes which are consistent with the unique contexts or ethnic makeup of each expression of Asbury Theological Seminary.

**SP 1.0 Goal #28, 29, 31**

## **VALUE #9: ASBURY SEMINARY WILL BE COMMITTED TO DEVELOPING NEW CONSTITUENCIES**

### **GOAL 21. New Constituencies**

*By 2023, Asbury Theological Seminary will develop a range of new student constituencies as a part of a growing family of new Christian movements who embrace a Wesleyan vision of Christian identity.*

Traditionally, Asbury has served a fairly defined group of denominations within the Wesleyan family of churches (United Methodists, Free Methodists, Wesleyans, Salvation Army, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Nazarene, etc.). However, with the advent of global Christianity and thousands of new Christian movements, networks and denominations, Asbury seeks to joyfully embrace newly emerging groups within our theological stream. Furthermore, we embrace the full range of expressions of Christian service including pastors, counselors, cross-cultural workers, teachers, market place ministers, and so forth.

**SP 1.0 CORE VALUE #8**

## **VALUE #10: ASBURY SEMINARY WILL BE COMMITTED TO STRENGTHENING OUR ECONOMIC MODEL, NETWORK OF SUPPORT, AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

### **GOAL 22. Viable Economic Model**

*By 2023, Asbury Seminary will operate with a comprehensive and sustainable economic model*

Asbury Theological Seminary will redesign its economic model to create operational efficiencies and generate sufficient income from its key revenue streams in order to sufficiently fund its mission. We will work to produce annual operating budgets with sufficient surpluses to fund both capital and undesignated reserves. These operating budgets will reflect the priorities of the strategic plan through a rigorous process that reallocates current resources and integrates new resources from tuition, endowment, auxiliary services, gifts, and other sources that may be developed.

We will grow the endowment to a level sufficient to generate income to provide robust scholarships for our optimal enrollment, recognizing that this goal is not possible without strong collaboration between the advancement, finance and investment teams.

Asbury Theological Seminary will have a full advancement and development operation (alumni, annual fund, special events, planned giving). Asbury Seminary remains committed to increasing our income from donors and friends, investing in the spiritual development of our ministry partners, and raising capital for the development of the seminary's facilities on all of our campuses. Our staff will be nimble enough to provide successful fundraising results for strategic projects or initiatives that advance the vision of Asbury Seminary while maintaining healthy annual unrestricted giving (Wesley Fund). We will include a maintenance endowment in all capital fundraising projects.

In summary, Asbury Theological Seminary will redesign its economic model and launch a comprehensive campaign both of which will be integrated with its 2023 Strategic Plan. This work will increase scholarship for our students, and provide for the long term economic viability of the Seminary.

***SP 1.0 Goals #33-38***

**GOAL 23. Board of Trustees**

*By 2023, Asbury Theological Seminary will be committed to strengthening our governance structure and systems.*

The Board of Trustees are the final guardians of the mission of Asbury as well as the fiscal sustainability of the ministry. To faithfully guard the mission, the Board of Trustees will enjoy a collaborative relationship with faculty, administration, staff and accrediting bodies in shared mission, with each member faithfully serving in their assigned roles. While the Trustees have final authority in the institution, they will, by example, embody the values of servant-leadership for every level of leadership and governance in the organization.

Members of the Board of Trustees shall reflect the diversity of our constituencies which will be fully orthodox and Wesleyan in theology and practice to add to our current family of United Methodist, Wesleyan, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Salvation Army, Nazarene, etc. Furthermore, the Trustees of Asbury Seminary shall embody a global perspective on the church and on theological education, not at the expense of our Wesleyan heritage, but as a natural extension of our mission to “spread scriptural holiness throughout the world.”

In addition to the shared qualities of orthodoxy, Wesleyan commitments, global awareness, strategic thinking and missional focus, our Board shall be composed of members with clearly defined expertise in a wide range of areas, including, but not limited to, graduate level theological education, finance and investment, pastoral leadership, spiritual formation, technological competence, and legal expertise.

New Trustees will undergo a training program which initiates them into the following: the history of the institution, the founding documents (mission statement, statement of faith and ethos statement), the missional ethos, global realities, shared governance, the operational structure of the Seminary, Robert’s Rules of Order, and the by-laws of the Board of Trustees. Every new Board member will be placed in a mentoring relationship with a seasoned Board member to help in passing down the ethos, expectations and operational procedures of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will develop a comprehensive strategic plan for Board recruitment and development.

No Board meeting will be devoted entirely to agenda business. A culture of spiritual formation, learning and reflection will also characterize Board meetings. Each Board member shall share a deep, single-minded commitment to invest their time, skills, competencies, experience-honed wisdom, financial resources and relational connections towards the furtherance of the mission of the Seminary.

***SP 1.0 Goals #39-44***



## **Foundational Documents of the Seminary**

### **Introduction**

The three guiding, foundational documents of the Seminary are the mission statement, the statement of faith and the ethos statement. All Trustees, Administrators, Faculty and senior Staff (director and above) are asked to sign all three of these statements every year.

The documents emerged from the earliest days of the seminary in which the Articles of Incorporation on July 27, 1931 stated the following:

“It will be the object of this Seminary to prepare and send forth a well-trained, sanctified, Spirit-filled, evangelistic ministry. This Seminary will emphasize in its teaching the divine inspiration and infallibility of the Holy Scriptures, and the Virgin Birth, Godhead, Vicarious Sufferings, and bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The instruction of this Seminary will fully recognize the fallen state of mankind, the necessity of individual regeneration, the witness of the Spirit, the remains of the carnal nature, and entire sanctification as a definite second work of grace subsequent to regeneration. The instruction in this Seminary will conform fully to the Wesleyan interpretation of the Scriptures. The instructors in this institution will guard with jealous care against any sort of teaching in sympathy with modern liberalism.”

### **Mission Statement**

Asbury Theological Seminary is a community called to prepare theologically educated, sanctified, Spirit-filled men and women to evangelize and to spread scriptural holiness throughout the world through the love of Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit and to the glory of God the Father.

### **Statement of Faith**

WE BELIEVE:

#### **God**

In the one God, creator and sustainer of all things, infinite in love, perfect in judgments and unchanging in mercy. God exists eternally in three persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit;

#### **Scripture**

In the divine inspiration, truthfulness and authority of both the Old and New Testaments, the only written Word of God, without error in all it affirms. The Scriptures are the only infallible rule of faith and practice. The Holy Spirit preserves God’s Word in the church today and by it speaks God’s truth to peoples of every age;

#### **Humankind**

That human beings were created in the image of God. This image was marred in every part through the disobedience of our first parents, and fellowship with God was broken. God, by His prevenient grace, restores moral sensibility to all humankind and enables all to respond to His love and to accept His saving grace, if they will;

### **Jesus Christ**

That Jesus Christ is God's Son incarnate, born of the Virgin Mary. He died for the sins of all, taking on Himself, on behalf of sinful persons, God's judgment upon sin. In His body He rose from the grave and ascended to the right hand of the Father where He intercedes for us;

### **Holy Spirit**

That the Holy Spirit is God present and active in the world. The Holy Spirit was given to the church in His fullness at Pentecost. By the Spirit, Christ lives in His church, the gospel is proclaimed and the kingdom of God is manifested in the world;

### **Justification**

That God graciously justifies and regenerates all who trust in Jesus Christ. Believers become children of God and begin to live in holiness through faith in Christ and the sanctifying Spirit.

### **Entire Sanctification**

That God calls all believers to entire sanctification in a moment of full surrender and faith subsequent to their new birth in Christ. Through sanctifying grace the Holy Spirit delivers them from all rebellion toward God, and makes possible wholehearted love for God and for others. This grace does not make believers faultless nor prevent the possibility of their falling into sin. They must live daily by faith in the forgiveness and cleansing provided for them in Jesus Christ;

### **Assurance of Believers**

That believers are assured that they are children of God by the inward witness of God's Spirit with their spirits, by faith in the gracious promises of God's Word, and by the fruit of the Spirit in their lives;

### **Christians in Society**

That Christians are called to live in daily witness to the grace which comes to us in Jesus Christ, to preach the gospel to every person according to the command of Christ, and to declare God's insistence upon righteousness and justice in all relationships and structures of human society;

### **The Church**

That the church is the people of God composed of all who believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. The church is Christ's body; it is visible in the world wherever believers, in obedience of faith, hear the Word, receive the sacraments, and live as disciples;

### **Return of Christ**

In the personal return of Jesus Christ, in the bodily resurrection of all persons, in final judgment, and in eternal reward and punishment;

### **God's Ultimate Victory**

In God's ultimate victory over Satan and all evil and the establishment of His perfect kingdom in a new heaven and a new earth.

## ETHOS STATEMENT

### **Community Vision**

We, the trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students embrace this ethos as a Wesleyan community which stands within the tradition of Christian orthodoxy and whose life and work are committed to reflecting the truth, beauty, and goodness of God's holiness.

We aspire to order our communal and personal life according to the truth and love revealed in Scripture and imparted by the Holy Spirit. We pledge ourselves to go on to the fullness of salvation, seeking through relationships of mutual accountability the maturity of faith, hope, and love that reflects the mind and likeness of Jesus Christ. By the Spirit's power we will bear witness to God's Kingdom, embodying a way of scriptural holiness that unites sound knowledge and vital piety in proclaiming the Gospel and participating in God's mission.

We covenant together to embrace ways of living in keeping with the spirit and intent of the General Rules set forth by John Wesley:

- By doing no harm and by avoiding evil of every kind.
- By doing good of every possible sort as far as possible to all people.
- By practicing the means of grace together.

We are committed to speaking the truth in love, sharing one another's burdens, bearing with one another's weaknesses, and serving one another by the mercy, forgiveness, and reconciliation extended by God. We will practice and nurture speech that is just, charitable, encouraging, and respectful of the standards and policies of Asbury Seminary. Exercising discernment which is guided by the law of love, we will affirm the breadth of views that bear witness to the richness of the Gospel and the diversity of Christian communities it calls and creates.

With God's help we will exercise the freedom of joyful obedience in being faithful stewards of our minds, bodies, time, gifts, abilities, possessions, and finances as expressions of God's good creation. We will renounce those attitudes and actions that resist the work of the Spirit, divide Christian community, and impede human flourishing. In faithfulness to the Gospel, we will resist the pervasive influence of materialism and commit ourselves to ministry with the poor. We will reject utilitarian methods that commodify the faith and mission of the church according to the values of a consumerist culture. By God's grace, we will nurture redemptive relationships that honor and uphold the dignity of creation, human life, the sanctity of embodied human sexuality, the equality of women and men, the covenant of Christian marriage between one man and one woman, and the importance of the family. Soli Deo Gloria!

### **Application of Community Vision**

This covenantal ethos orients our community life toward the fullness of holy love as the end of God's Law which has been fulfilled in the life and work of Jesus Christ. In light of the truth and goodness of God revealed by Christ, and as interpreted by our Wesleyan heritage, we acknowledge the Christian life cannot be reduced to either right doctrine or morality. Because we have been created and redeemed through Christ in the power of the Spirit, the fullness of

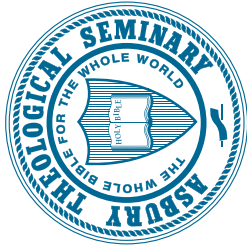
salvation consists of the restoration of the image of God and our life in communion with God and others. Intrinsic to our task as a theological seminary is the cultivation of knowledge, wisdom, and virtue for the practice of faithful obedience that bears fruit in love for God, our neighbors, and the whole creation.

For this reason, concerns related to particular expressions of thought and behavior will be assessed in light of the law of love which is the source, means, and goal of true freedom in Christ. To this end, we commit ourselves to seeking the Spirit's wisdom and discernment through the study of Scripture and participation in the means of grace, common worship, and holy conversation.

For the common good of the Asbury Seminary community, the Seminary commits to the following guiding principles:

- We believe God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as either male or female. Together these two distinct sexes reflect the creative nature and image of God.
- We affirm celibacy as a valuable and honorable practice related to holy living. We honor and esteem the fidelity of deep holy friendships as being in the image of God.
- We affirm marriage as sanctioned by God, which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union for life, as delineated in Scripture, and provides the sole context for sexual intimacy, helping to ensure the blessings of that relationship as God intended.
- We affirm God's design for holy living, and believe that Scripture clearly prohibits certain acts, including but not limited to drinking alcohol to excess, using pornography, stealing, speaking or writing profanely or slanderously, acting dishonestly, cheating, engaging in occult practice, and engaging in sexual relations outside the bonds of marriage (including but not limited to premarital sex, adultery, and same-sex sexual behavior). Such actions have devastating personal, social, and global effects, especially upon society's most vulnerable members.
- Based on a Biblical view of creation, fall, and redemption, our goal is to come alongside as a loving community anyone who is experiencing gender identity discordant with their birth sex. We do not affirm theologically the adoption of a psychological identity discordant with one's birth sex as a result of the tension between one's biological sex and one's experience of gender. Similarly, we do not affirm attempts to change one's given biological birth sex via medical intervention in favor of the identity of the opposite sex or of an indeterminate identity.
- We affirm the need for responsible care and stewardship of the human body through regular exercise when possible; practicing healthy eating habits; and properly balancing study, work, rest, and leisure.
- We stand with all Christians, both past and present, against the misuse of all substances that abuse the body, foster addiction, and bring harm to others.
- We covenant with each other to maintain an alcohol, tobacco, and drug free environment with respect to all Seminary facilities, events, and activities.
- We condemn any form of harassment or abuse.

This Ethos assumes the practice of Christian hospitality within a seminary community that is dependent upon the gift of God's grace and characterized by relationships of mutual trust and respect. To this end, we acknowledge our constant need for keeping covenant with one another and diligence in speaking the truth in love. We encourage the practice of repentance, confession, pardon, correction, and redemptive discipline when breaches of this covenant may occur. In witness to society, we commit ourselves to these guiding principles, and we disavow advocating, supporting, or condoning behavior contrary to this Ethos. We will make institutional decisions in light of this policy.



# Asbury Theological Seminary: 2023 Strategic Map

**MISSION STATEMENT:** Asbury Theological Seminary is a community called to prepare theologically educated, sanctified, Spirit-filled men and women to evangelize and to spread scriptural holiness throughout the world, through the love of Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and to the glory of God the Father!

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**DEFINING VALUES:** "Asbury Seminary is committed to historic Christian faith in the Wesleyan tradition in a way which is globally engaged, spiritually formative, and missionally alert."

## Ten Core Values of Strategic Vision

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>Asbury Seminary will be committed to <i>servicing the global Church.</i></p> <p>We will be ever mindful of the global Church as we develop new programs, utilize technology and innovative delivery systems, understand global trends, and partner with theological institutions around the world. We will strategically deploy faculty, student, and learning resources on every continent in a collaborative way marked by servant leadership.</p>	<p>Asbury Seminary will be committed to <i>graduating level theological education which is faithful to God's Word.</i></p> <p>Serious biblical, theological and pastoral reflection which is committed to historic orthodoxy is crucial for the long-term health and vitality of the church. Asbury Seminary needs a well-trained, missionally alive, spiritually vibrant faculty and staff in order to "theologically educate" men and women. Although we are generously catholic with all those who are historically orthodox, we are called to highlight the distinctive contributions of the Wesleyan/Arminian tradition. We will resist attempts to downgrade our programs and scholarship and, instead, we will extend effective pastoral leadership and Wesleyan scholarship around the world.</p>	<p>Asbury Seminary will be committed to <i>personal and community formation.</i></p> <p>Asbury Seminary is a worshiping community of formation and learning. We acknowledge the need for, and indeed, the crucial relationship between, academic and spiritual formation. Our campuses should be rich environments for spiritual development, global community, sacrificial service, catechesis and holiness, to the end that Asbury Seminary might propel a 21st-century renewed emphasis and deeper understanding of holiness. If students do not graduate holy and Spirit-filled, then we have not fulfilled our mission. To this end, we must extend formation opportunities to all our faculty, staff and students.</p>	<p>Asbury Seminary will be committed to <i>pursuing a diverse, missionally oriented student body.</i></p> <p>We will identify students who are missional, diverse, committed and teachable. Asbury Seminary is committed to developing a life-long relationship with our students and alumni. We want to assist in helping students to understand the call of God in their lives and we want them to see the Seminary as a life-long partner in helping them to be effective in their service to Christ and His Church. We believe that helping to equip students to effectively engage a post-Christendom context in N. America is highly strategic for both church renewal and church planting. We believe that helping students understand the remarkable missional possibilities around the world is strategic for our commitment to "spread scriptural holiness throughout the world."</p>	<p>Asbury Seminary will be committed to <i>life-long learning for pastors and church leaders.</i></p> <p>The rapid pace of change in the world requires that we no longer conceptualize a two or three year degree as an isolated period of training which equips someone for a lifetime of ministry. Rather, we affirm the importance of developing an ongoing relationship with our alumni/ae for their entire ministry. The growing challenges and fast-paced change in the world today requires that pastors and leaders become life-long learners. Asbury Seminary is committed to extending the Seminary as a bridge to not only our graduates, but to many new groups who will look to us for training and instruction. Asbury Seminary will become a vital resource for ongoing teaching, distribution of resources, networking, collaboration, re-tooling and reflection.</p>	<p>Asbury Seminary will be committed to <i>the laity.</i></p> <p>We affirm that the Church, properly understood, is a lay movement, which is trained, guided and deployed through effective, often ordained, leadership. Every Christian should see their lives as a divine, strategic placement for the effective extension of the gospel. We will develop specific programs and reproducible models for effective lay training and empowerment for ministry. The Beeson Center is strategically positioned to lead Asbury Seminary in this area.</p>	<p>Asbury Seminary will be committed to <i>equipping pastors for missional engagement in service to the church.</i></p> <p>North America is the fastest-emerging mission field in the world. Many churches have either lost connection with dynamic, apostolic orthodoxy or do not have a clear strategy for missional engagement. Asbury Seminary is committed to spiritual renewal, member re-vitalization, church planting, and evangelism. Only through the full recovery of the five-fold ministry of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers can we effectively strengthen and extend the church of Jesus Christ. Asbury Seminary must become a leader in preparing and equipping church planters as well as fostering church planting networks around the world.</p>	<p>Asbury Seminary will be committed to <i>emerging ethnic churches.</i></p> <p>We are committed to responding effectively to the growing ethnic diversity and urbanization of North America. We will develop degree and non-degree programs as well as demonstrate flexibility in delivery systems for Hispanic, Chinese, Korean, African-American, Indian and other ethnic minorities.</p>	<p>Asbury Seminary will be committed to <i>developing new constituencies.</i></p> <p>While continuing our strong commitment to traditional and mainline Wesleyan and Methodist churches, we must also recognize the strategic importance of the 432 million new independent Christians who are emerging as a fourth branch of Christianity and will, over the next generation, largely replace what are often referred to as the "mainline" churches. The fastest-growing churches in America are ethnic, urban, missional and non-denominational. Asbury Seminary is committed to training these Christians and introducing (or re-introducing) them to the great Wesleyan heritage and history of the Church.</p>	<p>Asbury Seminary will be committed to <i>strengthening our economic model and developing our network of support.</i></p> <p>Under God's grace, the mission of Asbury Seminary is enabled through two sources of revenue: students and gifts from alumni and friends. The Seminary must develop a long-term model of economic viability which optimizes and expands our revenue. In order to achieve our strategic plan we also need a full-orbed, long-range advancement and communication strategy. This includes a robust commitment to donor development, capital campaigns, scholarship support, planned giving, alumni affairs, trustee involvement and generous donations into the mission of the Seminary.</p>

## **Identifying Three Defining Themes and Single Statement**

In reflecting on the strategic plan as a whole the 55 original goals of the 2023 Strategic Plan 1.0 and the newly presented 25 goals of the 2023 Strategic Plan 2.0 can be captured well by three defining themes and a single statement. These are included to help in advertising and how we communicate our identity within the larger world of theological education.

### **Three Defining Themes**

***1. Asbury Theological Seminary will be faithful to historic, biblical orthodoxy in the Wesleyan tradition.***

(biblical and theological training, formation in holiness, pastoral leadership/care, scholarship, catechesis, ethics, etc.)

***2. Asbury Theological Seminary will be globally engaged, seeking to serve the church of Jesus Christ around the world.***

(global partnerships, technological reach, training, learning, etc.)

***3. Asbury Theological Seminary will be committed to forming missional pastors and Christian leaders who are committed to the Church of Jesus Christ***

(post-Christendom, pastoral leadership, church planting, lay training, evangelizing post-moderns, Christian response to world religions, new atheism, secularism, etc.)

### **Single Statement**

All three of these defining themes might be summarized in the following single statement of our strategic vision:

**“Asbury Seminary is committed to historic Christian faith in the Wesleyan tradition in a way which is globally engaged, spiritually formative, and missionally alert.”**