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*Community of Christ*  
**SEMINARY**

# Student Handbook 2021-2022

Community of Christ Seminary • 1401 W. Truman Road • Independence • MO • 64050  
(816) 423-4676 • [www.graceland.edu/seminary](http://www.graceland.edu/seminary)

Fall 2021 Edition

## **Mission**

The Community of Christ Seminary is solidly grounded in the Christian faith and shaped by its religious heritage and traditions. This tradition understands that God's will and purpose for the world and the church continue to emerge out of the process of faithful response to human need. We affirm that the people of God are called to live in community with all creation, and that peace and justice are the touchstones by which the gospel of Jesus Christ is enfleshed.

The mission of the seminary is to educate and prepare—through prayerful scholarship, teaching, service, and mentoring—faithful, creative, and discerning leaders for ministries in congregations, church, and world.

The purpose of this *Handbook* is to provide information about the Master of Arts in Religion (MAR) degree program, program policies and procedures, and student services. Students employed by Community of Christ and receiving tuition benefits need to consult the Community of Christ staff manual for further guidelines.

## **Accreditation**

The Master of Arts in Religion (MAR) degree is awarded by Graceland University and accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA).

### **Community of Christ Seminary Graceland University**

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## **REFLECTION ON THE ETHOS OF COMMUNITY OF CHRIST SEMINARY**

*As a theological learning community:*

Our principal task is to serve the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the mission of the church, Christ's body. Our mission is to equip persons to proclaim with power the matchless Christ and to promote authentic Christian discipleship and community. We prepare ministers, both full-time and bi-vocational, to effectively serve the cause of God's reign (Zion, the peaceable kingdom), where peace, reconciliation, and healing of spirit embrace all.

We are committed to excellence in all we do. We understand this within the holistic mission of theological education to mean that in all aspects of our task, we strive to offer a first-rate theological education. We will prioritize our efforts. We would rather do fewer things superbly well than perform more tasks in a mediocre fashion.

We embrace a holistic mission. We promote sound academics, spirituality, practical ministerial ability, a vibrant witness, prophetic action, stewardship, and the formation of Christian community. We believe these various dimensions are not in competition but complementary. We seek balance in life and acknowledge the importance of Sabbath times of rest and renewal. We are inspired by the monastic example of community that integrated times of prayer, study, fellowship, work, and rest.

We believe in collegiality and consultation. We stress team work. We strive to find the best ways to employ the gifts of each co-worker for the common benefit of the mission of the seminary. We pursue shared governance and broad-based dialogue about all the issues we face. We, therefore, seek to resist the top-down and individualistic strains of our contemporary culture. In all we do, we seek to build the requirements of authentic community, such as trust, respect, and mutual listening.

We honor seminarians as adult learners, partners in ministry, and full and equal members of the body of Christ. We respect the background that each person brings and are determined to learn from one another. We are one community—seminarians, staff, faculty, and trustees—of co-learners and co-teachers. We also promote life-long learning. We are more interested in mutual formation as ministers and learning disciples of the Lord Jesus than in providing a self-contained terminal education experience.

We pursue a worldwide mission. We aim to be the seminary for the Community of Christ around the globe. In all that we do, we seek to develop and offer planetary perspectives and to build transnational community. We promote and celebrate cultural diversity in all of its dimensions.

We affirm that we are an inclusive community. We consistently advocate for the complete equality and mutuality of men and women in the church. We welcome students from all cultures and languages. We resolutely and proactively oppose discrimination on the basis of creed, gender, sexual orientation, race, nationality, or class.

We unapologetically promote the Christian Gospel and the ceaseless search for truth. We encourage theological exploration. We respect the great variety of theological, exegetical, and ethical positions within our denomination and in all of Christianity. We ask people to carefully listen to and consider all viewpoints, but we do not indoctrinate.

Our spirit is ecumenical and interfaith. Persons of any religious persuasions are most welcome. We constantly strive to create and maintain partnerships with other religious institutions and movements. We will assure that we are prepared for constructive and reconciling living in an increasingly pluralistic world.

We will exercise careful and just stewardship over our resources. We wish to provide for all that is needed to complete our mission while modeling simplicity and good stewardship in the pursuit of our goals. We will endeavor to make our educational offerings accessible and relevant to persons of all social and economic contexts.

While we must maintain the separation necessary for academic freedom and prophetic integrity, we pledge to work closely with the leaders of our sponsoring denomination and to be accountable to the membership of the church.

We will practice and promote constructive engagement with our specific traditions, both celebrating our heritage and raising critical questions. We also strive to be relevant to the world of the twenty-first century, which is marked by stark contrasts between wealth and poverty, globalization, religious and cultural pluralism, environmental concern, and postmodernism. We pledge that we will help our community of faith to wrestle with the challenging theological, scriptural, historical, and ethical issues confronting us at this time in our history.

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## STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

### Student Accounts

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Rachel Wigland

Phone 816-423-4713

Email: [rwigan1@graceland.edu](mailto:rwigan1@graceland.edu)

### Community of Christ Library

Contact: Rachel Killebrew, Librarian

Phone: (816) 833-1000 ext. 2399

Email: [rkillebrew@cofchrist.org](mailto:rkillebrew@cofchrist.org)

### Helpdesk

D2L - Daylight helpdesk

Phone: 1-877-325-7778

Graceland helpdesk

Phone: 866-786-2790

Email: [infocentral@graceland.edu](mailto:infocentral@graceland.edu)

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## ACADEMIC INFORMATION

### DEGREE PROGRAM FORMAT

Community of Christ Seminary courses are offered in two formats: 8 weeks online via the Internet, and 7 weeks hybrid (online and focus session, 3-1-3) where the first three weeks are online, one week is face-to-face in Independence, Missouri, and the final three weeks are online. Note: *the MAR degree cannot be completed solely online.* The community life, spiritual formation, and extra-curricular presentations and discussions that take place during focus sessions are critical to ministerial formation.

### Admissions Requirements and Process:

1. Applicant must have earned a Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4-point scale, or the equivalent from a non-U.S. institution. Students with a GPA below 3.0 will need to demonstrate the ability to do work at the graduate level.
2. Applicant must complete the application form that is available on the seminary website. <http://www.graceland.edu/Academics/College-and-Schools/Community-of-Christ-Seminary/Apply-Now/index>
3. Applicant must provide official transcripts of all course work.
4. Applicant should request references from three persons who can attest to the applicant's promise for graduate study. References should be submitted directly by recommenders using the reference form online: <http://www.graceland.edu/seminary/documents/ReferenceForm.pdf>. Recommenders should be persons who have known the applicant for more than 1 year and who have knowledge of the intellectual and ministerial abilities of the applicant.
5. Graceland University Community of Christ Seminary has a rolling admissions process; students may apply at any time during the year. New MAR cohorts begin in the fall term each year.

### Degree Requirements

1. The **Master of Arts in Religion (MAR)** is a 34 semester-hour graduate degree. Students must satisfactorily complete all 22 semester hours of Core Curriculum and 12 semester hours of their chosen concentration with a cumulative 3.0 GPA.
2. Students must attend focus sessions in person when a course includes a focus session. Focus sessions are scheduled during the fourth weeks of January and May of each year.
3. A maximum of nine semester hours with a grade of "C" will apply toward the MAR degree. Students who earn a "C" in more than the maximum allowed number of hours will be required to repeat excess courses in which a "C" was earned. Students must repeat any course in which they earn a grade lower than a "C."
4. Students will normally successfully complete requirements for the MAR degree in two years of part-time study; students are allowed up to four years to complete the program.

### Transfer of Credits

Students may request the transfer of a maximum of 9 semester hours of credit toward the MAR, provided that the courses transferred approximate courses offered by Community of Christ Seminary, were taken at a regionally accredited institution or its non-US equivalent, and that the

student earned at least a “B” in those courses. The request must be accompanied by an official transcript from the institution where the credit was earned.

## **Student Status**

**Non-degree** status is granted to those students not seeking a degree. Non-degree status could include those students who have not completed the bachelor’s degree required for regular admission, and those who have already received a seminary degree. Non-degree students are not eligible for financial aid.

**Conditional** status is granted to applicants wish to enroll in courses and who have official transcripts on file but whose admissions file is otherwise incomplete. The file must be complete by the end of the fourth week of the term in order to continue enrollment and receive credit for that term’s course work.

**Continuing** status is granted to a student who is not enrolled during a given semester, for whatever reason, and who wishes to maintain matriculation. A student may remain in continuing status for up to two years. After one year, students will be administratively withdrawn if they do not indicate to the Dean of Seminary their intent to return to classes. An administratively withdrawn student must apply for re-admission if she/he wishes to return.

**Probation** is a status for students about whom there is some question concerning capability of maintaining satisfactory academic, personal and/or professional progress in the degree program. During probation, a student is often referred for special support, and special attention will be given to the student’s progress. The Dean of the Seminary may recommend or require certain limitations or other actions deemed useful for the academic/professional/personal progress of the student. Depending upon the reason(s) for the student’s probationary status, limits may be placed on the academic load or financial aid of a student on probation. A student on probation is not eligible for graduation. A student on probation may be dismissed for not complying with the requirements of his/her probationary status.

## **Student Disabilities Services**

Graceland University is committed to full compliance with the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As part of the implementation of this law, the university will continue to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities so that they can participate fully in the university’s educational programs and activities. Although Graceland is not required by law to change the fundamental nature or essential curricular components of its programs in order to accommodate the needs of disabled students, the university will provide reasonable academic accommodations.

Students with physical disabilities are expected to contact their instructor at least 24 hours in advance to request approved accommodation(s). Students may also contact the director of Student Disability Services at (641) 784-5083. The office will work with the course instructor to arrange for reasonable accommodations. Students are required at their own expense to provide documentation verifying disability. The general definition of a student with a disability is any

person who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's activities, and any person who has a history of, or is regarded as having, such an impairment.

## **Online Course Information**

### **Syllabus**

Syllabi for students taking online classes will be available on each BrightSpace course site starting with the first day of class. Prior to the course start date, students will be notified via their Graceland email account of their username and password to enable them to access their course on the BrightSpace site. Required reading lists will be emailed to students at least two weeks before the course start date.

### **Expectations**

Online classes require students to devote approximately 18-20 clock hours per week for class preparation and participation. Assignments include weekly online discussions in which students participate and interact with each other. There will be a deadline for those discussions each week. Assignments may also include reflection papers, research papers, presentations, group assignments, or tests. First-time students are expected to devote additional time to becoming acquainted with the course site, library, accessibility, etc.

### **Technology Fee**

Students are assessed a technology fee of \$2 per credit hour<sup>10</sup> University Technology Fee and \$6 Program Support Fee for each online course at the time of registration. These fees are non-refundable once the course has begun.

### **Help Desk**

Should you experience difficulties with D2L - BrightSpace, contact the D2L - BrightSpace helpdesk at **877-325-7778**.

### **Textbooks**

Students are responsible for purchasing their books for classes. Books for courses may be obtained from bookstores or on-line sites like Amazon.com, half.com, alibris.com, biblio.com or publishers' websites. If you have difficulty purchasing a book, please contact the course instructor.

### **Resource for Success**

*The Seminary Student Writes* by Deborah Core (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000 ISBN 0-8272-3447-3) is highly recommended for all Seminary students. This comprehensive guide will help prepare and guide students in writing tasks at the seminary level.

### **Style Guide for Academic Writing**

*A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, Chicago Style for Students and Researchers, University of Chicago Press, 2013.

### **Library Access**

Seminary students may use Temple library resources as well as resources from other seminary and theological school libraries. Temple library regular hours are M-F 8-noon; 1:30-4:45 p.m.

Database searches can be conducted offsite. Go to the library website for more information:  
[www.cofchrist.org/library](http://www.cofchrist.org/library).

For remote access to Association of Theological School Libraries database (ATLA) go to  
[www.cofchrist.org](http://www.cofchrist.org)

Connect (dropdown), select Independence

Library and Archives (select)

Database Sites (toward the bottom)

Click on ATLA. When prompted for a username and password enter “coc” for the username and “library” for the password.

If you need assistance with the online databases, contact Rachel Killebrew at the Temple Library:  
816-833-1000 ext. 2399.

## Technology Requirements

To take full advantage of the interactivity of the courses, a PC is highly recommended. Macintosh computer may be used, but in some situations a Mac will not support the requirement of a specific college course online. It is the students' responsibility to ensure that they can access a PC in such situations.

### System Requirements

**Microsoft Windows:** Windows XP, Vista, 7 or later versions  
28.8 kbps modem (56K recommended)  
Sound card and speakers  
Internet Explorer 8.0  
Word processing software

**Macintosh OS:** Mac OS X or higher (in classic mode)  
28.8 kbps modem (56K recommended)  
Sound card and speakers  
Safari 4.0  
Word processing software

### Browser Requirements

If a browser is not listed below it has not been tested on the online platform. A user risks running into problems with the course software if they choose to use an unsupported browser. Browsers listed below have been validated with the course platform.

**Microsoft Windows:** Recommended version: (Windows Internet Explorer)  
Microsoft Internet Explorer 9.0  
Recommended version: (Mozilla Firefox)  
Mozilla Firefox 7.0.1  
Supported versions: (Windows Internet Explorer)  
Microsoft Internet Explorer 7.0 and 8.0  
Supported versions: (Mozilla Firefox)  
Mozilla Firefox 3.5

**Macintosh OS:** Recommended version: (Safari)  
Safari 5.1  
Recommended version: (Mozilla Firefox)  
Mozilla Firefox 7.0.1  
Supported versions: (Safari)  
Safari 4.0 and 5.0  
Supported versions: (Mozilla Firefox)  
Mozilla Firefox 3.5

**Community of Christ Seminary  
Protocols for International Students  
Established Fall 2018**

Community of Christ Seminary, as part of Graceland University, is an ecumenical seminary grounded in Community of Christ tradition. Its Master of Arts in Religion degree program is open to all qualified students. The seminary is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) as a part of the university, and is responsible to the HLC's academic and professional standards. Therefore, our seminary coursework requires that students are well-prepared for master's level of academic study. Higher education learning systems differ around the world. Because the seminary wants to help those enrolled in its program succeed, we have created the following protocols. These can assist individuals applying to the MAR program, as well as Community of Christ leaders who are identifying possible international candidates for MAR study. From experience, the seminary believes that following these protocols will empower both potential students and the seminary to be successful.

1. Potential students must have proficiency in both spoken and written English. To be considered for admission, students whose first language is not English must submit a TOEFL score of 550 or higher on the written exam or a 79 or higher on the online exam. Exceptions will be granted on a case by case basis (for example, someone whose first language is not English but whose undergraduate degree is from an English speaking institution, etc.)
2. Potential students are responsible to submit a professional audit of their undergraduate transcript and GPA (Grade Point Average) equivalency by CGFNS or World Education Service (WES). The student (or sponsoring organization, e.g. the church) is responsible for the cost of this audit.
3. The potential student must submit TOEFL scores and the WES or CGFNS audit as part of their application packet, which is typically due by May 30 of the year in which the potential student will begin the MAR program. The first class in the program begins at the end of August or beginning of September each year.
4. Once admitted, students living abroad submit to the Director of the Seminary their plan for acquiring course materials and textbooks well in advance of each class. Students typically receive a textbook list for each class approximately one month before a course begins, but International students can request book lists earlier.
5. For students employed by Community of Christ, the seminary recommends that the student work with the Director of Human Resources and their supervisor to create a work load distribution plan that:
  - A) Allows the student to plan ample time for proper completion of weekly seminary course work (typically 20-25 hours per week) into their ministry schedule.
  - B) Insures the student will be able to get regular, reliable access to the Internet for each 8 week course.
  - C) Allows for travel and relief from work responsibilities when attending Seminary Focus Sessions.

6. The seminary encourages students who are unfamiliar with graduate level education and requirements to seek a mentor to help them with the challenges and expectations of this type of study.

## Rules for Critical-Constructive Dialogue in Seminary

Communication is complicated. Even more, critical and constructive dialogue requires discipline. Seminary is an academic setting where informed dialogue is essential. An ‘informed’ or ‘critical’ response is not a reaction or an *ad hominem* (literally, ‘against the person’) attack on a concept or thinker. Rather, it will be based on thoughtful, reasoned analysis of texts, traditions, beliefs, or viewpoints, grounded in the insights and knowledge of scholarship in the appropriate field. The following statement provides guidelines for quality critical and constructive dialogue appropriate for seminary.

Seminary learning requires this kind of critical thinking and dialogue about matters that are *personal* (like individual beliefs, spiritual experiences, concepts of truth, etc.) and *universal* (like the human condition, understandings of the world, shared truths, etc.). Theological and ethical dialogue often includes critical thinking about controversial and complex issues that are inherently cultural, social, political, emotional, and scientific.

Quality dialogue depends on a structured environment that fosters active listening and sharing that is honest and appropriately vulnerable. Such an environment is organized around the principles of human dignity (or Worth of Persons), self-respect and respect for others, appreciation for difference, tolerance for personal discomfort, and love for discovery.

Instructors must be free to preserve and protect the right environment for informed inquiry, exploration, challenge and discovery. Students must be free to ask questions, explore ideas, share perspectives, venture new ideas, identify and share personal feelings, and grow from exchange, within a safe learning environment.

Theology and its cognate fields are disciplines. A discipline is defined by a method of inquiry and acquired knowledge in a specific field. Students prepare for discussions by reading and engaging the assigned material and creating and offering informed insights and questions. This is necessary for creating high-quality dialogue, both online and face-to-face. Because the seminary upholds the conviction that the best learning happens in community, we offer the following set of rules for engaging in respectful, Master’s-level critical-constructive dialogue:

1. Be critical of ideas, not people. No name-calling or disdain. Comments that caricature persons and dismiss their ideas with prejudice plainly change the subject of the discussion and follow bad logic. Address ideas and the foundations of ideas, not the character of those who have them. Gently discontinue conversations with those who use such arguments as a mode of disagreement.
2. In all discussions, constructive contributions and critical questions should be informed by course material. Students should aspire to clarity and respect, and their posts or class contributions should make connections between course materials, the discipline, and the ethics and practice of ministry.
3. Own your interpretation of others’ ideas. Rather than take offense at what you fear someone might be saying, ask a clarifying question. For instance, sarcasm is easy to miss online, and can lead to misunderstandings. Give the person the benefit of the doubt and ask

what they mean. No matter how offended, uncomfortable, or concerned you are by a post or comment, clarify your understanding and interpretation by asking thoughtful questions: “I think I am hearing you say .... Is that correct? If not, could you clarify?” This approach works equally well for comments that may be passive aggressive or disingenuous. Use questions and honest inquiry to avoid escalating a misunderstanding or conflict.

4. Aspire to discover, critically assess, and clarify your own assumptions, theological or ethical foundations, and dispositions that shape your own point of view. No one thinks, reflects, questions, dialogues, or feels in a cultural or historical vacuum. Each of us are shaped by our culture, social location (class, race, sex/gender, education, religious background, ableness, etc). Learning to recognize how these cultural influences, social factors, and experience shape our assumptions, theological or ethical positions, and disposition is part of spiritual and academic discipline.
5. Disagreement can be constructive. Remember that disagreements often lie in differing assumptions, objectives, or perspectives, not bad judgment. It’s OK, even helpful, to ask for evidence or rationale. Critical dialogue is a method for discovery.
6. Be open to the benefits of constructive criticism. Clarity is more important than being right. Truth is not property; it can’t “belong” to anybody. If you feel some criticism is inaccurate, explain your objections or graciously defend your perspective.
7. Love people and love learning. Often, we don’t love what we don’t know. Don’t confuse love with accepting whatever another says. You can disagree with someone, and still love them. And there is a difference between liking someone and their ideas, and practicing Christian love.
8. Respect the instructor’s role and expertise. Open, honest questioning and even disagreement with the instructor is welcome in the graduate setting. These interactions must be consistent with the guidelines stated above. Also be mindful that your professor is additionally responsible for the well-being of the whole class, the integrity of the learning environment, and the course learning outcomes.

Matthew J Frizzell, Anthony J. Chvala-Smith, and Charmaine Chvala-Smith  
June 2018

## **Focus Session Information**

Four of the ten required courses in the MAR degree program include a focus session. Focus sessions are held Monday-Friday at the Community of Christ Temple in Independence, Mo. during the middle week of selected courses. They include face-to-face class sessions, formational activities such as group worship opportunities and community meals, cultural outings, informal fellowship, and time for research and study in the Temple library. Students should plan their travel in order to arrive in Independence by Monday morning.

### **Classrooms**

Students will be notified via email of the classroom location prior to the start of class as well as the schedule of activities during the focus session.

### **Break Room**

A break room is available to students during the focus session. This room is located by the Temple School entrance.

### **Vending Machine and Kitchen**

Beverage and snack vending machines are located next to the break room at the Community of Christ Temple. Kitchen facilities are also available in the area adjacent to the vending machines for those who wish to bring in a meal with them.

### **Telephones**

Pay phones are available for students to use outside the Herald Bookstore in the Community of Christ Temple.

### **Library**

The Community of Christ Library provides library services to seminary students, staff, and faculty. Library hours will be included on the week's schedule.

### **Accommodations/Student Housing**

Students are responsible for making their own housing and transportation arrangements for focus sessions. The Higher Ground Hotel is within walking distance of Community of Christ Temple. Phone toll-free (877) 836-0292 for information or to make reservations. Some local families have also offered to host students during focus sessions. Please contact the dean if you need assistance finding appropriate housing.

### **Orientation**

On the first day of focus sessions all students and faculty participating in the focus sessions are invited to an orientation meeting. This is held at the Community of Christ Temple. The purpose of the orientation meeting is to welcome all students, orient new students into the focus session program, and provide updates on any program changes.

**Community Meals**

Community meals are scheduled throughout the week. A donation basket will be available to cover costs. The Thursday evening meal is traditionally a pizza party to raise funds for Seminary student scholarships.

**Wireless Internet Access**

Internet access is available within the Community of Christ Temple complex.

**Daily Devotions**

Student- and staff-led devotions will be held in the Chapel located in the Community of Christ Temple. Students are expected and encouraged to attend and participate in the daily devotions. Friday devotions include a service of commissioning for any students attending their final focus session.

**Photocopying Machines**

Photocopying machines are located in the Community of Christ Temple Library.

**Local Restaurants**

These are many restaurants and fast food outlets within ten-minute drive from Community of Christ Temple and Graceland University, Independence Campus.

## **ADVISING**

### **Role of the Academic Adviser**

The adviser serves for the benefit of the student. The adviser is available to work with the student to design her/his class schedule. The adviser is available for counseling on curricular matters, denominational requirements, governance policy, and personal concerns. The adviser may play an active role in monitoring and providing supportive counseling of students on probation, or those who are having academic/professional difficulties.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

### **Class Participation**

By their nature, online courses require frequent and regular participation online as well as significant work offline. Students should plan to devote 140 to 160 hours per course for successful completion of course work.

During focus sessions students are expected to attend scheduled classes, be punctual, and complete all assignments. The opportunity for making up class work missed as a result of an excused absence is to be worked out between the instructor and the student upon the student's initiative.

Excused absences include the following (1) the student has contacted the faculty member prior to the absence and the faculty member concurs that the absence is unavoidable and legitimate, and/or (2) the Dean of the Seminary determines that the student has missed classes/assignments due to

factors beyond the student's control (i.e., illness/family misfortune) and the faculty member concurs.

All other absences are considered unexcused, in which case the instructor is not obligated to provide an opportunity for making up class work for credit.

**Focus Session Class Cancellation Advisory** In the event of severe weather during face-to-face focus sessions, please call the Community of Christ international headquarters at 1-816-833-1000 after 7:00 a.m. and listen to the **entire** message for information on late start or building closure.

### **Completion of Course Work**

Students are required to complete all work in their current course before registering for additional courses. Failure to complete course work before the next term will result in students being denied registration until course work is complete.

### **Extensions**

In special, exceptional cases, students unable to complete course work during the term may request an extension from the instructor. (Instructors are not required to agree to any extension of deadlines.) The Registrar's Office must be notified of any negotiated extension by means of an Incomplete Grade Contract completed by the student, signed by the instructor, and submitted to the Registrar at least 2 weeks prior to the end of the course.

## **REGISTRATION**

### **Student ID Number**

New Seminary students will be assigned a student ID number by Graceland University upon admission to the program. Students who have previously been issued a Graceland University (or College) ID number (in an undergraduate program, for example) will continue to use their original number.

You must have your student ID number to:

1. Receive assistance from the Graceland helpdesk
2. Access [My Graceland](#)
3. Access the online Graceland library databases

### **Graceland Email Account**

Students will be assigned a Graceland email account. All official announcements and online course access information will be sent to the Graceland email account. Students should check it on a regular basis.

## **Graceland Username and Password**

A Graceland Username and password will be emailed to you when you register for your first course. This username and password are necessary to access your academic record, including grades.

**You will use the Graceland username and password to log into the D2L - BrightSpace interface for any online course.** If you cannot locate your Graceland username and password, please contact the Graceland helpdesk (641-784-5167). You must have your student ID number available for verification. If you are unable to locate your Student ID number, please contact the Seminary office.

## **My Graceland**

[My Graceland \(https://my.graceland.edu\)](https://my.graceland.edu) is the website used by Graceland University to allow students easy access to their academic record, University announcements and other resources.. Use your Graceland username and password to access [My Graceland](https://my.graceland.edu). Through My Graceland you can:

1. View your grades in a recent course.
2. View and print your unofficial academic transcript
3. Apply for graduation.

## **Yearly Class Enrollment**

Currently enrolled students are required to submit a [course registration form](#) by **June 30** of each year for all courses they wish to enroll in for the coming year. Course registration forms can be found at <http://www.graceland.edu/seminary/documents/YearlyRegForm.pdf>. Tuition arrangements must be completed each term before enrollment can be finalized.

## **Withdrawal from a Course**

Graceland University students may withdraw from a course through the 13 percent point of the term without a “W” grade. A grade of “W” is recorded in any course when the student withdraws after the 13 percent point and through the 60 percent point. After 60 percent of the term is complete, the student is not allowed to withdraw from the course, and will be awarded the appropriate grade in the course.

Course withdrawals must be initiated by students. To withdraw from a course a student must complete a Student Petition form. The form must be signed by the instructor and the student’s adviser before being forwarded to the office of the Dean of the Seminary. Non-attendance or lack of participation does not constitute withdrawal notification. Notification dates are used to calculate withdrawal credit and financial aid award adjustments per the Refund Policy. When Official Notification is not provided by the student, the date the university determines the student needs to be withdrawn is used as the notification date.

## **Directed Independent Study**

Permission may be granted for directed independent study (DIS) when irresolvable scheduling conflicts exist that preclude enrollment in a regularly scheduled class. The following procedure applies to directed independent study courses.

1. A student who anticipates a need for such accommodation should contact the Dean of the Seminary at the earliest possible date. Instructors may not be available for a directed independent study.
2. A completed application for DIS course is submitted by the student to the Dean of Seminary's office. The completed form must include the rationale for the arranged course and signatures from the student's academic adviser and the course's instructor.
3. An approved application serves as the student's registration form.

### **Auditing of Courses**

Auditing provides an opportunity to take a class without the pressure of grades. A person wishing to audit courses must submit a non-degree student registration form (available from staff in the seminary office) and must obtain the permission of the instructor of the class that he/she wishes to audit. Auditors' names will appear in the records and will be designated as "Auditors," and no course credit will be conferred. Auditors must complete all required readings, participate fully in online discussions and attend any required focus session. The instructor of any particular course will determine additional minimal requirements in order for the course to be included on the auditor's transcript.

### **Continuing Education**

Each seminary three-semester-hour course may be taken by non-degree-seeking students for 4.2 continuing education credits (CEUs). In order to earn CEU credit, participants must complete all course assignments as well as participate fully in course activities both online and during any required focus session. Students enrolling for CEU credit must submit a non-degree student registration form available from staff in the seminary office.

### **Transcripts**

No official statement of the record of any student will be released until all fees, dues, loans, fines, and tuition assessed by the university or any department have been settled. Transcripts should be requested at least two weeks in advance of the date required. Transcripts may be [requested online](#) at the following link:

[https://my.graceland.edu/ICS/Resources/Registrar/Requesting\\_Official\\_Transcripts.jnz](https://my.graceland.edu/ICS/Resources/Registrar/Requesting_Official_Transcripts.jnz)

## **TUITION AND FINANCES**

Check the university website for current information at  
<https://www.graceland.edu/seminary/tuition-and-fees>

### **2021-2022 Academic Year**

<b><u>Tuition (2021-2022) Academic Year</u></b>	\$300	Per Semester Hour
Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Charge	\$240	Per Course
Auditing Fee	\$450	Per Course
<b><u>Fees</u></b>		
Application Fee	\$50	
Reactivation Fee	\$50	Per Occurrence
Graduation Fee	\$100	
Re-Sequencing Fee	\$100	Per Occurrence
Extension Fee for an Incomplete Course*	\$100	Per Occurrence
Non-Degree Seeking Administration Fee*	\$50	Per Course
University Technology Fee	\$4	Per Credit Hour
Program Support Fee ( <i>Online courses</i> )	18.00	Per Course



## **Application Fee**

The application fee is non-refundable unless requested within three business days of Graceland receiving the fee.

## **Tuition Payment**

Tuition payment in full or participation in an approved payment plan is required on or before the first day of class per term. To assist students in paying tuition, the following methods of payment are available.

1. Paying by check, payable to “Graceland University.”
2. Paying by credit card

You may pay with a credit card either by contacting your staff person in student accounts: Graceland University accepts Discover, MasterCard, Visa, and American Express credit cards.

## **Tuition Refund Policy**

Tuition paid for a course from which a student withdraws may be refunded on a pro-rated basis. To be eligible for a tuition refund, a student must notify the seminary staff assistant. The official drop date for determining a refund will be the notification date when the information was received at the Dean of Seminary’s office. Students whose tuition is being paid by their employer or whose tuition is being reimbursed by their employer will need to consult with their supervisor before withdrawing from a course.

## **Technology Fee Refund Policy**

The technology fee is not refundable once the course has begun.

## **Scholarships**

The Community of Christ Seminary is able to offer modest scholarships for students enrolled in the MAR program. These scholarships are available to students who are not employed by Community of Christ nor have their tuition paid by their employer. To apply for a scholarship, contact the Dean of the Seminary.

## **Payment Plans**

Graceland University offers an interest-free payment plan to its students. The intent of the payment plan is that tuition be paid by the time the course is completed by dividing the payments over the term.

There is a processing fee when a payment plan is set up. The fee assessed for a single seven or eight-week course is \$15. A payment plan for two consecutive sub-sessions (i.e., a trimester) incurs a processing fee of \$40. The corresponding fee will be charged each time a payment plan is set up. Payment by credit card or check is normally due on the first day of the month. All seminary students are eligible for payment plans. To apply contact your Student Financial Services representative in Student Accounts.

# DEGREE PROGRAM

## Master of Arts in Religion (MAR)

The Master of Arts in Religion (34 graduate semester hours) at Community of Christ Seminary is designed for bi-vocational ministers who want to deepen their understanding of faith and ministry and transform community, as well as for professional ministers preparing to lead others in discipleship and mission. It builds a strong foundation of formation in Christian scripture, tradition and mission and offers *three concentrations for focused development: Christian Theology, Spiritual Leadership, Peace and Justice*. This degree provides a strong academic foundation in biblical studies, Christian history, and theology, leadership, peace, and justice. These subjects offer essential preparation for Christian ministry and/or doctoral study in religion.

The Master of Arts in Religion provides a unique blend of religious theory and practical studies that can meet the needs of students with a variety of learning objectives. The classes in the program will be offered either totally online or online with a face-to-face session at the Community of Christ Temple in Independence, Missouri during the fourth week. The faculty is composed of scholars and professionals in the field of religion with the academic and applied backgrounds to make the study of religion stimulating and worthwhile.

The courses in the program are offered in online-only or hybrid online/face-to-face formats. The faculty is comprised scholars and professionals in the field of religion with the academic and applied backgrounds to make the study of religion stimulating and worthwhile.

### Core Curriculum 22 s.h.

- [RELG5011](#) Christian Theology 3 s.h.
- [RELG5040](#) New Testament - Gospels and Acts 3 s.h.
- [RELG5060](#) History of Christian Thought I 3 s.h.
- [\\*RELG5350](#) Community of Christ History and Scripture 3 s.h.
- [\\*RELG5360](#) Community of Christ Theology and Scripture 3 s.h.
- [RELG6240](#) Contemporary Culture and Theologies 3 s.h.
- [RELG6500](#) Portfolio 1 s.h.
- [RELG6900](#) Advanced Topics in Practical Ministry 1-3 s.h.

### Complete all of one specific concentration: 12 s.h.

#### Christian Theology

- [RELG5022](#) Introduction to the Hebrew Bible 3 s.h.
- [RELG5050](#) New Testament - Letters and Apocalypse 3 s.h.

- [RELG6050](#) Christology and Liberation 3 s.h.
- [RELG6070](#) History of Christian Thought II 3 s.h.

#### Spiritual Leadership

- [RELG5435](#) Pastor as Person 3 s.h.
- [RELG5440](#) Spiritual Formation and Transformation 3 s.h.
- [RELG6245](#) Transformational Leadership 3 s.h.
- [RELG6250](#) Community Building and Diversity 3 s.h.

#### Peace and Justice

- [RELG5445](#) Theology of Peace 3 s.h.
- [RELG5450](#) Philosophy of Peacebuilding 3 s.h.
- [RELG6255](#) Social Justice: Ecologies and Economies of Peace 3 s.h.
- [RELG6260](#) Conflict Resolution and Restorative Justice 3 s.h.

\*Students from other denominations may substitute approved denomination-specific course work.

## Course Descriptions

### **RELG5011 Christian Theology 3 s.h.**

This course is an initial exploration of the discipline and methods of theology. The foundational topics of Christian theology are covered including the nature and necessity of the theological task and contemporary understandings of the doctrine of God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit, humanity, the church, and Christian hope.

### **RELG5022 Introduction to the Hebrew Bible 3 s.h.**

A review of the sacred literature of ancient Israel, centered on its covenantal themes and Ancient Near Eastern contexts. Prerequisite: RELG5011.

### **RELG5040 New Testament - Gospels and Acts 3 s.h.**

A review of the New Testament literature focusing on the gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, centered around its christological themes as they relate to other primary doctrines. Attention will be given to techniques of exegesis based on various methods of biblical criticism. Prerequisite: RELG5011.

### **RELG5050 New Testament - Letters and Apocalypse 3 s.h.**

A review of the New Testament literature focusing on Paul, the General Epistles, and the Apocalypse of John, centered around its christological themes as they relate to other primary doctrines. Attention will be given to techniques of exegesis based on various methods of biblical criticism. Prerequisite: RELG5040.

### **RELG5060 History of Christian Thought I 3 s.h.**

This course traces the theological and doctrinal development of the Christian church from the biblical period to the period immediately preceding the Reformation. Attention will be given to the historical context in which this development occurred. Prerequisite: RELG5011.

### **RELG5350 Community of Christ History and Scripture 3 s.h.**

This course traces the historical development of Community of Christ, from its origins in the setting of revivalism and democratization on the American frontier of the 1820s to the challenges the church faces as it negotiates the 21st century's global, postmodern context. The course will also explore how the unique sacred texts of this movement have reflected the tradition's ongoing engagement with culture. Special attention will be given to helping students learn how to apply critical historical methodology to the study of a religious tradition. Prerequisite: RELG5011

### **RELG5360 Community of Christ Theology and Scripture 3 s.h.**

This course will explore the main themes, key issues, and seminal thinkers in Community of Christ theology, from its emergence on the American frontier (1820-1844) through its recontextualization into Reorganization theology (1851-1960) to the radical transformation of beliefs and denominational identity since 1960. The methods of both critical historiography and systematic theological analysis will guide our quest to understand this tradition. Central to our explorations will be how the church has responded to the intellectual, social, and cultural challenges of each age. We will devote special attention to the ways the church's engagement with its own sacred texts has contributed to the denomination's metamorphosis, especially as it has embraced its unique place within the wider Christian tradition and its vocation as a peace and justice church. Prerequisite: RELG5011

### **RELG5435 Pastor as Person 3 s.h.**

A focus on ministerial formation through exploration of the connection between vocation, ministerial "calling", and social context. Students will engage in critical examination of ministerial myths,

narratives, and stories that shape leadership response in a variety of pastoral experiences. Attention will be given to resources and tools for critical reflection on self and vocation. Prerequisite: RELG5011.

**RELG5440 Spiritual Formation and Transformation 3 s.h.**

A study of the historical and theological roots and implications of spiritual formation. Students will engage in critical study and practice of spiritual practices and formation models. Students will reflect on study and practices from biblical, historical, and psychological perspectives through individual experience in class as in the context of ministerial and spiritual leadership. Prerequisite: RELG5011.

**RELG5445 Theology of Peace 3 s.h.**

An introduction to and exploration of peace in Christian theology. Biblical, historical, and theological perspectives of peace as central to theological narratives. Focus on given students' resources for building foundational theologies of peace and resources for application of peace through a theological lens. Prerequisite: RELG5011.

**RELG5450 Philosophy of Peacebuilding 3 s.h.**

Peace is central to theological and ethical thinking. Students will explore approaches to peace, grounded in social and moral philosophy. Emphasis on evaluating ethical implications of peace, justice, and peacebuilding for individual, communal, and vocational contexts. Prerequisite: RELG5011.

**RELG6050 Christology and Liberation 3 s.h.**

Explores Christological intersections between classical interpretations of Jesus of Nazareth's identity and various modern and post-modern liberative approaches. As well as considering the contributions of the Social Gospel Movement, the work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Jürgen Moltmann, special attention will be given to Latin American, Feminist, Womanist, African American, and Eco-liberationist Christologies. Emphasis will be placed on understanding the relevance of Jesus' life and message to situations of violence, racism, and various forms of gender, environmental and economic oppression. Prerequisite: RELG5011.

**RELG6070 History of Christian Thought II 3 s.h.**

This course traces the theological and doctrinal development of the Christian church from the Reformation into the 21st century. Attention will be given to the historical context in which this development occurred. Prerequisite: RELG5011.

**RELG6240 Contemporary Culture and Theologies 3 s.h.**

An examination of the nature and implications of current issues and practices found in major world cultures with emphasis on their impact on Christian ministry, particularly ecumenical and intercultural ministry. Prerequisite: RELG5011.

**RELG6245 Transformational Leadership 3 s.h.**

Exploring leadership that leads to sustainable and transformative change in community and organizations. Critical study of missional leadership through theological, sociological, biblical, and ministerial analysis. Prerequisite: RELG5011.

**RELG6250 Community Building and Diversity 3 s.h.**

Examining essential skills in developing leaders as spiritual/sociological researchers in the context of their ministerial community for the purpose of cultivating missional transformation. Topics of social analysis will include social location, theological perspective, culture and cultural diversity, community systems, and religious pluralism. Attention will also be given to adaptive change as it relates to rapidly changing culture and context of ministry experience. Prerequisite: RELG5011.

**RELG6255 Social Justice: Ethics, Ecology, and Peace 3 s.h.**

An exploration of religious and philosophical foundations of imperatives for social and ecological justice. Examines mutual implications between interpersonal and environmental ethics as well as the scope of theories of justice as applied to human/nonhuman communities. Prerequisite: RELG5011.

**RELG6260 Conflict Resolution and Restorative Justice 3 s.h.**

Examining methods, concepts, and skills of conflict resolution and restorative justice paired with theological and historical perspectives. Intended to equip students with the skills to engage constructively and meaningfully with conflict and justice in personal, congregational, institutional, and community settings. Prerequisite: RELG5011.

**RELG6500 Portfolio 1 s.h.**

A summative project that encourages students to reflect on their experience and the directions it may take them as a disciple or minister. The Seminary Graduate Portfolio consists of a beginning paper, gathering of graduate work, and self-assessment. The student will review her/his portfolio with a committee as a “finale” of her/his graduate work. (Evaluated on a pass/fail basis.)

**RELG6900 Advanced Topics in Ministry 1-3 s.h.**

An in-depth study of topics selected from various areas of practical ministry such as church leadership, Christian ethics, mission, pastoral care, public ministry, spiritual formation, and disciple education. Students should have taken all of their other coursework prior to this course as this is a capstone course. The course is designed to guide students to integrate their learning into practical ministry application. Prerequisite: RELG5011.

# SYSTEM OF GRADING

## Grade Structure

The marks used at Graceland University to indicate grades and the grade points for each semester hour of credit are as follows:

- A = 4.00
- B = 3.00
- C = 2.00 (A maximum 9 s.h of C are allowed without having to repeat courses.)
- D = Course must be repeated.
- F = Course must be repeated.
- I Incomplete, no grade points. Minimum course requirements unfinished for reasons acceptable to the instructor. Requests for extensions must be initiated by the student. An “Incomplete Grade Contract” signed by the student and the instructor is required before an Incomplete can be recorded. A grade will be given at the discretion of the instructor upon completion of the work.
- IP In-Progress, no grade points.
- W Withdrawn from the course at a specified date

## Repeating a Course

When a student repeats a course, the last grade earned will be the one computed into the cumulative grade point average. Students must receive permission from the Dean of Seminary to repeat a course in which a grade of “B” has been earned.

## Checking Grades

Once grades are submitted by the instructor and are processed by the Registrar’s office, you may check your own grades online. From [My Graceland](#) you can print a copy of your grades and your academic record.

# UNIVERSITY POLICIES

All policies of Graceland University apply to Seminary students. These policies can be accessed through the [Graceland University website www.Graceland.edu/](http://www.Graceland.edu/). It is the responsibility of students to be familiar with Academic Policies and Procedures of the University. For the benefit of Seminary students, the following policies are highlighted for specific attention.

## **Harassment Policy**

Sexual and other harassment of student, faculty, or staff is not tolerated at Graceland University. Sexual and other harassment diminishes the university in achieving its mission through an insidious and detrimental impact on individual students, faculty, staff, and the university community as a whole. All harassment stifles the realization of the victim's full potential as a student, faculty, or staff member. Harassment is especially serious when it threatens relations between faculty and student or supervisor and subordinate by unfairly exploiting the power differential between the parties in the relationship. Likewise, Graceland University does not tolerate harassment between people of equal university status. Procedures relating to this policy are available upon request from the President's office.

## **Academic Integrity**

Honesty and integrity are prerequisites to academic life and professional practice. The standards of academic conduct address meeting established academic criteria and behavioral integrity in performing the academic work of the School. Faculty are required to investigate and report any concerns regarding student violations of academic policy. Faculty concerns are submitted in writing to the appropriate school committee for review and action. The student is informed when a concern has been submitted and may respond in writing to the concern prior to committee review. Academic integrity violations are reviewed and acted upon by the school academic committees.

Committee decisions for dismissal may be appealed to the Dean of the School. Refer to the Academic Appeals Policy & Procedure. In the case of all other sanctions, the decision of the school committee is considered final. Failure to comply with committee-imposed sanctions may result in immediate dismissal without option for readmission.

## **Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct is a breach of honesty or integrity and standards. Examples of academic misconduct include but are not limited to the following:

1. Cheating: giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in any assignment.
2. Plagiarism: the use of ideas, language or work of another without sufficient acknowledgment that the material is not one's own or submission of the work of another, whether altered or unaltered, as one's own. Students are to be guided by the latest edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA).
3. Manipulation or alteration of another student's or faculty's academic work.

4. Unauthorized use, removal, concealment or defacement of library, skills lab or faculty resources (e.g., books, equipment, files, papers, tests).
5. Submitting the same work or portions of work for more than one class without prior written approval of faculty.
6. Collusion: assisting another student in an act of dishonesty.
7. Lying: conveying any untruth either verbal or written.
8. Disregarding the well-being and needs of individuals or populations in professional practice (e.g., failure to provide safe appropriate care, breach of confidentiality, failure to follow supervisor, faculty instructions).
9. Fraud: the act of deceit or misrepresentation (e.g. misrepresenting self, falsifying an academic document, communicating false information, forging signatures).

Sanctions imposed by school committees for academic misconduct may include, but are not limited to:

1. Written notification of the student's act of academic misconduct and potential consequences placed on the student's file.
2. Assigning a zero (no points) for a test, assignment or paper.
3. Assigning a failing course grade.
4. Placing the student on probation.
5. Dismissal from the program.

### **Plagiarism**

Graceland University values the level of integrity and professionalism of our students throughout their education and as they continue on in their professional careers. Therefore, it holds students to a high standard of competence and recognition where plagiarism is involved. Graceland University policy requires the reporting of all incidences of plagiarism to the School Dean and to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

### **Academic Appeal Policy**

A student may appeal either of the following:

1. Failing final course grade
2. Program dismissal.

Students are responsible for meeting the standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled. The establishment of the criteria for grades and the evaluation of student academic performance are responsibilities of the course faculty. Grade appeal is available only for the review of allegedly capricious grading and not for review of the faculty's evaluation of the student's academic performance.

An appeal is initiated by submitting a typed statement to the Chair of the appropriate graduate committee, no later than **seven (7) working days** after documentation of the failing final course grade or recommendation for dismissal.

The typed appeal statement submitted by the student must include the following:

1. A statement of the issue;
2. Specific steps that have already been taken to resolve the issue with the course faculty, course coordinator and/or Specialty Track/Program Coordinator;
3. Evidence supporting why the student believes the decision made was inconsistent with existing university policy, school policy, or course policy, was arbitrary, or lacked sufficient evidence.

### **Incomplete Grade Policy**

A written request for a grade of incomplete ("I") must be initiated by the student at least two weeks prior to the course end date. Students may be required to provide formal documentation to support an incomplete grade request.

Faculty may assign a grade of "I" in cases when students are unable to complete the work for a course due to reasons beyond their control, or in cases when the faculty deems an "I" the most appropriate grade to give. The grade of "I" should not be abused and should be used only in cases where the incomplete is unavoidable and legitimate.

An electronic "Incomplete Grade Contract" that includes the reason for the incomplete, work that must be completed to earn a final course grade and the required completion date is generated when an "I" is submitted as a course grade. The completion date must be no later than the last day of the next scheduled term. For example, an Incomplete Grade Contract for a course in the A session of a 16 week trimester will have a completion date of the last day of the B session in that same 16 week trimester. The "I" is a temporary grade and will be automatically converted to an "F" if the course has not been completed by the end of the next scheduled term. Extensions beyond one scheduled term are not allowed for graduate courses.

An extended access fee is required for the use of the Daylight course site.

### **Application for Graduation**

In order for the registrar to perform a graduation audit and to verify that students have completed their program, students are asked to file an Application for Graduation *six months* prior to their anticipated completion date. These processes are completed on line at [www.graceland.edu/registrar](http://www.graceland.edu/registrar) - Online Forms

### **Commencement**

Degree-seeking graduate students are expected to complete all requirements for graduation in order to participate in commencement. Students who have completed graduate programs and who choose to attend Commencement Ceremonies will receive the **Master's Hood**. The Dean of the Seminary and another affiliated with the Seminary will "Hood" graduates as part of the conferring of their degree. The hood is the most important and distinctive feature of attire for formal academic ceremonies in American colleges today. The inside of the hood is lined with silk in the official academic colors of the institution, which for Graceland are blue and gold.

# **Community of Christ Policy of Inclusive Language in the Life and Ministry of the Church**

## **Background**

Language usage changes, and there is an increasing sensitivity on the part of the faithful to employ inclusive language in the life and ministry of the church. In these efforts, we join with other people of faith searching to find adequate expression of the glory of God and concern for our sisters and brothers. As we become a prophetic people, we are challenged to choose words and expressions that enrich our vocabulary about God and persons as we extend the love of Christ into our communities.

The Community of Christ has been well served by the 1978 Policy of Inclusive Language that promoted gender-inclusive language. World Conference Resolution 1259 authorized a review and update of this policy with particular emphasis on its application to church publications, resources, worship practices including hymnody, and international church perspectives.

In order to fulfill these challenges, the following policy has been crafted to uphold the diversity that is evident in God's miraculous creation and to empower writers and speakers throughout the church to address the needs of ministry in ever-inclusive expressions.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to encourage all speakers and writers who convey the message of the church to use modern language that clearly reflects the gospel of love and concern taught by Jesus Christ. It is the life and ministry of Jesus that teaches us to love those whom society disregards. Jesus spent his life reaching beyond the confines of "social acceptability"; he continually used expressions of love and acceptance to all persons (women, men, children, the sick, the dispossessed, the enemy). Can we as the church of Jesus Christ offer words and ministry in any spirit other than acceptance and love?

Language has great power to influence and persuade persons. We acknowledge that tradition and familiarity have often limited innovative religious expression. We acknowledge that words are an imprecise media and cannot purely convey the reality of the divine/human intersection. Words are merely tools to share such life-changing experiences with others.

Therefore, this policy encourages persons to expand their vocabulary as they convey the church's message. Language does influence how persons perceive themselves, the Divine, and each other. **It is not the purpose of this policy to "forbid" or "eliminate" words from the church's vocabulary.**

"Whom do you say that I am?" Sounds very simple, doesn't it? Yet the way we address God and who we say God is continues to cause division in the church. It is not our intention as a committee to mandate how any person speaks about God or to prescribe specific words for worship. However, it is our goal to promote healing and to let each person know that they are precious to their Creator.

This policy has been crafted to encourage the enlargement and enrichment of the church's lexicon of faithful expressions. By recognizing that words describing God and God's intersection with humanity are but frail representations of the power resident in that experience, **this policy encourages persons to express their devotion in more expansive ways.**

Expressions of ministry (prayers, dialogue, readings, etc.) must be carefully crafted to include all persons because [1] language has power. It transmits not only facts and ideas, but emotions and values. Skillful writers and speakers have always had the power to affect people's attitudes, influence their actions, and shape their inner views of the world and its peoples.

—Guidelines for Inclusive Language (New York: Lutheran Church in America, no date), prologue.

### **What is inclusive language?**

Inclusive language can be defined as language that reflects an attitude of mutuality, sensitivity, and openness toward other humans and respect for a multitude of faithful expressions of human interaction with the Divine. Inclusive language encourages creative expressions of these experiences and realization of wholeness in Christ. Inclusive language reflects a sensitivity to barriers that may exist between individuals and among communities in such areas as gender, race, class, physical differences, nationality, theological beliefs, culture, and lifestyle. The "Affirmation of Human Diversity" (WCR 1226) provides foundational guidance to this revised policy. The principles that guide the life and practice of the church cannot be "what do most people find comfortable?" but rather "how can I most effectively convey my experience with God?" The Community of Christ promotes inclusive language because such language promotes justice, reconciliation, and love—the ministry to which we as Christian disciples have been called.

### **Usage Guidelines**

Because language is a living and ever-evolving entity, see appendix A and B for helpful guidelines that are intended to increase awareness of issues and offer potential solutions. These recommendations are NOT meant to limit, but rather to offer inclusive alternatives that expand vocabulary beyond traditional expressions.

### **Inclusive Language Resources**

See Appendix A for Expressions dealing with people

See Appendix B for Names of God

See Appendix C for an Annotated Bibliography of Resource

## Appendix A: Expressions Dealing with People

Concern	Terms and Phrases That Have Been Limiting or Have Miscommunicated	Alternatives That Expand Understanding
“Man”	<p>This term has sometimes been used to mean all humans and sometimes to mean specifically the male species. Using “man” to mean all humans can cause confusion and often ignores the valuable contributions of women.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Man and History man’s achievements man must exercise stewardship overall of creation</i></p>	<p>Use “persons,” “humans,” “people,” “humankind,” or “women and men.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Great Figures in History human achievement people must exercise stewardship over all of creation</i></p>
Pronouns	<p>The use of the masculine pronoun “he” was once considered acceptable to apply to persons of both genders. However, such grammatical convention is becoming less and less standard usage.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>God loves a cheerful giver and accepts his offering.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Each student should bring his pen</i></p>	<p>It is currently acceptable to use a plural pronoun (their) with a singular noun.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>God loves a cheerful giver and accepts their offering.</i></p> <p>Some writers use the she/he option. Others recast the sentence as plural: <i>Each student should bring her/his pen. Students should bring their pens</i></p>
Personal Equality/ Elimination of Stereo-types	<p>It is important to treat persons equitably. Do not perpetuate stereotypes: “men are strong and women are weak”; “men have business savvy and women have beauty.” Do not hide behind clichés or outdated expressions.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Daring frontiersmen fought their way westward, encouraged by their patient wives.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>John, a successful business owner, was accompanied by Jane, a stunning blonde beauty.</i></p> <p>Females over the legal age should be referred to as “women” not “girls.” <i>The girls in the office answer the phone. The men on Capitol Hill/ The girls in the Senate</i></p> <p>Be sure to identify men and women equally as to job status or family relationships. <i>George Smith married the daughter of Jacob Jones, the rich banker. The Saints gathered to Zion with their wives and children.</i></p>	<p>Treat persons equally. If a person’s physical strength is important to mention, include it. If such a description does not add to the value of the sentence, eliminate it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Daring men and women fought their way westward.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Jane, a dedicated community worker, was accompanied by John, a successful business owner.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The office staff answer the phone. Members of the Senate</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>George Smith married Julie Jones.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Saints gathered to Zion.</i></p>

<p>Exclusively Male Terms for People and for God</p>	<p>Terms, including “man,” are not appropriate to refer to persons of both sexes.</p> <p><i>working man</i> <i>manmade</i></p> <p><i>manned the phones</i></p> <p><i>businessman</i></p> <p><i>repairman</i> <i>forefathers</i> <i>chairman</i></p> <p><i>brethren</i> <i>fellowship of the Saints</i></p> <p>References to God need not be limited to “Father” and “Lord.”</p>	<p>There are hundreds of terms that do not include the “man” suffix.</p> <p><i>worker</i> <i>manufactured</i> (comes from “manus” meaning hand) <i>answered the phones</i></p> <p><i>business owner or business person</i></p> <p><i>repairer, technician</i> <i>forebears, ancestors, founders, precursors</i> <i>chairperson, moderator, leader, chair, facilitator, convener, presider</i></p> <p><i>friends, brothers and sisters</i> <i>community of the Saints</i></p> <p><i>God of the Universe</i> <i>Creator of Sunrises</i></p> <p>See the appendix B for additional suggestions.</p>
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### B. Physically and Emotionally Sensitive Language

As a people striving to be like Jesus, disciples need to be especially sensitive to language used about persons who live with physical and emotional challenges. The most important element of such language is to “Put people first.” This means that in describing a person who uses a wheelchair, say, “The child in the wheelchair” rather than “a wheelchair-bound child.” Likewise, it is the person with a learning disability not a learning disabled person. Remember that all humans face challenges in life, and it is important to emphasize the humanity of all and not define or label persons by their abilities.

Be sure to analyze metaphors about “walking with” or “standing up for” Jesus. Do we mean a literal or a figurative act? Such sensitivity to words and phrases is an important effort to help all persons feel they are wanted and needed in the community of faith.

### C. Race, Culture, Age

Speakers and writers are encouraged to examine colloquial or timeworn usage that is disrespectful. For example, the common practice of equating good with white and evil with dark or black promotes an attitude of discrimination against people with dark skin or hair color. All disciples are urged to examine and discard language that demeans persons with diverse ethnic roots.

In addition, all disciples are cautioned to eliminate words or phrases that perpetuate “isms” (ageism, sexism, nationalism . . .) and therefore separate God’s children from each other and from the peace found in the shalom of true community.

Finally, this policy reminds persons to refuse to repeat “jokes” or stories that demean specific groups; Christian disciples are reminded of the model of Jesus who stood up against prevailing social trends and protected and defended those less accepted in his society.

#### **D. Family Diversity**

The church at all levels of organization serves as an extended family for the children of God. As a family, we care that each individual is celebrated, affirmed, and nurtured. Family units in our congregations come in a wide variety of sizes and compositions. It is important that each member feel that their family is accepted, supported, and loved. We must move our thinking of “family” beyond the one form of father, mother, and children to include the many other arrangements that exist.

A family is a grouping of people, however large or small, who have made a commitment to each other and nurture and support each other through all of life’s experiences. In planning, writing, and speaking, avoid saying that a young couple without children has “not started their family yet.” Consider the subtle announcement that each family should “bring a main dish and a salad or a dessert to the potluck.” This is not a reasonable request for a single person and consequently sends the message that they are not a family and are really not welcome at this event. In written and spoken words, include the stories and testimonies of a wide variety of family structures. Treat these various expressions of family life as normal, and all members of our church family will feel warmly accepted.

#### **E. Images and Metaphors for God**

When we use only one or two ways to speak of our Source, we tend to limit the Divine and God’s ability to work in our lives individually and communally as a church. Yet, we don’t want to eliminate words that have long been used to describe God, because then we lose our rich, sacred, and unique Christian language and connection to our Christian heritage.

Thus a delicate balance is needed. To broaden our language, we believe, is the key. Our discipleship (expressed in public as worship, congregational life, resource production, sermons), in turn, should reflect our call and willingness to broaden our expressions. There are many scripturally based names and images for God: Creator, Companion, Sacred, Divine, Energy, Yahweh, El Shaddai, Mother, Father, Friend, Pillar, Giver of Life, Source of Our Being. The list is as endless as the attributes of God; for, after all, God is infinite.

Our hope is that such expressions will grow and expand as we grow in discipleship. In this growth process, we encourage the free expression of concerns, feelings, and struggles in an atmosphere of love and acceptance. Our prayer is that each speaker and listener would respond out of caring, compassion, and love of the Sacred and each other. We trust that each one will respond with dialogue while being open to the Spirit through new leadings and new understandings.

Also, we encourage more thorough theological examination of words and phrases. For example the overuse of the “language of domination” (e.g., Master and King) limits the infinite nature of God. Such words have a historical place in the theology of the Christian tradition in which people lived in worlds built upon hierarchy and domination. However, as we struggle to

understand God and God's intent for us in less "power over" vertical structures to more "power with" circles of mutual relationships, we urge persons to craft new ways of expressing God's love and interaction with humans. We encourage persons to continue theological studies that assist them in understanding the differences between the historically male Jesus of Nazareth and the spirit of Christ that transcends physical body, historical time, and human consciousness. As we explore together the ways we speak of our Creator and the ways we communicate with each other, may we do so with words that welcome, not wound; words that heal, not hurt; and always with the intention to connect with the Healing Source.

### **F. Practical Applications**

One of the greatest opportunities we have to incorporate inclusive language is with worship practices. As has been stated, it is not our intention to write masculine-dominant God language out of the church's usage, but rather to explore feminine and other images and concepts of God. When we broaden our concepts, we take our Creator out of the small box of maleness and, in turn, open our worship to infinite possibilities. In this section on practical applications, we hope to stimulate new expressions for personal and congregational worship. A main purpose of this section is to remind disciples to be sensitive to the experience of all persons, not just those who relate to God in a particular way or by a particular term.

### **Hymnody**

We acknowledge the depth and breadth of theology that is expressed in song. We encourage all worship planners and resource producers to choose music that reflects, informs, and calls disciples to a deeper and more expansive theology.

As a new denominational hymnal is created, persons should address the complex issues of gender, race, culture, ethnicity, age, family structure, and physical and mental challenges.

### **Prayer**

It is unwise to put conditions on how persons pray. Disciples are encouraged to address the Divine in a variety of ways. However, public prayer represents the community. Therefore, in offering a prayer on behalf of people, one should try to be as sensitive as possible in making all feel that their prayers are being lifted up.

### **Readings and Variety of Worship**

In all worship practices, we urge a sensitivity and recognition of the infinite variety of human activity and experience as we connect with the Divine Power. Therefore, we suggest exploration of metaphors and dimensions of God through the use of a variety of worship practices: litanies, drama, sacred dance, poetry, and other forms of creative worship.

### **Scripture**

We recommend the utilization of inclusive translations of the Bible in addition to the Inspired Version. (See the bibliography for suggestions.) We encourage persons to seek out the diversity of language that is found within scriptures and let the Bible speak for itself through the wealth of images for God that are found in scriptural passages.

## **G. The Church in All Cultures**

After discussion with members in several cultures about the wide variety of culturally specific needs, we recognize an inability to fairly represent the inclusive-language needs of the church in all cultures.

However, this revised policy encourages all American resource producers and speakers to be aware of and sensitive to the needs of the worldwide church (e.g., providing non-North American phone numbers in *Herald* articles, utilizing the stories of non-American heroes in resources, and outlining procedures for church members throughout the world to respond to World Church announcements).

Each national church (or other local jurisdiction) may wish to form task forces to examine the cultural and language expressions that may be limiting or discriminating against any of God's children.

### **Conclusion**

The World Church Committee on Inclusive Language offers this revised policy as a guide to more faithful expression of the love of Jesus Christ and the hope that resides in the gospel message.

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## Appendix B: Names for God

### Gender-Free Options

Gender-free options are metaphors that have no human analogue; therefore, there is no gender reference. These metaphors are likely to create the least inner struggle as new metaphors. They are perceived as the "safest" to use in public. They seldom cause alienation in a hearer and seem inclusive. However, for deeper identification and affiliation, persons may choose more personal images. Those that are feminine or masculine may be used to supplement these gender-free options.

(NOTE: \* From a list entitled "Names, Titles, Phrases Applied to God (non-sexist)" which was compiled by Davelyn Vignaud and distributed by the Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church.)

### Names, Titles, Phrases Applied to God

Absence	Darkness
Aim	Deity (Acts 17:29)
All	Divine Ally
All-powerful God* or	Divine Being
Powerful God (Psalm 147:5)	Divine Process
Almighty God (Job 5:17)	Divine Spirit
Anchor (Hebrews 6:19)	Emptiness
Answer to All Mysteries*	Eternal One (Deuteronomy 33:27, Romans 16:26)
Awesome God*	Eternal Presence
(Deuteronomy 7:21; Nehemiah 1:5, 9:32)	Eternal Source of Comfort
Being Itself	(II Thessalonians 2:16-17)
Beyondness	Existence Itself
Binder of Wounds*	Ever-Living God* (Psalm 9:7)
(Ezekiel 34:16, Hosea 6:1, Psalm 147:3)	Ever-Loving God* (Psalm 136)
Wounder (Job 5:18)	Faithful God* (I Corinthians 1:9, 10:13)
Black God	First and Last* (Isaiah 44:6, Revelation 22:13)
Breath of God (Job 27:3, 33:4; Isaiah 30:33, 40:7)	Fountain, Water of Life (Jeremiah 17:13, Revelation 21:6)
Brokenness	Generous Provider of All Good Gifts*
God as one who breaks (Ezekiel 30:21-22)	(I Corinthians 2:12)
Burden-lifting God	Giver of Life (Job 33:4)
(Psalms 55:22, 81:6; Matthew 11:28-30)	Giver of Light
Ceaseless Working	Giver of Peace
(Lamentations 3:22, Isaiah 40:28)	God
Comfort of Sufferers* (Psalms 119:50, 76; Isaiah 51:12; II Thessalonians 2:16)	God of All Colors
Compass	God of the Covenant
Creating God (Genesis 1:1, 26)	(Genesis 9:17, Ezekiel 16:62, Luke 22:20)
Creative and Nurturing God	God of gods (Deuteronomy 10:17)
Creative Source of All Being* (Hebrews 11:3)	God of Israel (Exodus 5:1, II Samuel 23:3, II Kings 10:31)
Creator (Genesis 1, 2, Isaiah 40:28, Romans 1:25, Revelation 4:11)	God of Life and Death
Creator and Preserver of All Kind*	God of Peace (Romans 15:33, 16:20; Philippians 4:9)
Cry (The Cry)	Gracious Giver of Knowledge* (Proverbs 2:6, Ecclesiastes 2:26, James 1:5)
Cycles	Gracious God* (Jonah 4:2)

Great God (of power)\* (Deuteronomy 7:21, 9:29; Psalm 66:3)  
 Great God Our Hope\* (Jeremiah 14:8, Psalm 71:5)  
 Ground of Being  
 Heart's Delight (Isaiah 58:14, Psalm 37:4)  
 Hidden God\*  
 High and Holy One\* (Isaiah 57:15)  
 Holy One (Leviticus 19:2, I Peter 1:16)  
 Holy One-in-Three (John 14:26)  
 Holy Spirit (Mark 1:10, John 14:26)  
 I Am; I Will Be What I Will Be; I Will Cause to Be What I Will Cause to Be (Exodus 3:13-14)  
 Incognito God\* (i.e., Moses with the burning bush, Exodus 3:2-6)  
 Infinite Challenger  
 Infinite God\*  
 Inspiration to Goodness\*  
 Isness  
 Keeper (Psalm 121:5)  
 Knowing One  
 Liberator (Isaiah 49:9, 61:1; Luke 4:18-19)  
 Life-giver (Job 33:4; Psalms 119:154, 156; I Timothy 6:13)  
 Light (Psalm 27:1, Isaiah 60:20, John 1:5)  
*Logos* (The Word) (John 1)  
 Love (I John 4:8)  
 Maker of All Things  
 Maker of Heaven and Earth (Genesis 14:19, 22)  
 Merciful God (Deuteronomy 4:31, Nehemiah 9:31)  
 Mighty God\* (Deuteronomy 10:17, Isaiah 9:6, Jeremiah 32:18)  
 Mighty Rock (Psalms 62:2,7; 89:26)  
 Mind of the Universe\*  
 Most High, or God Most High (Genesis 14:18, Deuteronomy 32:8, and in many Psalms)  
 Nothingness  
 Nurturer  
 One Who Is Always There  
 Our Beginning and Our End\*(Revelation 1:8, 21:6, 22:13)  
 Our Refuge and Our Strength\* (Psalms 46:1, 62:8)  
 Overhanging Tree  
 Peacemaker  
 Power of Being  
 Power that Saves\* (Psalms 67:2, 78:22)  
 Presence  
 Proclaimer of Justice\* (Isaiah 42, Matthew 12:18)  
 Puzzle, Puzzler  
 Radiant, Glorious God (Psalm 76:4)  
 Rainbow God  
 Rebel  
 Reconciler (Colossians 1:20, II Corinthians 5:18)  
 Redeemer (Job 19:25; Psalm 19:14; Isaiah 47:4, 60:16)  
 Refuge (Deuteronomy 33:27, II Samuel 22:33, Psalm 31:2)  
 Rhythm (Divine Rhythm)  
 Righteous God\* (Psalms 71:19, 112:4; Daniel 9:14; Isaiah 45:21; I John 2:1)  
 Rock (Genesis 49:24, Deuteronomy 32:15, II Samuel 22:2-3)  
 Sacred and Intimate One  
 Searcher of Hearts\*(Psalm 139:1, I Chronicles 28:9, Romans 8:27, Revelations 2:23)  
 Shelter from the Storm\* (Isaiah 25:4)  
 Shield (Genesis 15:1; II Samuel 22:31; Psalms 18:30, 28:7)  
 Shining Glory\*  
 Silence  
 Singer of New Songs  
 Song (Exodus 15:2)  
 Source of Blessing, Creation, Freedom, Life, Mercy, Peace...\*  
 Sovereign God\* (I Timothy 6:15)  
 Spirit (Mark 1:10, John 4:24)  
 Spirit of God, see Wind of God (Genesis 1:2, Exodus 31:3, Luke 4:18, Matthew 3:16)  
 Spirit of Life  
 Spirit of Peace  
 Spirit Within  
 Spiritual Presence  
 Steadfast and Loving One\* (Lamentations 3:22; II Chronicles 7:6; Psalms 17:7, 48:9)  
 Strength (Exodus 15:2, Psalms 18:1, 28:7)  
 Strength of the Weak\*(Isaiah 35:3, Ezekiel 34:16, Luke 1:51-55)  
 Supreme Intelligence  
 Supreme Reality  
 Surprising One  
 Sustainer (Psalm 55:22, I Corinthians 1:8)  
 Technicolor God  
 Thou  
 To Be  
 Total Mystery  
 True Light (John 1:9)  
 Trustworthy One (Psalm 111:7)  
 Truth  
 Ultimate One  
 Understanding God (Psalm 147:5)  
 Unity of All Life  
 Unobtainable  
 Upholder of the Falling\*  
 Watchful and Caring God\* (Genesis 31:49-50, Jeremiah 1:12)

Water	I Corinthians 2:6-8)
Way (John 14:6)	Spirit of Wisdom (Isaiah 11:2)
Wind	Wise God (Romans 16:27)
Wind of God ( <i>Ruach</i> , a feminine word in Hebrew, see Spirit of God—Genesis 1:2)	Wondrous Fashioner and Sustainer of Life*
Wisdom (Proverbs 3, 8 and any others;	Word (John 1:1)
	You

Even this long list does not encompass all of the possibilities for Divine metaphors. For example, many animals and birds are used in the Bible as metaphors that emphasize a certain quality of God: "God is like an eagle, stirring up its nest..." (Deuteronomy 32:11); "I am like a mother...like a lion..." (Hosea 5:12, 14).

When the Deity is referred to by such metaphors as Nothingness, Emptiness, Darkness, Brokenness, Absence, Clown, or Rebel, it is the experience of the believer that is being emphasized. For some people, God may seem like Emptiness at times. Those who have experienced a period of time in which their relationship to the Deity was very confusing will likely find some of these choices meaningful. These metaphors are offered as possibilities not as recommendations. Certainly many in our biblical tradition have felt God to be absent and perplexing at times—and have told God so. Choices for the names of God is a deeply personal choice.

### **Options That Evoke Feminine or Masculine Images**

Some metaphors, such as Father, clearly have a masculine reference, while others, such as Sister, refer to likeness with females. Yet there are many metaphors with human analogues that could evoke either masculine or feminine images.

Whenever a human profession is lifted up as a metaphor for the Deity, it is either a male or female in that profession that we think of as we name the Deity that way. We cannot think of the Deity as Physician or Nurse without also associating some gender to that Physician or Nurse, although the gender we associate with the metaphor of professions will vary at different times and is conditioned by cultural expectations.

(NOTE: \* From a list entitled "Names, Titles, Phrases Applied to God (non-sexist)" which was compiled by Davelyn Vignaud and distributed by the Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church.)

Administrator of Life	Comforter (Isaiah 66:13)
Architect	Companion of the Lonely*
Author	Composer
Author of Life (Acts 3:15)	Conductor
Baggage Carrier	Counselor (John 14:26, 15:26)
Baker	Wonderful Counselor (Isaiah 9:6)
Begetter	Dancer
Beloved Friend	Dentist
Blacksmith	Designer
Builder (Psalm 127:1; Hebrews 3:4, 11:10)	Divine Colleague
Carpenter	Divine Companion
Chef	Fashioner (Job 31:15, Psalm 119:73)
Clown	Fixer

Friend (Jeremiah 3:4)  
Gardener  
Glassblower  
Guardian (I Peter 2:25)  
Guide  
Healer of the sick\* (Jeremiah 30:17,  
Hosea 11:3)  
Helper\*  
Helper of the fatherless (Psalm 10:14)  
Helper of the helpless (Psalm 10:14)  
Helper of the needy (Psalm 72:12)  
Judge  
Judge Eternal (Genesis 18:25, Isaiah 33:22,  
Hebrews 12:23)  
Keeper of the Covenant  
Keymaker  
Giving Keys (Matthew 16:19)  
Holding Keys (Revelation 1:18)  
Knitter (Psalm 139:13)  
Liberator (the Exodus story, Isaiah 61:1)  
Life-giver (Job 33:4, I Timothy 6:13)  
Lover (Song of Solomon)  
Lover of our Souls  
Machinist  
Master (Ephesians 6:9)  
Master Builder, see Builder  
Mechanic  
Mentor

Minister  
Music Maker  
Nurse  
Nurturer  
Overseer  
Parent (Hosea 11:3, I John 5:1)  
Persuasive Friend  
Physician  
Potter (Isaiah 64:8)  
Professor  
Protector (Psalm 68:5)  
Provider (Genesis 22:14, Psalm 111:5)  
Rabbi (Matthew 23:8)  
Rebel  
Savior (Isaiah 60:16)  
Servant  
Sewer  
Shepherd (Genesis 49:24, Luke 15:3-7,  
I Peter 2:25)  
Teacher (Isaiah 30:20; Matthew 12:38, 23:8;  
John 13:13)  
Tester  
Thou (Psalm 31:3)  
Timekeeper  
Time Manager  
You (Psalm 31:3, an example of many)

## Appendix C: Annotated Bibliography

### Articles and Journals

Hughes, Kathleen. "The Power of Words to Shape Reality," *Pastoral Music* (August-September, 1999).

This article from the journal of The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada samples hymns found in seven recent North American, denominationally produced hymnals and discusses their relative success in combining fidelity to classical Christian teaching, faithfulness to standards of inclusivity, and the original authors' theological intentions.

*Religious Education: Inclusive Language*. vol. 80, no. 4 (Fall 1985).

This journal of the Religious Association addresses a variety of inclusive language issues from many religious traditions (Protestant, Catholic, Jewish). This particular issue provides a point/counterpoint discussion of many of the basic issues in inclusive language.

Wood, Ruth Ann. "The Power of Language," *Restoration Studies V* (Independence, Missouri: Herald House, 1993), 93-99.

This article was written to help persons understand the evolving nature of words and the use and misuse of words in cultural settings and in scripture.

### Books

Andrews, Peggy. *Sisters Listening to Sisters: Women of the World Share Stories of Personal Empowerment*. Westport, Connecticut: Bergin & Garvey, 1996.

Andrews shares stories of women listening to women as they struggle with universal issues in the struggle for women's economic, political, social, and cultural empowerment—the value of women's work, violence against women's bodies, women's spirituality, sexual harassment, and women's peace movements.

Belenky, Mary Field, Blythe McVicker Clinchy, Nancy Rule Goldberger, and Jill Mattuck Tarule. *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind*. New York: Basic Books, 1986.

Based on personal interviews with a hundred women throughout the United States, this is an excellent resource for the general study of knowledge and how knowledge is constructed and expresses our reality.

Clyde, Arthur G. *The Language of the New Century Hymnal*. Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 1996.

This book details the myriad considerations and subsequent policies followed by the United Church of Christ in their extensive efforts to produce its new denominational hymnal in a language-inclusive way.

Daley, Mary. *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1985.

First published in the early 1970s, Daley's book has endured the test of time in feminist theory. The author encourages the spiraling journey into hope and wholeness through examining mythical paradigms and breaking out of "man-made amnesia."

Duck, Ruth C. *Finding Words for Worship: A Guide for Leaders*. Nashville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995.

Hymn-text author Ruth Duck presents methods and models for writing unique and creative worship resources—such as prayers, hymns, and sermons—that are scripturally relevant and mindful of inclusive-language concerns.

Duck, Ruth C. and Patricia Wilson-Kastner. *Praising God: The Trinity in Christian Worship*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999.

Using analytical essays and liturgical resources, the authors explore the complex issues of Trinitarian theology past and present while investigating the new forms of language that are essential if we are to "properly praise the unnamed, all-named triune God."

- Epstein, Cynthia Fuchs. *Deceptive Distinctions: Sex, Gender, and the Social Order*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988.  
This scholarly work examines the assumptions that guide social thought and public policy, analyzing how social beliefs bring about social realities and how social realities shape social beliefs. In the words of Betty Friedan, "...It is an important caution for those of us who conceive now of an equality that transcends the male model, affirming the diversity and new existential possibilities of both female and male experience."
- Kozak, Pat and Janet Schaffran. *More Than Words: Prayer and Ritual for Inclusive Communities*. Meyer Stone Books, 1986.
- Lerner, Gerda. *The Creation of Patriarchy*. Oxford University Press, 1986.  
Lerner provides a historical framework examining the historicity of female subordination and re-opens the origins of the collective dominance of women by men.
- Marshall, Joyce and Gene. *The Reign of Reality*. Realistic Living Press, 1987.  
A chapter of this book titled "Postpatriarchal Women and Men" traces human cultural development from primitive to modern times, offering the insight that the key themes to be translated into language are equality and mutuality for both women and men.
- Mollenkott, Virginia Ramey. *The Divine Feminine: The Biblical Imagery of God as Female*. New York: Crossroad, 1984.  
Mollenkott states that her purpose in writing this book is "to delve deeper into just one way in which the Bible supports human sexual equality and mutuality: the images of God as female that sprinkle the sacred writings of Judaism and Christianity"(page 7).  
*Women, Men and the Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1977.  
In this book Mollenkott explores the teachings and behavior of Jesus as a model for mutual relationships. As a careful scholar, the author examines basic scriptural texts to discover foundational principles to achieve "male-female equality through mutual submission." (page 33).
- Pagels, Elaine. *The Gnostic Gospels*. Vintage Books, 1979.  
This overview of the "gnostic Christian" texts found in Egypt in 1945 reveals that early scriptural concepts of Father-God had a Mother-God counterpart.
- Plaskow, Judith and Carol P. Christ. *Weaving the Visions: New Patterns in Feminist Spirituality*. Harper SanFrancisco, 1989.  
The subjects of these thirty essays range "from the problems of liturgical language and 'naming the sacred' to reclaiming women's history within Christianity, Judaism and other religious traditions" (*New York Times Book Review*).
- Ramshaw, Gail. *God beyond Gender: Feminist Christian God-Language*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.  
This book examines each of the primary types of Christian God-language and proposes helpful guidelines and solutions for worship.
- Russell, Letty M., ed. *Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985.  
The editor hopes that the essays in this book will provide a forum for discussion of the use and misuse of scriptural interpretation.
- The Liberating Word*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976.  
This collection of essays exposes readers to a variety of biblical interpretations that expand one's understanding of the mutuality inherent in the gospel message.
- Ruether, Rosemary Radford. *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology*. Beacon Press, 1993.  
"An impassioned plea for humane life on this planet"--*Philadelphia Inquirer*
- Wren, Brian. *What Language Shall I Borrow?: God-Talk in Worship: A Male Response to Feminist Theology*. New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1990.  
Renowned hymn-writer Brian Wren gives both a thoughtful theoretical presentation and a step-by-step practical walk-through of the inclusive God-language issue.

## **Inclusive-Language Scriptures**

*The New American Standard Bible.* Chicago: Moody, Press, 1977.

*The New English Bible.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1970.

*The New International Version.* Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Bible Publishers, 1973.

*The New Jerusalem Bible.* Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1985.

*The New Oxford Annotated Bible, New Revised Standard Version.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

From Priests for Equality, P. O. Box 5243, Hyattsville, MD 20782 1-800-746-1160:

*The Inclusive Hebrew Scriptures: Volume III: The Writings,* 1999.

*The Inclusive New Testament,* 1994.

*The Inclusive Psalms,* 1999.

*The Psalter* by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL), Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1995.

*Psalms Anew: In Inclusive Language.* Nancy Schreck and Maureen Leach, compilers. Winona, Minnesota: Saint Mary's Press, 1986.

*The New Testament of the Inclusive Language Bible.* Notre Dame, Indiana: Cross Roads Books, 1994.

## **Inclusive-language Worship and Music Resources**

For a list of suggested worship and music resources that utilize inclusive language, contact Worship Ministries Team (816) 833-1000 ext. 1433.

## **Reference works**

Maggio, Rosalie. *The Nonsexist Word Finder: A Dictionary of Gender-Free Usage.* Boston: Beacon Press, 1988.

This book provides more than 5,000 alternatives, explanations, or definitions for sexist words and phrases.

Miller, Casey and Kate Swift. *The Handbook of Nonsexist Writing: For Writers, Editors and Speakers.* New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1980.

This standard work in inclusive language helps persons see the background and a thorough understanding of many principles of inclusive usage. Topics covered include "Man as a False Generic," "The Pronoun Problem," "Generalizations," and other topics of interest.