2. Report of Bethany Theological Seminary

Bethany Theological Seminary has a history of adapting its program to meet the changing needs of the church and society. Now, in a religious and spiritual landscape characterized by uncertainty, Bethany will uphold its mission by embracing and articulating its Anabaptist-Pietist identity and reaching out to serve a broader, more diverse constituency. Hallmarks of Bethany’s education will be (1) an interdisciplinary approach to learning, (2) integration of theory and practice, and (3) increasingly diverse programs of study.

• Anchored in its commitment to academic freedom, Bethany expresses a prophetic witness rooted in a deep theological understanding of scripture and the Anabaptist-Pietist traditions of disciple making, peace building, and advocacy for justice.

• Bethany claims a position as a center for the study and practice of emerging areas of religious interest across faith traditions.

• Blending academics with application and spiritual formation, Bethany exemplifies impactful learning, developing servant leaders with theological understanding, sensitivity, and skill to forge genuine change in church and community.

• Engaging people of diverse religious, geographic, and social backgrounds, the Bethany community nurtures respect for differences and sustains spiritual empowerment for students and alumni.

Taken from “Extending our Witness, Enlarging our Impact,” Bethany Seminary’s strategic vision narrative approved by the board of trustees in March 2017.

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LEADERSHIP

Board of Trustees
At the beginning of Bethany’s fiscal 2019-20 year in July, the officers of the board of trustees comprised Lynn Myers in his eighth year as chair, Cathy Huffman in her third year as secretary, and Eric Bishop as the new vice chair, replacing David Witkovsky, who concluded his second term as of June 30, 2019. Brian Flory, representing alumni, also concluded his service on the board after one term.

Wendi Ailor was elected as the new alumni representative to her first term on the board by the Bethany alumni body and was affirmed by Annual Conference delegates. Monica Rice was elected by the delegates to her first term on the board, representing the Brethren Colleges. Eric Bishop and Phil Stover were affirmed by the delegates to serve second terms, both at large, having been elected by the Bethany board of trustees.
President
Jeff Carter began his sixth year as Bethany’s president on July 1, 2019. He continues to travel widely, visiting and preaching in Brethren congregations, meeting donors and alumni, and speaking at district and denominational events. In March at Bridgewater College, he provided a response to one of the lectures at the Forum for Brethren Studies symposium, The Status of Brethren Organizations: Demise and Momentum, 1994-2019.

President Carter continues to represent Church of the Brethren interests as a member of the World Council of Churches Central Committee, serving as a member of the Churches Commission on International Affairs. Along with Courtney Hess, grant project director, he gave a presentation on the success of Pillars and Pathways (see below) at Gathering First Fruits: National Summit on the Economics of Ministry. This January 2019 event brought together 650 leaders of denominations, denominational agencies, and seminaries. He also attended two leadership events during the year: the Harvard Intensive for Presidential Leadership, a certificate program for presidents of higher education institutions, and the ATS Presidents Leadership Intensive.

Administrative Leadership
Day-to-day governance of the Seminary is the responsibility of the Leadership Team, which in 2019 comprised the president, academic dean, executive director of administration and finance, executive director of institutional advancement, executive director of admissions and student services, faculty secretary, and director of the Brethren Academy. The Administrative Team comprises the president, academic dean, executive director of administration and finance, and executive director of institutional advancement and meets separately on certain issues as needed.

MAJOR INITIATIVES

Strategic Plan
Bethany is in the third year of its strategic vision implementation plan. In March 2017, the board of trustees approved a strategic vision narrative that is a response to (1) Bethany’s self-assessment of its current position as a school of theological education and (2) primary issues the Seminary identified that it will face in the future. The narrative presents a scenario in which the Seminary has realized its goals for the nature of theological education it offers, the nature of its student body, and its fiscal and operational well-being. The document was crafted by the Strategic Planning Oversight Committee, based on group discussions with faculty, staff, trustees, and several alumni.

From this document, five priorities were named to guide Bethany in living into its vision. The strategic vision implementation plan is a framework that addresses these priorities with both finite and ongoing goals, timeframes, and actions taken. Faculty and staff continue to incorporate the addressing of these goals into their work and to update the plan with mention of work being done.
Anniversary in Richmond
With the beginning of the 2019-20 academic year, Bethany marked its twenty-fifth year as part of the Richmond community. Coinciding with the completion of interior renovations, this milestone was celebrated with an open house for the public during the September board of trustees meeting. The Wayne County Chamber of Commerce conducted a ribbon cutting, and the president of Earlham and the mayor of Richmond were invited to offer remarks. President emeritus Gene Roop was the guest speaker at the Bethany trustee and employee dinner, offering a reflection on the people who made the relocation of the Seminary possible.

Curriculum
New Master of Arts Degree  In the fall Bethany and the Earlham School of Religion launched the new Master of Arts: Theopoetics and Writing degree, unique in graduate education. The degree grew out of the popularity of Bethany’s Certificate in Theopoetics and Theological Imagination and student enthusiasm for how Bethany’s theopoetic courses and ESR’s writing courses complement each other. Scott Holland, Slabaugh Professor of Theology and Culture, and Ben Brazil, assistant professor and director of the Ministry of Writing program at ESR, developed the degree, which is offered independently by each school. Five Bethany students enrolled in fall 2019, and one enrolled in spring 2020.

New Graduate Certificate  The Certificate in Biblical Peacemaking was launched in the fall as Bethany’s fifth specialized graduate certificate. It was developed especially in response to the interests of potential Nigerian students for Bethany’s partnership with EYN, and a total of eight EYN students enrolled during the 2019-20 academic year. All qualifying courses are already part of the curriculum, involving North American students for an intercultural experience. The certificate can be completed entirely through online courses or blended courses using synchronous video.

Pillars and Pathways Program
The Pillars and Pathways program at Bethany was developed through a grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. as part of their Initiative to Address Economic Issues Facing Future Ministers. At Bethany five pillars have been named to help students complete seminary with minimal or no additional debt and encourage a lifetime of sound financial practices: (1) financial education, (2) conscious consumption, (3) financial aid, (4) affordable housing, and (5) employment assistance.

Students are required to take a Conscious Financial Living class to give them knowledge of best practices in managing finances and living within their means. While Courtney Hess has been the sole instructor, he co-taught the class with Dan Poole in fall 2019, broadening the leadership for this important program component. Bethany has used the financial services of Everence to train coaches to work with the students, although finding coaches can be difficult. In September 2019 the Seminary partnered with Lititz Church of the Brethren,
hosted the training and recruited coaches from its members and surrounding area. Each coach was then paired with one or two students during the fall semester, and some have expressed interest in coaching again. It is hoped that such a partnership can be arranged with another congregation in the future.

As a unique opportunity within this program, the Pillars and Pathways Residency Scholarship enables eligible students to complete seminary with no additional educational or consumer debt. Resident Scholars must reside in the Bethany Neighborhood and engage in community life, qualify for enough financial aid to cover tuition beyond the required base payment, volunteer eight hours per month in Richmond, and earn or save $7500 per year. The Residency Scholarship covers the gap between the expected cost of attendance for residential students and the combination of Bethany financial aid and the amount students earn per year.

The number of Resident Scholars has increased each year since the scholarship was launched in fall 2017, from an initial eight to fourteen by the fall of 2019. To accommodate the increasing student population, Bethany has been able to acquire space in two new houses (see Facilities below).

Partnerships

EYN. Since January 2018, when Bethany offered its first course via synchronized video to students in Nigeria, task teams both at Bethany and with EYN in Nigeria have continued to refine the program. The new Certificate in Biblical Peacemaking has been developed in response to the interests of EYN members (see New Graduate Certificate above). The lifting of the residency requirement for the MA will benefit Nigerian students eligible for this degree. With a reduction in credit hours for the MDiv, students qualified to enter the program can fulfill their residency requirement by attending classes on campus for one semester.

In August 2019 a new cohort of EYN students began their studies at Bethany in the Certificate in Biblical Peacemaking. The two-week intensive course, Gospel of Peace, was revised as a blended course and team taught by Dan Ulrich at Bethany and Nyampa Kwabe in Jos, Nigeria (see International Scholar in Residence below). An online course for the certificate was taught during the fall by adjunct professor Debbie Roberts, and additional courses are scheduled. Eight EYN students have enrolled in the certificate during 2019-20.

Cross-Registration. Beginning with the fall 2019 semester, Bethany Seminary, Earlham School of Religion (ESR), and Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) entered into an open cross-registration agreement. This is the first collaborative effort of its kind among seminaries of the three Historic Peace Church traditions. The agreement allows eligible students at each seminary to enroll in most courses offered by the other seminaries without tuition adjustments being made. Online courses and synchronous video technology are part of the curriculum at each school, making an increasing number of courses widely accessible.
Richmond Symphony Orchestra  For the third year, Bethany became an educa-
tional sponsor of the symphony and was acknowledged as such at each concert,
on the website, in donor listings, and in connection with educational activities
provided for children at the concerts. The Seminary also continued partnering
with the RSO in presenting a second season of The Recital Series. Featuring RSO
members and guest musicians as soloists or in small ensembles, the perform-
ances take place in Nicarry Chapel and are free to the public. Two performances
took place in the fall, and two more are scheduled for spring 2020. The RSO
publicizes the series to their membership, and Bethany announces the perform-
ances to regional alumni and friends.

Grant-Supported Programs

Binocular Vision  During the spring Bethany hosted a series of events as a con-
tinuation of its initiative called Binocular Vision: Looking at Life through the
Eyes of Faith and Science. The project was funded in 2018 by a grant from the
American Association for the Advancement of Science through its Science for
Seminaries program. The goal of this program is to support seminars as they
integrate science into theological education and demonstrate its relevance to
the life of religious communities. Russell Haitch, who wrote the grant proposal
with Nate Inglis, assistant professor of theological studies, took the lead in plan-
ning and facilitating the events.

During March and April, three lunches open to the public were held at the Sem-
inary to present information on current social challenges. Richmond residents
in ministry and social service were joined by Bethany alumni, students, and em-
ployees to learn about the causes and effective treatments of childhood stress
and various forms of addiction.

A conference entitled Look at Life, held in April, encouraged the considera-
tion of faith and science in tandem. More than 100 guests and presenters gathered
to receive information and share viewpoints in a space for open dialog. Scientific
scholarship and personal faith perspectives were offered by five professors from
the fields of biology, mathematics, philosophy, archaeology, theology, physics,
and astronomy. Presentations on current scientific thinking and findings gener-
ated discussion, and questions posed to the speakers were followed by small
group discussions to process topics in more depth. Renowned Old Testament
scholar and author John Walton from Wheaton College presented the final lect-
tures on an understanding of creation that incorporates the Genesis account and
the theory of evolution. A panel discussion provided a response.

ATS Peer Group  During 2019 Bethany and four partner seminaries continued
their collaborative work to address student indebtedness. In 2018 the Associa-
tion for Theological Schools (ATS) awarded the five schools a $20,000 Peer
Group Grant to support their efforts to minimize the financial cost of obtaining
a seminary education. These schools had already received grants from Lilly En-
dowment Inc. as part of its Theological School Initiative to Address Economic
Issues Facing Future Ministers. At Bethany, this led to the development of Pillars and Pathways (see above).

Courtney Hess, Bethany’s grant project director who submitted the proposal, facilitated a conference in 2018 with representatives from the schools to share ideas about addressing student indebtedness. In January 2019, a follow-up conference included both administrators and students from each seminary in conversations about cost of education and debt. The three Bethany students who attended expressed surprise and gratitude for the extent of Bethany’s efforts in reducing indebtedness compared to the other institutions.

Facilities

**Capital Improvements** The final phase of capital improvements took place during fall 2019, giving the Seminary an improved exterior presence and better accessibility. A parking lot just west of the Bethany Center was added along with a new entrance drive and handicapped accessibility parking in front of the building. A new sign perpendicular to National Road gives Bethany greater visibility, and new sidewalks and landscaping update the building’s appearance.

Inside, all new furniture for classrooms and public spaces arrived in spring 2019. Those using the classrooms now have tables equipped for computer use. Lobby areas have updated seating, and the Gathering Room and Congregational Life Room have greater flexibility with table and chair arrangements. To honor the generosity of donors who made major gifts to the capital improvements, the first-floor lobby is being named in honor of Paul and Priscilla Wampler, and the second-floor lobby and one classroom are being named in honor of Ernest and Cleona Barr.

In need of additional housing for its Pillars and Pathways Residential Scholarship (see Pillars and Pathways above), Bethany began renting a renovated house from Earlham College with room for four students in fall 2019. The Seminary was also able to purchase a small home during the fall, which will provide housing for two Residency Scholars beginning with the spring 2020 semester. Five houses are currently being utilized for the scholarship program.

**International Scholar in Residence**

During fall 2019, Dr. Nyampa Kwabe served as Bethany’s third international scholar in residence. An Old Testament scholar, he is acting head of the Department of Biblical Studies at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria (TCNN). Prior to arriving, Kwabe co-taught Bethany’s August intensive course, Gospel of Peace, with Dan Ulrich, Weiand Professor of New Testament Studies (see EYN Partnership above).

While at Bethany, Kwabe preached in chapel and continued his professional writing, which explores a particular method of interpreting scripture: “a hermeneutics for transformative biblical interpretation that will bridge the gaps
between academia and the church and between exegesis and spirituality.” Hermeneutics was an area of concentration in Kwabe’s MATH from the International Christian College in Glasgow, Scotland (2004), and his PhD from the University of Leeds, England (2015).

FACULTY AND STAFF

Personnel Changes

- Amy Beery, program director of youth engagement, resigned in April, having held the position since November 2017. She began employment at Bethany in July 2016 as an admissions counselor.
- Nate Inglis resigned as assistant professor of theological studies in August. He began teaching at Bethany in the fall of 2015, bringing an emphasis in ecotheology to the curriculum and working with the Seminary’s Green Circle group to promote awareness of ecological issues. He has begun a position as assistant dean of students at Columbia University.
- In August, Roxanne Aguirre resigned from her position as coordinator for Spanish-language ministry training programs in the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership. She had held the position since January 2018.
- Todd Knight, administrative assistant for institutional advancement, resigned in September, having held the position since March 2017.
- Karen Garrett resigned as office manager for Brethren Life & Thought in September, having held the position since September 2007. She will continue in her role as coordinator of assessment for the Seminary.
- Gabriela Carillo Chacón joined the Admissions Office as an admissions recruiter in June. In this position she initiates and maintains relationships with prospective students, guides them through the application process, and assists in managing department communication.
- Dan Poole was named assistant professor of ministry formation, beginning in July. He had served as coordinator of ministry formation since 2007 and during 2018-19 held the position of visiting instructor for ministry formation. While at Bethany he has also served as an advancement associate and director of educational technology.
- Tony Price began as an office manager for Brethren Life & Thought in September. He has responsibility for maintaining subscriptions and overseeing production logistics for the journal.
- Lily Ballenger has taken on additional advancement responsibilities with the new title administrative assistant for finance and institutional advancement. She began working at Bethany in August 2018 as business services assistant.
- Mark Lancaster has the new title of assistant to the president for international partnerships. He came to Bethany in 2015 as executive director for institutional advancement and began serving as assistant to the president for strategic initiatives in 2018.
- Courtney Hess has begun a new role as assistant to the president for strategic initiatives, having served Bethany since 2014 as grant project director. Both roles have been as an independent contractor.
Selected Faculty Highlights

- Russell Haitch, professor of theology and human science, gave primary oversight to organizing and leading events within Bethany’s initiative entitled Binocular Vision: Looking at Life through the Eyes of Faith and Science (see Binocular Vision above). He copresented an insight session of the same name at Annual Conference 2019 and also copresented a session entitled “A New Perspective on Creation and Evolution.”

- Scott Holland, Slabaugh Professor of Theology and Culture and director of peace studies and cross-cultural studies, participated during the summer in the Anabaptist Global Network and World Council of Churches conference and consultations on Just Peace Building, held in The Netherlands. His presentation, “Make Art, Not War: Toward An Aesthetics of Just Peace,” will be published in the conference book. In October he presented the paper "Theopoetics and Public Theologies" at an international theology conference at KU University in Leuven, Belgium. Also in October he presented a paper on Moncure Daniel Conway, a nineteenth-century Ohio abolitionist leader and pastor, at the Unitarian Universalist Academic Convocation in Baltimore. It will appear as an article in the spring 2020 issue of the Journal of Unitarian Universalist History.

- Denise Kettering-Lane, assistant professor of Brethren studies, created an introductory seminar on the history and traditions of the Brethren for new Bethany employees, which she led in March. In October she taught History of the Church of the Brethren as a TRIM course for the Brethren Academy, hosted by the Miami (Florida) Haitian Church. At Annual Conference 2019 she was a panel member for the insight session “Responding to #MeToo and #ChurchToo: Biblical, Historical, and Practical Ministry Perspectives,” sponsored by the Brethren Journal Association. She also continues as editor of Brethren Life & Thought.

- Dawn Ottoni-Wilhelm, Brightbill Professor of Preaching and Worship, wrote the lead article in the 2019 International Journal of Homiletics, entitled “Fearing God in a Fear-Filled World? Homiletical Explorations.” She continues to provide leadership as a board member for Societas Homiletica, the international association of homileticians, and attended an October planning meeting in Budapest, Hungary, for the 2020 international conference. She also continues to teach for the Buttrick Peer Coaching program for preachers at Vanderbilt University.

- Dan Poole, assistant professor of ministry formation, currently serves as Bethany’s liaison to the program Part-Time Pastor: Full-Time Church, a new initiative of the Church of the Brethren Office of Ministry that provides support to multivocational, part-time pastors. He also provides materials and lectures for the training of resource people who support the pastors. He continues to serve as secretary on the National Steering Committee for the Association of Theological Field Educators. He also began a two-year training program with Oasis Ministries to become a certified spiritual director, benefitting the Ministry Formation student groups that he leads.
• Ken Rogers, professor of historical studies, gave four lectures in January and February on the Protestant Reformation in England at the First Congregational Church (UCC) in Palo Alto, California. In March he presented a paper to the Midwest Section of the American Academy of Religion, proposing that Quaker beliefs influenced the formation of the Brethren movement in the late 1600s and early 1700s through an instructor of Alexander Mack. In November he attended the national conference of the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Biblical Literature held in San Diego.

• Steve Schweitzer, academic dean, traveled widely to present and teach during the year. He gave workshops on science fiction and theology at National Jr. High Conference in June and also spoke on science fiction and theology at youth/young adult and continuing education events. Among other presentations, he taught the TRIM course Survey of the Bible in March in Miami, Florida, and spoke about Bethany’s international programs at the Western Plains District Conference.

• Dan Ulrich, Wieand Professor of New Testament Studies, wrote a book chapter entitled “The Life-Giving Logos: A Johannine Vision for Ministry” while on sabbatical in the spring. In November he led a bilingual continuing education workshop on intercultural biblical interpretation in the Pacific Southwest District, then preached and led an insight session at the district conference. His work with intercultural interpretation has also contributed to curricular offerings for Bethany’s educational partnership with EYN. He collaborated with Dr. Nyampa Kwabe in team-teaching Gospel of Peace in August (see EYN Partnership above), then collaborated with Dr. Dauda Gava in developing and teaching a new course on Interpreting Romans as a Resource for Peacemaking.
THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

The Graduate Student Body

The following enrollment statistics include all students enrolled for credit. They
do not include those eligible for enrollment but who have chosen not to enroll
during 2019-20. Figures under Total Students 2019-20 include those who may
have enrolled in only one of the two semesters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>New Students Fall 2019</th>
<th>New Students Spring 2020</th>
<th>Total Students 2019-20</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MDiv Local</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDiv Connections</td>
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<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>MA Local</td>
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<tr>
<td>MA Connections</td>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATW (Theopoetics and Writing) Local</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATW Connections</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Certificates:

- Achievement in Theological Studies: 1
- Biblical Peacemaking (all EYN): 5
- Intercultural Biblical Interpretation: 0
- Just Peace and Conflict Transformation: 0
- Theology and Religion: 0
- Theopoetics and Theological Imagination: 1
- Occasional students (not included in percentages below): 2

Totals: 22

2019-20 Total Students: 74

*Two current students enrolled in both the MDiv and MA are counted in each
category under Total Students but only once in this grand total.

Students pursuing a degree or certificate

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local students</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>MDiv degrees*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EYN and Connections students</td>
<td>83.1%</td>
<td>MA degrees*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MATW degrees</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Certificate programs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Students with dual degrees counted in each category

Eighteen graduates were honored on Saturday, May 11, 2019: three masters of
divinity, six masters of arts, four Certificates of Achievement in Theological Stud-
ies, one Certificate in Biblical Interpretation, one Certificate in Intercultural Bib-
lical Interpretation, and six Certificates in Theopoetics and Theological Imagination. Two students completed both a degree and a certificate. Bishop
Staccato Powell of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church was the invited
speaker. His address was entitled "Re-envisioning Ministry." Following tradition,
the graduates prepared and led a worship service open to the public on Friday afternoon, May 4.

The Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership
The Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership is a partnership between Bethany and the Church of the Brethren Office of Ministry, equipping persons for church leadership through several training programs in both English and Spanish, named below. Janet Ober Lambert serves as director of the Academy. A selected list of highlights and accomplishments from 2019 follows.

Training in Ministry
- Thirty-one students were active in the TRIM program, and seven graduated.
  Five new students completed summer orientation.
- Eleven courses were offered in the areas of preaching, biblical studies, Brethren beliefs, worship, theology, and practical ministry.

Education for Shared Ministry (EFSM)/Educacion para el Ministerio Compartido (EPMC)
- Five EFSM and three EPMC congregations were active, involving nine ministers in training; two congregations joined during the year.
- The first EPMC graduate was recognized at Annual Conference.

Seminario Bíblico Anabautista Hispano (SeBAH-CoB)
- Fifteen students continued in SeBAH, representing four districts. Four students completed their program.
- Three instructors representing global Brethren bodies taught courses.

Academy Certified Training Systems
- Six ACTS programs, involving eleven districts, are certified: SVMC, Christian Growth Institute, West Marva Ministry Training Program, School of Spiritual Leadership, Buckeye Brethren Institute, and Brethren Leadership Institute, which received certification in 2018.
- SVMC and CGI are being reviewed for recertification.

Continuing Education
- Eighty-seven persons earned CEUs through Academy courses and seminars. Including offerings from other Academy-certified programs, 359 CEU certificates were issued during the year.
- A clergywomen’s cohort in Strength for the Journey began meeting.
- Deb Oskin led the annual Clergy Tax Seminar for seminary students and other interested church leaders in January.
- The Academy offers Ethics for Set-Apart Ministers: Basic Course for licensed ministers and credentialed clergy new to the denomination. The director of the Academy is a trainer for Ethics for Set-Apart Ministers: Advanced Course. Zoom webinars in English and Spanish and onsite classes in several districts were available. More than 1000 certificates were earned.
Other Activities

- Roxanne Aguirre resigned as coordinator for Spanish-Language Ministry Training Programs, and a search is being conducted.
- A new essay-style exit exam will replace the Biblical and Theological Awareness Inventory beginning with the 2018 incoming class.
- Grants from the Julie Mader Hostetetter Academy Scholarship were made available to EFSM and EPMC students who attended Annual Conference to fulfill their program requirement. SeBAI students received the grant for the second year.
- A series of short courses for prelicensed ministers is in development.

Alumni Assessment Survey

Early each calendar year, a survey has been sent to the class that graduated five years prior. With the change in 2019 of sending to the graduating class three years prior, that survey was sent to the classes of 2014, 2015, and 2016 to ensure no classes would be missed. The survey includes both standard assessment questions from the Association of Theological Schools and questions to generate data of particular interest for Bethany. Respondents are asked for information on their current careers, their perception of the quality and effectiveness of their academic programs, and the influence of their education on their ministry/work.

ADMISSIONS AND STUDENT SERVICES

The Admissions and Students Services Department encompasses recruitment, financial aid, orientation, student development, the Pillars and Pathways program, and youth engagement.

EYN students in Nigeria are included in these efforts, and the department is fortunate to have current Bethany student Sharon Flaten as a contract employee in Nigeria. While continuing her own studies at a distance, Sharon provides leadership in recruitment and promotion of the program and as a teaching assistant when courses via synchronous video are in session. She is able to communicate information about EYN student needs and the operation of the technology center in Jos to Bethany staff.

With the growth of the residential student body in 2019, largely due to the Pillars and Pathways Residential Scholarship, the department remains committed to continue reaching student prospects in the Richmond region and at a distance. The department is working with the Brethren Academy to promote Bethany and Academy course offerings to Brethren leaders, including regular communication with CODE regarding CEU opportunities. Staff regularly attend regional recruitment and career fairs and have promoted Bethany as a resource for continuing education with the Richmond Area Ministers Association.

With the resignation of youth program staff, an envisioning process for youth engagement at Bethany and possibilities for collaboration is being undertaken. Bethany’s programs, Explore Your Call and Immerse!, have been highly appre-
ciated by participants and those who send them, and there is a desire to build on this foundation.

**Student Development**

Bethany students have a program of support and guidance for the personal and social aspects of life in community. The director of student development helps students navigate the challenges and opportunities of seminary and seeing to the needs of a student body diverse in age, experiences, location, and goals. This includes regularly meeting with each student, face-to-face or by other methods, and overseeing the Pillars and Pathways Residency Scholarship, facilitating group interaction and reflection, fostering involvement in community life, and advising participants as needed.

In addition to group gatherings and one-on-one interaction with students concerning specific circumstances, Bethany’s staff and faculty are also attentive to the academic vibrancy of the students and the places where additional support needs to take place. Integration of Connections students into campus life also remains a priority. Examples include opportunities for distance students to connect digitally to gatherings and meetings on campus, and prayer times and social events during intensive classes.

The Student Development Office also oversees the Student Leadership Team, a called group of students that provides social activities, lines of communication, and structure for students’ participation in community life. With the creation of a student development position at Earlham School of Religion, staff from the two schools collaborated during 2019 to strengthen student connections through joint seminary events and streamline student resources used by both schools.

The retention rate from fall 2018 to fall 2019 for new students enrolled in a degree or certificate program was 100 percent and from spring 2019 to spring 2020 was 89 percent.

**FISCAL STEWARDSHIP**

Bethany’s fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30. In October 2019, Bethany received a clean audit for fiscal 2019 from the auditing firm BradyWare & Schoenfeld. Total net assets of $52.4 million and endowment assets of $41.1 million (including funds functioning as endowment) both represented increases of 2.6 percent from fiscal 2018.

The Seminary closed the 2019 fiscal year with $29,098 in income over expenses. Total giving for fiscal 2019 was $1,649,634, the largest amount raised in the last five years and a 9.1 percent increase over fiscal 2018. Unrestricted giving represented a slight 3.4 percent decrease from fiscal 2018 with a total of $623,208. The budget for current fiscal year 2019-20 is $3,019,062, a slight decrease from the previous year.
CONNECTING WITH THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Regional Connections
To bring recognition to the Bethany name as a regional seminary, Bethany continues to make and maintain connections with Richmond and Wayne County civic and organizational leaders. President Carter is on the board of the Wayne County Chamber of Commerce and the Richmond Symphony Orchestra. He and members of Bethany’s administration and faculty have taken part in events such as the Chamber of Commerce dinner and the Farm to Fork dinner, the latter sponsored by Bethany. This has helped the Seminary to be more widely recognized as one of the several higher education institutions in Richmond rather than part of Earlham College. It has also resulted in outside groups using Bethany facilities for meetings and events.

Advertising and Communications
Bethany news appears regularly in most issues of Newsline, the Church of the Brethren e-news publication, and is also distributed to churches, districts, and other denominational outlets. Selected news is sent to regional papers. The biannual magazine, Wonder & Word, is sent to all constituents. A social media presence is maintained on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. Two quarterly e-newsletters are sent, one to alumni and The Scroll from the Brethren Academy.

New in 2019 were billboards advertising Bethany as a higher education option. Three billboards within Richmond featured Bethany for one month each quarter, and one billboard on Interstate 70 featured Bethany for a full year. The Seminary also submitted content for three lead articles in Church Executive Magazine online, which received response rates in the 40-50 percent range. Print and digital advertising continued with Messenger, Sojourners media, Cincy Magazine and its affiliates, The Mennonite website, and Relevant media, including Relevant magazine, the most widely read faith-based publication among young adults. Ads again appeared in season programs of the Richmond Symphony Orchestra and Richmond Civic Theater. Bethany also had a sponsorship for the Richmond Meltdown Ice Festival.

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As Bethany Theological Seminary expands its witness in the world, we remain committed to our founders’ vision, in which spiritual empowerment, scripture and theology, and service remain foundational to our mission. It is truly an exciting time at the Seminary as our faculty engage students who are invested in their studies so that the world might flourish through their service and our common witness.

Jeff Carter
President

Lynn Myers
Chair of the Board of Trustees