## We believe:

### God

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

### Scripture

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

### Humankind

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

### Jesus Christ

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

### Holy Spirit

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

### Justification

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

### Entire Sanctification

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

### Assurance of Believers

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

### Christians in Society

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

### The Church

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

### Return of Christ

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

### God’s Ultimate Victory

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

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**Asbury Theological Seminary Ethos Statement**

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

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

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

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

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

**Application of Community Vision**

This covenantal ethos orients our community life toward the fullness of holy love as the end of God’s Law which has been fulfilled in the life and work of Jesus Christ. In light of the truth and goodness of God revealed by Christ, and as interpreted by our Wesleyan heritage, we acknowledge the Christian life cannot be reduced to either right doctrine or morality. Because we have been created and redeemed through Christ in the power of the Spirit, the fullness of salvation consists of the restoration of the image of God and our life in communion with God and others. Intrinsic to our task as a theological seminary is the cultivation of knowledge, wisdom, and virtue for the practice of faithful obedience that bears fruit in love for God, our neighbors, and the whole creation.

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

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

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

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