



President

SAINT PAUL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

EFL Associates, Inc.

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Saint Paul School of Theology

President



THE OPPORTUNITY

The Board of Trustees at Saint Paul School of Theology has begun the search for the Seminary's next president. The Search Committee invites nominations of and applications from accomplished, dynamic and inspiring individuals who will provide the college with outstanding leadership. After a highly successful six-year tenure, Rev. Neil Blair has announced his intention to retire on December 31, 2023. Considering the Seminary's stable enrollment, balanced budget history, lack of debt, and healthy endowment, a new president will arrive at a propitious moment in the life of Saint Paul.

ABOUT SAINT PAUL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Saint Paul was founded to educate leaders for the church, attentive to both its Methodist heritage and to the needs of the ecumenical church. In 1952 the General Conference of the United Methodist Church authorized a study of regional needs for Methodist seminaries. The study resulted in the decision of the 1956 General Conference to establish a seminary in Kansas City. Saint Paul was originally chartered in 1958 as National Methodist Seminary and opened for classes in the fall of 1959. The original trustees from the seven annual conferences of the Methodist Church adjacent to Kansas City met and agreed upon three institutional purposes to guide their decision-making at the new school:

- Maintain the highest academic standards,
- Be a professional school to provide educated leadership for the church, and
- Affirm its Wesleyan heritage, but would be identified with the spirit and life of the ecumenical church.

In 1961 the Seminary changed its name to Saint Paul School of Theology, Methodist. From 1969, it was known simply as Saint Paul School of Theology.

In response to a long-standing need for accessible theological education in the Oklahoma Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, Saint Paul announced in 2007 plans for a second site at United Methodist-affiliated Oklahoma City University. In 2008, the Higher Learning Commission approved the site and classes began that fall. Saint Paul was a leader in providing synchronous distance education, using technology to video link campuses in each course from the beginning of opening the Oklahoma campus. This early investment in the latest technology has continued, enabling Saint Paul's current highly flexible approach to course design and delivery, and a quick pivot in the face of the recent pandemic.

The Kansas Campus

Saint Paul School of Theology and United Methodist Church of the Resurrection have formed a groundbreaking educational partnership in Leawood, KS. This partnership provides new opportunities for laity, seminary students, and clergy to explore their faith and enrich their overall educational experience. Explore the many capacities and varied ministries present on this church campus.



Saint Paul was founded in 1958 to prepare leaders for the church, and the mission continues today. We are committed to the formation of people for innovative, creative ministry through rigorous academic life; the exploration of Scripture, tradition, and ministry practices; and diverse, contextual experience. To learn more about all of the great things going on in Kansas City, check out [VisitKC](#).

The Oklahoma Campus

Saint Paul School of Theology along with Oklahoma City University, the Oklahoma United Methodist Conference, and the Oklahoma United Methodist Indian Missionary Conference offers unique opportunities in Native American ministries and restorative justice/prison ministries in Oklahoma City, OK.

Saint Paul at [Oklahoma City University](#) prepares leaders for ministries that meet the needs of today's churches and society. Students enjoy access to all the resources of a vibrant university, as well as the hospitality and support of a close-knit seminary community. Saint Paul at OCU is a seminary for a new world of ministry.

To learn about all of the great things going on in Oklahoma City, check out [VisitOKC](#).



Mission

Centered in Christ and rooted in the Wesleyan tradition, Saint Paul School of Theology is a seminary of intentional relationships committed to the formation of people for innovative, creative ministry through rigorous academic life; the exploration of Scripture, tradition, and ministry practices; and diverse, contextual experience.

This mission frames Saint Paul's identity and guides every decision. The underlying values that support this mission are further elaborated in the Seminary's 2017–2025 Comprehensive Plan, which reiterates Saint Paul's distinctive approach to theological education built around key commitments: Christian and Wesleyan, collaborative relationships,

formation of students, integration of the academic study and the practice of ministry, and the importance of contextual diversity to study and ministry. While Saint Paul stands in the Wesleyan tradition explicitly living out these commitments at the intersection of personal and social holiness, that tradition is also understood to welcome a broad range of Christian beliefs. Saint Paul often partners with other faith and secular communities to provide a diversity of experience and depth of resources to students and the larger community.

At Saint Paul holistic formation for ministry and mission happens in the context of a worshipping Christian community. As an educational community Saint Paul is committed to teaching and learning across geographic divides, emphasizing interdisciplinary studies and a diversity of perspectives toward a goal of preparing leaders with theological integrity. Graduates from Saint Paul are recognized for their solid theological foundation, practical skills, and formative preparation for ministry, whether in local churches or other settings. They are leaders who rely on the power of Jesus Christ to renew the church and transform the world.

Accreditation Status

Saint Paul School of Theology received accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission in 1976 and is presently accredited by the HLC to offer the following degrees: Master of Divinity; Master of Arts in Christian Ministry; Master of Arts (Theological Studies); and Doctor of Ministry. Saint Paul's HLC review was completed in September 2022. In November 2022, Saint Paul received confirmation that the Higher Learning Commission "continued the accreditation of Saint Paul School of Theology with the next Reaffirmation of Accreditation in 2028-2029." Saint Paul is also accredited by the Association of Theological Schools, which completed its most recent reaffirmation review in 2021 and confirmed Saint Paul's approved status for the next decade.



Theological Foundations and Commitment to Diversity

Saint Paul is centered in God's self-revelation in Christ and rooted in the Wesleyan tradition. As such, we foster personal and social holiness, are open to learning from all realms of human knowledge and engage with ecumenical and inter-faith partners. In keeping with these commitments, we seek to increase the presence of students from various denominations and faith backgrounds.

Saint Paul is committed to increasing racial/ethnic and other forms of diversity within our community. Our [current Strategic Plan](#) describes this commitment. We continue to seek diverse representation in our student body, faculty and staff, and Board of Trustees.

Since its inception, Saint Paul has been committed to wholistic theological education, which brings together rigorous engagement with scripture, tradition, and theology; experience of and reflection on practices of ministry; and experiential learning in a broad array of settings. In short, we believe in theological education oriented to the life of the church.

From the 1960s, when our Board, faculty, students, and alumni helped to integrate the lunch counters in Kansas City to our current work in Oklahoma with indigenous communities, we have continued our deep commitment to social justice. Our courses and community life address racial, gender, and ecological justice, and affirm cultural diversity. We walk with and learn from those marginalized in society and provide our students with opportunities for training in community organizing.

Saint Paul is committed to fostering a diverse community of learning and formation with a supportive and respectful environment. We believe that the diversity of our trustees, faculty, students, and staff is essential to the fulfillment of our mission. Saint Paul is an equal opportunity employer and gives consideration for employment to candidates without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, military service, or because of marital, parental, or veteran status or any other characteristic protected by law.



THE PRESIDENT

The president acts as the chief executive officer (CEO) of the Seminary and as such serves as the spiritual, academic, and administrative head of the Seminary. In this capacity, the president oversees all aspects of the Seminary's operations. The president works closely with the faculty and the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean in shaping and articulating a common vision of theological education, which serves the school's mission to form people for innovative and creative Christian ministry.

Agenda for New Leadership

Saint Paul's next president will oversee implementation of the Seminary's next iteration of its strategic plan. The current plan is scheduled to conclude in 2025. A planning committee will begin work on the next strategic plan in the spring 2023. The incoming president will aid in

concluding work on the current plan and work to attain the goals and objectives of the next strategic plan. The timing of the appointment for the new president ensures an opportunity to influence the drafting of the next plan.

During its October 2022 meeting, the Board of Trustees authorized staff to undertake preparations for a comprehensive campaign. The preparation for a campaign coincides with the drafting of the new strategic plan. Consequently, the new strategic plan will provide a case statement for the campaign. Saint Paul's next president will therefore assume a critical role in fundraising as the campaign unfolds.

Theological education generally and the United Methodist Church particularly face the prospect of declining membership and increasing secularization. In light of these trends, Saint Paul's next president will guide the Seminary in developing programs and degrees that appeal to a broader and more diverse population of prospective students than we have served in the past. This aspect of the new president's work is critical to the long-term vitality of Saint Paul as the Board, faculty, and staff search for new ways to promote our mission.

QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate for the position of President of Saint Paul School of Theology will have a demonstrated history of service to church, academy, and community. The new president will convey a compelling vision for theological education as it addresses present and future challenges.

The Board of Trustees authorized initial planning for Saint Paul's first comprehensive campaign in almost twenty years, so a successful record in fundraising will prove important in increasing the Seminary's endowed resources and annual fund.

The successful candidate will have administrative experience in a complex organization, will demonstrate competence to maintain and strengthen high-quality theological education, and show ability to lead the Seminary.

Strong candidates will have many of the following personal and professional characteristics:

- Capability for strategic thinking and implementing the priorities of the strategic plan;
- Deep familiarity with trends in theological education, including enrollment, accreditation, technology, and academic best practice;
- Record of successful and energetic fundraising to build on the Seminary's philanthropic success;
- Solid understanding of financial and personnel management;

- Approachable leadership demeanor willing to engage the Seminary's several constituencies in an engaging and affable manner;
- Active and thoughtful leader who will encourage discussion and ideas about how Saint Paul continues its mission in a dynamic environment for theological education;
- Appreciation for the fundamental importance of Saint Paul's identity as a United Methodist Seminary eager to broaden its diversity and to deepen its commitment to equity and inclusion;
- Educational credentials appropriate for academic leadership; and
- History of increasing responsibility in complex organizations.

The banner features the Saint Paul School of Theology logo at the top center, which includes a cross with a circle in the center. Below the logo is the text "Saint Paul School of Theology". Underneath the logo is the tagline "Committed to the formation of people for innovative, creative ministry" in a cursive font. At the bottom of the banner are three rectangular images, each with a caption below it. The first image shows a man with a beard and headphones playing an acoustic guitar, with the caption "ONLINE" below it. The second image shows a man in a suit and glasses pointing at a screen in a classroom, with the caption "ON CAMPUS" below it. The third image shows a man in a graduation cap and gown with a red sash, with the caption "ON MISSION" below it.

NOMINATION & APPLICATION PROCESS



EFL Associates (<https://eflassociates.cbiz.com>), an executive search firm, is assisting **Saint Paul School of Theology** with its search for this important leadership position. All calls and inquiries should be made through the search firm. Nominations and applications will be held in strict confidence and candidates will remain confidential until the final stage of the search, at which time the express permission of finalists will be obtained before making their candidacy public.

Application Process

STEP 1: Complete a brief online application (2-3 minutes):

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SP-President>

STEP 2: Send us your letter of interest and résumé or curriculum vitae:

- Send in **PDF format** please
- Send to ApplyHigherEd@EFLAssociates.com
- Email subject line should read – “SPST – President”

Key Dates

- Application deadline is March 7, 2023
- Semi-Finalist Interviews are tentatively scheduled for week of April 16, 2023
- Campus Interviews are tentatively scheduled for week of May 8, 2023
- Desired start date is January, 2024, but is negotiable

Confidential Inquiries

Steve Waldron, JD

VP & Managing Director, Higher Education Practice

816-945-5423 (direct)

Email: swaldron@eflassociates.com

Nominations & Application Questions: If you would like to provide a nomination, please email all pertinent information (***including an email address and phone number of the nominee***) to:

Ms. Edith Ketay

Program Manager, Higher Education Practice

816-841-4001 (direct)

Email: Edith.Ketay@EFLAssociates.com