

TRINITY LUTHERAN SEMINARY

at CapitalUniversity

2199 East Main Street
Columbus, Ohio 43209



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS AND PROSPECTUS

**RECTOR AND DEAN OF TRINITY LUTHERAN SEMINARY
AT CAPITAL UNIVERSITY**

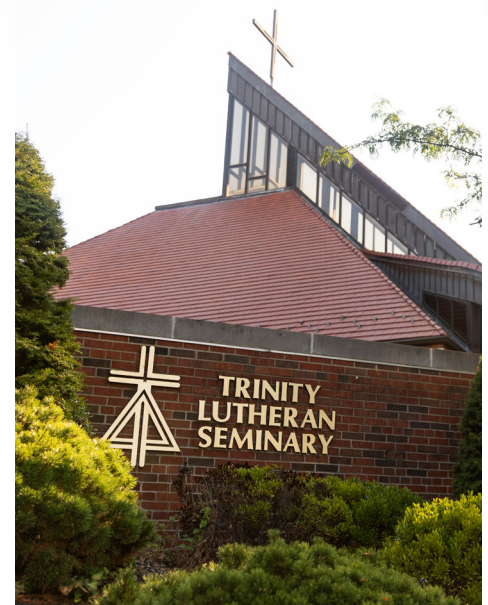
Position Summary

Capital University in Columbus, Ohio, invites nominations and expressions of interest for the role of Rector and Dean of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University, with an anticipated appointment beginning summer 2027. The next Rector and Dean will assume leadership at a consequential and promising moment in the life of both the Seminary and the University. As one of the seven seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and one of only three embedded ELCA seminaries within a comprehensive university, Trinity occupies a distinctive place in theological education.

The next Rector and Dean will have the opportunity to help define and communicate a compelling vision for Trinity's future - one that is deeply rooted in Lutheran theology and the formation of leaders for Christ's Church while responsive to changing patterns of ministry, theological education, and congregational life. The leader will be called to strengthen sustainable enrollment, nurture a culture of formation and belonging, advance innovative and accessible approaches to theological education, deepen relationships across the ELCA and broader Church, and expand Trinity's public witness and external visibility.

Trinity Lutheran Seminary is an integral part of Capital University, creating distinctive opportunities for interdisciplinary learning, vocational exploration, shared academic life, and engagement across the University. The Rector and Dean will serve not only as the Seminary's chief academic and administrative leader, but also as an active University leader who builds partnerships across academic and administrative areas and helps Capital more fully embody its identity as a university shaped by vocation, faith, inquiry, belonging, and the common good.

The successful candidate will bring theological depth, pastoral credibility, academic judgment, strategic imagination, and relational strength. The Rector and Dean must be a trusted ecclesial leader who can cultivate meaningful relationships with bishops, synods, congregations, candidacy leaders, alumni, donors, churchwide partners, and the wider community while leading with sound stewardship and an entrepreneurial spirit. Trinity seeks a leader who can honor its heritage while building its future — strengthening enrollment and resources, developing new partnerships and pathways, supporting faculty and staff, and positioning the Seminary as an intellectually vibrant, spiritually grounded, ecclesially trusted, and publicly engaged place of formation for leaders called to serve the Church and the world.



**Forming
leaders
for
Christ's
church
at work
in the
world.**



About Capital University

Capital University is the oldest university in Central Ohio, with nearly 200 years of academic excellence. Affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the picturesque main campus is situated on 54 acres in the community of Bexley. Through its undergraduate and graduate programs, including Trinity Lutheran Seminary and the Law School in downtown Columbus, Capital students, faculty, staff, and alumni are committed to making a positive impact in their communities and chosen industries.

The University's mission is rooted in its 1830 founding by the Lutheran Church and in the 1850 charter granted by the Ohio legislature. The mission seeks to transform lives and empower an inclusive community of learners through engaging academic, co-curricular, and professional experiences. Our inclusive community supports access and success for all. Students engage in relevant and collaborative experiences necessary to be knowledgeable,

resilient, and ethical citizens. They leave Capital prepared to make meaningful contributions in their communities and advance the common good. Capital exemplifies its mission by:

- Proactively supporting the academic, social, physical, mental, and spiritual development of every student as they pursue their academic and personal goals.
- Having expert faculty and staff who use evidence-based best practices to create intellectually challenging and personally supportive learning experiences in and out of the classroom.
- Respecting all identities, cultures, and perspectives, promoting equity in access and opportunity, and fostering a sense of belonging for all members of our community.
- Acting with integrity through honesty, transparency, and hard work, we demonstrate our best selves and value the same in others.

The University serves a diverse

student body of over 2400 students (1,667 undergraduate students; 672 graduate students), with 35.8% attending from underrepresented populations. Capital offers 4 undergraduate degrees from 61 majors and 56 minors in the areas of music, art and communication, business and management, education, humanities, natural sciences, mathematics and computer science, nursing, and



social sciences. Capital also offers 8 graduate degrees in law, business, education, music education, social work, and theology that are practical, purposeful, collaborative, and entrepreneurial. The University created Ohio's first combined 3+3 BA/JD program, an accelerated pathway for qualified and motivated students to complete their baccalaureate and law degrees in six years.

Capital is supported by more than 300 full-time faculty and staff and approximately \$198 million endowment and other investment funds with a \$63.7 million operating budget.

Capital University's Bexley campus includes facilities that range from historic to modern. Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University is part of the Bexley campus, separated by a single street but sharing structural, academic, and personnel resources. The Law School is located four miles away in the Discovery District in downtown Columbus, a nod to Columbus' strength in education, culture and innovation, and just blocks away from the hub of multiple governmental and judicial entities.



Trinity Lutheran Seminary



Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University is a regional, ecumenical, and inclusive seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) whose mission is to **form leaders for Christ's church at work in the world.** One of seven ELCA seminaries nationwide, Trinity is also distinctive as one of three ELCA seminaries embedded within a broader university. That position gives Trinity the intimacy and formational character of a seminary community while providing its students and faculty access to the academic, professional, operational, and community resources of Capital University.

Trinity's history reaches nearly two centuries and is inseparable from the history of Lutheran higher education in Ohio. The Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary was founded in Canton in 1830 and later moved its work of preparing pastors to Columbus. In 1850, at the request of the Joint Synod of Ohio, the Seminary's Board of Directors chartered the institution that became Capital University. The Seminary remained part of Capital until 1959. A second stream of Trinity's history began with Wittenberg College and its Hamma Divinity School in Springfield. After decades of conversation between Lutheran bodies, the Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary and Hamma came together in 1978 to form Trinity Lutheran Seminary. In 2018, Trinity and Capital reunited, restoring an institutional relationship whose roots extend to Capital's founding.



Today, Trinity occupies a distinctive place on Capital's campus at the corner of Main Street and College Avenue. The Seminary complex includes Hamma Library, Gloria Dei Worship Center and Schenk Chapel, classrooms and gathering spaces, courtyards, and the Promise for Life Holocaust remembrance sculpture by artist and Holocaust survivor Alfred Tibor. Hamma Library also houses the ELCA Region 6 Archives, the official repository serving the six ELCA synods in Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, and the Lower Peninsula of Michigan.

Trinity remains intentionally small and relational. Fall 2026 census enrollment is 43 students, including welcoming 19 new



degree-seeking students to the Seminary this year. While theological education nationally continues to experience significant changes in traditional enrollment patterns, Trinity registered 338 semester credit hours in Fall 2026, an increase of 14.6 percent from the prior fall. The University has also strategically invested in recruitment, vocational discernment, faculty and staff

capacity, and stronger pathways for students preparing for ministry, including renewed attention to ELCA Master of Divinity formation.

A significant strength of Trinity is its financial foundation. The Seminary's endowment stood at approximately \$45.0 million as of June 30, 2026, providing important long-term support for its educational and formational mission. Together with other philanthropic resources, this foundation enables Trinity to make theological education unusually accessible: all admitted Trinity students currently qualify for full-tuition scholarship support. Published tuition for 2026–27 is \$728 per credit hour before aid.

Faculty & Staff of TLS

At the heart of Trinity is a faculty and staff committed to the integration of theological scholarship, ministry formation, and vocational discernment. Trinity's faculty represents fields including biblical studies, theology, pastoral theology, chaplaincy, homiletics, worship, contextual education, church history, church and society, and ministry leadership. Faculty members intentionally integrate academic scholarship and significant experience in the church, congregations, and communities, creating an environment in which theological inquiry remains closely connected to ministry practices and communities.

That faculty is supported by colleagues devoted to contextual and experiential formation, academic administration, enrollment and seminary discernment, congregational engagement and advancement, Hama Library, and the ELCA Region 6 Archives. As an embedded seminary, Trinity also benefits from the wider infrastructure and expertise of Capital University in areas including student services, financial aid, advancement, technology, academic support, marketing, enrollment management, and administration.

The Seminary's scale allows for unusually close relationships between faculty and students. Trinity describes its model as providing 1:1 faculty advising from the beginning of a student's program through completion. Faculty and staff accompany students not simply through



academic requirements, but through discernment, candidacy, contextual education, internship, and preparation for lives of ministry and service.

Curriculum

Trinity currently offers two primary graduate degrees: the **Master of Divinity (M.Div.)** and the **Master of Theological Studies (MTS)**. Both are grounded in rigorous theological study undertaken in community, with an emphasis on connecting Scripture, history, theology, vocation, and ministry to the contexts in which students will live and serve. Trinity's degree programs are accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools, with Capital University institutionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.

The 84-credit Master of Divinity prepares students for pastoral and other forms of ordained ministry. The curriculum encompasses biblical studies, history, theology, ministry, worship, pastoral care,

cross-cultural learning, and engagement with the church and the world. Trinity's M.Div. meets the educational requirements for ELCA candidates for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament and Ministry of Word and Service while also serving students preparing for ordination and ministry in other Christian traditions.

A hallmark of the M.Div. is Trinity's contextual approach to formation. **Leadership in Context** begins during a student's first two years and places classroom learning in conversation with sustained experience in congregations and other ministry settings. Students also engage in supervised clinical ministry, commonly through Clinical



Pastoral Education. For ELCA candidates, Trinity's distinctive **2+2 model** combines two years of concentrated academic study with a two-year supervised internship in a congregation or ministry setting. During those internship years, students continue academic work through online courses and intensive experiences, allowing theological reflection and ministerial practice to develop together.

The **Master of Theological Studies** is a 40-credit degree designed for lay and ministry leaders, future scholars, educators, advocates, nonprofit leaders, and others seeking deeper theological formation. The degree can be completed full- or part-time and combines a theological core, concentrated study, and electives. Its flexibility allows working adults and individuals already engaged in ministry or professional life to participate meaningfully in theological education.

Trinity also extends theological education beyond its degree programs through online and hybrid study, intensives offerings in both January and summer, courses open for audit, continuing education, travel seminars, and lifelong-learning opportunities for clergy, alumni, lay leaders, and friends of the Seminary. Recent travel seminars have extended theological learning beyond the classroom, including a 2026 study experience in Egypt conducted in partnership with Wartburg Theological Seminary.

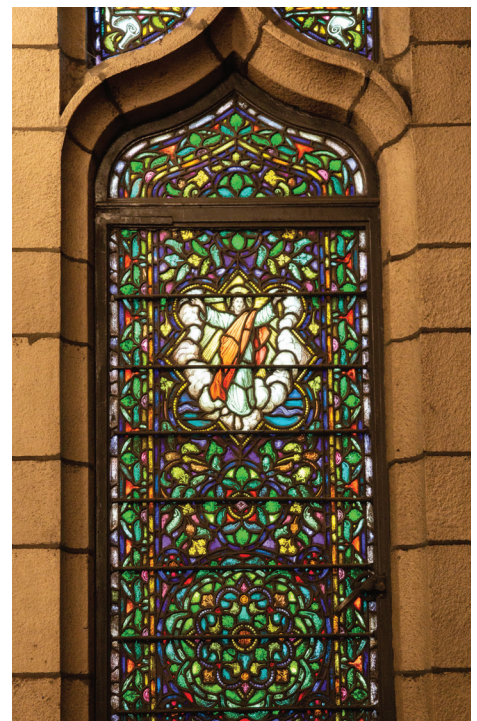
Being part of Capital creates additional opportunities for interdisciplinary learning and collaboration. Seminary students have access to the resources of a comprehensive university that

includes undergraduate liberal arts and professional programs, graduate education in business, clinical and school counseling, music education, social work, clinical and school counseling, and Capital University Law School. Capital undergraduates also have access to a pre-seminary program that provides vocational discernment, ministry immersion, faith coaching, and opportunities to explore theological education before graduation.

Student Life

Formation at Trinity occurs as much through community as through curriculum. Hospitality is a defining feature of Seminary life. Students come to Trinity at different stages of life and vocation—some directly from undergraduate education, some after years in another career or profession, some already serving in ministry, and others pursuing theological study for personal, academic, or vocational reasons. The ecclesial demographic is balanced well between ELCA Lutheran and a variety of Christian denominations. The richness of this diversity pushes students to clearly articulate their beliefs outside the polemic echo chambers that dominate our society.

Worship and spiritual life provide rhythm to the Seminary week. Students, faculty, and staff gather for prayer and conversation through Community Café, for weekly liturgical worship with preaching and Eucharist, and for spiritual practices and experimental worship rituals. Students also have access to subsidized spiritual direction. In a community small enough



for students to be genuinely known, these experiences reinforce Trinity's understanding of theological education as the formation of the whole person rather than simply the completion of an academic credential.

Trinity's location extends that formation into Bexley, Columbus,

Accreditation

Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University is accredited by The Association of Theological Schools (ATS), a network of over 270 seminaries and graduate theology schools. Founded in 1918, ATS promotes excellence in theological education for the benefit of faith communities and the broader public.

and the wider region. Students can engage ministries, congregations, nonprofits, hospitals, social-service organizations, and public institutions throughout one of the nation's fastest growing metropolitan areas while remaining within easy reach of rural and small-town ministry contexts across Ohio. This combination gives Trinity students access to a broad range of settings in which to understand the changing landscape of church and practical ministry.

The Seminary also has a rich calendar of traditions and public theological engagement. The Kantonen-Kessler Lectures at **Trinity Days**, held each fall, brings alumni, students, faculty, church leaders, and friends together for worship, lectures, learning, and reunion. Recent and upcoming lecturers have included ELCA Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry, the Rev. Dr. Jacqueline Bussie, the Rev. Dr. Karoline Lewis, the Rev. Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas, and Trinity Professor Emeritus the Rev. Dr.

Mark Allan Powell.

Each spring, the **Nelson W. Trout Lectures in Black Preaching** honor the life and legacy of Trinity alumnus and faculty emeritus the Rev. Dr. Nelson W. Trout, the first African American elected to serve as a Lutheran bishop. Trinity also partners annually with the local Jewish community for a Kristallnacht remembrance, hosts public lectures and lifelong-learning programs, and celebrates its graduates through a distinct Seminary commencement. Together, these traditions make Trinity a gathering place for theological conversation, remembrance, proclamation, and continuing formation well beyond its enrolled student body.

Trinity is also recognized as a Reconciling in Christ community, reflecting its commitment to welcome and engage people across identities and experiences who are called to participate in God's work of ministry for the world.

Alumni

Trinity Lutheran Seminary stands at the center of a robust network of alumni, pastors, church leaders, and friends who carry Christ's mission into congregations and communities across Ohio, throughout the United States, and around the world. Trinity's more than **2,400 graduates** lead within the ELCA and beyond it, serving as pastors, bishops, chaplains, nonprofit leaders, educators, advocates, theologians, and ministers in many forms.

The Seminary's alumni remain woven into its contemporary life. They mentor students, participate in continuing education, preach and teach, support internships and contextual-learning opportunities, contribute philanthropically, and connect current students with congregations and ministries. Trinity students therefore learn not only from faculty, but also from a network of practitioners and congregations engaged every

day in the changing work of the church.

That network is particularly strong throughout ELCA Region 6. Trinity graduates have served across the region as congregational pastors, synod leaders, bishops, educators, and churchwide leaders, while Hamma Library and the ELCA Region 6 Archives preserve the records and histories of the Lutheran communities and institutions from which much of that ministry has emerged.

Budget & Organization

Trinity Lutheran Seminary is an academic and formational unit of Capital University. Since the 2018 reunion, Trinity has retained its distinctive identity and responsibilities as an ELCA seminary while benefiting from the infrastructure and resources of the broader University. Financial operations, registration, technology, advancement, student support, enrollment functions, and other services are integrated with Capital, while Trinity maintains its own faculty, curriculum, worship and community life, ecclesial relationships, and Seminary Advisory Board.

The Rector and Dean reports to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and serves as Trinity's chief academic and administrative leader. The Rector and Dean works closely with the President and University leadership and maintains important relationships with the Trinity Lutheran Seminary Advisory Board, bishops and synods, congregations, the ELCA churchwide organization, alumni, and other partners throughout theological education. Trinity's governance also reflects



its dual identity as a seminary of the ELCA and an integral part of Capital University. Its Advisory Board provides counsel and helps sustain relationships with the wider church, while the University's Board of Trustees holds fiduciary and governance authority. This embedded structure creates an unusual opportunity for the next Rector and Dean: to steward the particular mission and identity of Trinity while helping the Seminary draw more fully upon—and contribute more fully to—the intellectual, spiritual, relational, and institutional life of Capital University.

Resources, Governance, and Institutional Support

Trinity Lutheran Seminary is an academic unit of Capital University and a seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The Rector and Dean serves as the Seminary's chief executive and administrative officer, is appointed by the President of Capital University in consultation with the Trinity Lutheran Seminary Advisory Board, the Capital University Board of Trustees, the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, and the appropriate churchwide unit, and reports to the University Provost alongside the leaders of Capital's other academic units.

The **Trinity Lutheran Seminary Advisory Board** provides an important bridge among the

Seminary, Capital University, and the wider church. Established as a non-fiduciary advisory body, it serves as a connection to Trinity's churchwide constituency, a trusted adviser to the Rector and Dean, and an advocate for the Seminary, its mission, and its students. Its membership intentionally reflects Trinity's relationship with the ELCA, including representation from the ELCA Church Council, bishops of Region VI, and each of the six supporting synods. The chair of the Advisory Board also serves as a voting member of Capital University's Board of Trustees, creating a direct connection between the Seminary's ecclesial advisory structure and the University's governing board. The Advisory Board's work centers on strategic, missional, and ecclesial matters rather than day-to-day management, with fiduciary responsibility and final institutional authority remaining with Capital's Board of Trustees.

That commitment is more than structural. In June 2026, Capital University's Board of Trustees adopted a formal **Resolution in Support of Trinity Lutheran Seminary**, affirming that Trinity is integral to Capital's mission, identity, and future. The resolution recognizes Trinity as Capital's founding institution and describes the Seminary and University as "inextricably linked" by their shared mission, history, and aspirations. Most significantly, the Board committed itself to **"ensuring the health and growth of Trinity"** and to ensuring that the Seminary continues to support and remain an integral part of Capital's mission.

UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

The University is governed by a Board of Trustees that currently has 21 members. Each trustee is eligible for re-election for up to three successive three-year terms. The Board is led by an Executive Committee, including the chair and vice chair of the Board. According to the University Bylaws, the current vice chair is expected to succeed to the position of chair, subject to agreement of the vice chair, recommendation of the Governance Committee, and election by the Board.

Faculty governance operates at two levels – the full University faculty body and the faculties of the three units (the College, the Law School, and Trinity Lutheran Seminary). Each faculty body operates as a unit of the whole and, in addition, there are committees at each level of the faculty that carry out specific duties. The committees of the University faculty have responsibilities that are relevant to all faculty and units of the university, whereas the committees of the College, the Law School, or Trinity have responsibilities that are specific to those units.

At the university level, the University Faculty Executive Committee is responsible for representing the University faculty with a unified voice to the administration and Board of Trustees with respect to university-wide issues affecting the faculties of the College, the Law School, and Trinity Lutheran Seminary. The chair of the University Faculty Executive Committee is an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees and serves as a member of the President's Cabinet, as does the president of Capital's advocacy chapter of AAUP.



BIOGRAPHY OF PRESIDENT TICE

Dr. Jared R. Tice serves as the 18th President of Capital University, Central Ohio's oldest university. Since assuming the presidency on August 1, 2025, he has led Capital through a period of renewed institutional momentum focused on academic excellence, student success, enrollment growth, community engagement, mission, and long-term sustainability.

During his first year, Dr. Tice led the development and launch of Capital Rising: Rooted in Legacy. Thriving into our Third Century, the University's five-year strategic plan. Developed through a yearlong collaborative process involving faculty, staff, students, trustees, alumni, and community partners, the plan is organized around five pillars - Purpose, People, Pursuits, Place, and Resources - and establishes a path for Capital through its bicentennial in 2030 and beyond.

Under his leadership, Capital has recorded two consecutive years of overall enrollment growth, reaching 2,380 students in fall 2026 and welcoming over 870 new students across undergraduate, graduate, Law School, and Trinity Lutheran Seminary programs - the largest number of new students entering the University since before the COVID-19



pandemic. The University is also advancing a comprehensive campus master plan, expanding community and institutional partnerships, strengthening its leadership structure, and increasing attention to student experience, retention, and long-term financial stewardship.

Dr. Tice has also emphasized Capital's Lutheran heritage and its identity as one university. During his first year, Capital restored the University Pastor position to full-time leadership, strengthened the integration of spiritual and religious life across the institution, and continued to deepen the relationship among the University, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Before joining Capital, Dr. Tice served at Catawba College in Salisbury, North Carolina, most recently as Senior Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer. During his tenure there, his responsibilities included institutional strategy, enrollment, student experience, marketing, campus planning, and major capital initiatives. Earlier in his career, he held progressive student affairs leadership roles at Barton College and West Virginia Northern Community College.

Dr. Tice earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a minor in Business Administration from Concord University; a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership with an emphasis in Higher Education Administration and a Graduate Certificate in Higher Education Marketing from West Virginia University; and a Doctorate of Education in Higher Education Leadership from Maryville University. He also completed the Executive Certificate in Higher Education Leadership at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education.

Dr. Tice is actively engaged in higher education and civic leadership and currently serves on the boards of the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Ohio and the Ohio Foundation of Independent Colleges. Throughout his career, he has also been involved with community organizations including United Way and Rotary International. His leadership is grounded in the belief that colleges and universities should be deeply connected to the communities they serve and should prepare graduates not only for careers, but for lives of purpose, ethical leadership, and meaningful contribution.

UNIVERSITY FINANCES AND FUNDRAISING

Capital University operates with a \$63.7 million annual budget, including \$2.3 million of debt service, with a \$2.0 million deficit projected for FY27. Investments total \$198 million, of which \$23 million is unrestricted and \$165 million is with the endowment, which produces \$5.9 million in annual support for Capital. Debt currently totals \$37 million, with most principal payments deferred until FY28.

The University secured more than \$8.6 million in cash and pledges for FY26. Key advancement efforts span the Bexley campus, Law School, and Trinity Lutheran Seminary, reflecting a unified and coordinated approach across all campuses. Trinity Lutheran Seminary has a

Since its founding, Trinity Lutheran Seminary has provided opportunities for theological education and faith formation in the classroom and around the globe, equipping students for transformation ministry in a variety of settings.

The scope of our master's degrees will prepare you to change the world, whether you see yourself leading a congregation, teaching in the classroom or advocating for social justice in the community.

development officer specifically for TLS fundraising and development, and is supported by the University's advancement office.

Driving toward continuous improvement, new alumni engagement and giving programs have been launched, including volunteer programs with career services and enrollment, advisory councils working with select academic programs, philanthropy day challenges and activities, and the Memorial Gateway Society formed to recognize annual support at leadership levels.

OUR LARGER COMMUNITY

As the fastest growing city in the Midwest, Columbus, the 15th largest city in the U.S., serves as a vibrant extension of the Capital and Law School campuses. Capital is within easy reach of a dynamic arts and cultural scene, beautiful natural surroundings including abundant rivers, lakes, and parks, and extensive trails for hiking and cycling. The Columbus region is the corporate headquarters of some of the world's largest companies, including several Fortune 500 corporations. Ohio's capital city ranked first in emerging cities for startups; is among the top 30 of Forbes' Best Places for Business and Careers; the top five for new college graduates; the top 10 large metro areas in the U.S. for concentration of young professionals; and the top three for women-owned businesses.

Capital greatly enriches the intellectual, creative and cultural life of the community by creating avenues of public access to figures whose commentary nurtures thought, debate, and social dialogue. For example, every January, the Capital University community celebrates the life and legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Learning. Citizens of Central Ohio delight in an opportunity to be challenged by the keynote speaker, engage in meaningful dialogue with students, staff and faculty during the workshops and enjoy the hospitality of the campus. Throughout the year, Capital hosts performing arts events, journalists, authors, political figures, and recreational and athletic activities to involve and enrich the larger community.

Trinity Faculty and Staff are committed to serving the seminary's students and helping prepare them for God's work in the world, whether that be pastoral ministry, lay ministry, music ministry, non-profit work, the academy, or another creative vocation.



Leadership Agenda

Rector and Dean of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University

The next Rector and Dean of Trinity Lutheran Seminary (TLS) at Capital University will assume leadership at a consequential and promising moment in the life of both the Seminary and the University. As one of the seven seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and one of only three embedded ELCA seminaries within a comprehensive university, Trinity (TLS) occupies a distinctive place in theological education. Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University is well-positioned, but like many seminaries, faces real questions about enrollment, sustainability, and its role in a changing church. Its future depends on a leader who can honor its deep Lutheran heritage while advancing a compelling, adaptive, and outward-facing vision for theological education, formation, and public witness in a rapidly changing religious and higher education landscape.

The Rector and Dean must be prepared to lead Trinity (TLS) as a seminary of the Church and as an integral academic and formational unit of Capital University. This will require a leader of theological depth, pastoral credibility, academic judgment, strategic imagination, and relational strength, someone who can work fluently at the intersection of church, university, community, and vocation. Early priorities for the Dean will include clarifying a vision for Trinity's future, building sustainable enrollment strategies, crafting a culture of thriving and innovation, deepening collaboration with the wider university's academic and student experience, reengaging key ELCA partners, and strengthening external visibility.

The agenda before the next Rector and Dean is both foundational and forward-looking.

Clarify and Champion Trinity's Distinctive Future

One of the Rector and Dean's highest responsibilities will be to help Trinity (TLS) articulate with greater clarity and confidence its distinctive role in the future of theological education. Trinity's identity is rooted in the theological tradition of Lutheranism and the leadership formation of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America); yet its embedded relationship within Capital University creates unique opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration, vocational exploration, ecumenical engagement, and shared institutional life.

The next Rector and Dean will be called to help define and communicate a compelling answer to a central question: what does it mean for Trinity Lutheran Seminary to flourish now - as a seminary of the ELCA, as a graduate theological school in a changing landscape, and as a vital part of Capital University?



Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University continues the heritage of nearly two centuries of theological education in Ohio. The seminary began its life in Canton in 1830, later moving the work of training pastors to Columbus. In March of 1850, at the request of the Joint Synod of Ohio, the seminary's Board of Directors chartered an academy, Capital University. From 1850 to 1959, the Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary was part of Capital University.

This work will require both discernment and conviction. The Dean must be able to interpret Trinity's legacy faithfully while shaping a vision that is responsive to the needs of the Church, attentive to the realities of theological education, and aligned with Capital's mission, identity, and emerging strategic direction. The next leader must be capable of helping Trinity (TLS) not simply preserve its place, but clarify its contribution and strengthen its future.

Nurture a Seminary Culture of Formation, Belonging, and Accompaniment

The next Rector and Dean will also shape culture. Because theological education is deeply relational, the Seminary needs a leader who can cultivate a community marked by trust, belonging, spiritual depth, and shared purpose. Students should feel known. Faculty and staff should feel valued and engaged. The culture should reflect both academic seriousness and pastoral care.

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The next Rector and Dean should also be attentive to the Seminary's ecumenical and increasingly diverse community, ensuring that Trinity (TLS) is a place of welcome, intellectual generosity, and faithful engagement across difference. This leader must be able to accompany individuals and the community through challenge, transition, discernment, celebration, and change with wisdom and grace.

With nearly two centuries of Lutheran theological training, Trinity Lutheran Seminary prepares students for thoughtful ministry, rigorous scholarship, and meaningful service. Rooted in a tradition of faith, dialogue, and intellectual inquiry, the seminary fosters a supportive community where learners at every stage of life can explore theology, deepen their calling, and engage the world with compassion and conviction.



Build a Sustainable and Mission-Aligned Enrollment Strategy

The next Rector and Dean will need to lead with a strong understanding that enrollment is not merely an operational matter, but a mission matter. Trinity's future vitality will depend upon the ability create thoughtful, realistic, and creative enrollment strategies that addresses current student realities, changing pathways into ministry, declining traditional seminary pipelines, and the evolving needs of church leaders and learners.

Crafting such strategies will require attention to the full enrollment ecosystem: degree programs, non-degree and certificate offerings, ecumenical learners, interested undergraduates, lifelong learners, leaders in discernment, and those preparing for varied forms of ministry and service. The Rector and Dean will need to work closely with Seminary faculty and staff, University partners, and church leaders to strengthen recruitment, clarify value, improve visibility, and create stronger pipelines into Trinity's programs.

The next leader should be prepared to think expansively about who Trinity serves, how students encounter Trinity, and what forms of theological education and formation are most needed now. The successful Rector and Dean will understand that sustainable enrollment growth in a seminary context requires theological clarity, relational trust, market awareness, and strong institutional storytelling.

Advance Innovative Models of Theological Education and Formation

Theological education is changing, and Trinity (TLS) has the opportunity to help shape that change rather than merely respond to it. The next Rector and Dean will be expected to lead thoughtfully in the development of new models, pathways, partnerships, and credentials that extend Trinity's reach while preserving the depth and integrity of its formational mission.

These innovations may include the growth of certificates, continuing education, hybrid and flexible formats, interdisciplinary offerings, and programs designed to serve new populations of students and leaders. At the same time, the Dean must ensure that innovation is not pursued at the expense of formation. Trinity's calling is not only to deliver content, but to help form leaders of faith, wisdom, courage, humility, and service.

The next Rector and Dean should approach innovation as a theological and institutional responsibility: creating pathways that are more accessible, more responsive, and more relevant, while remaining rooted in God's Word, sound doctrine, vibrant worship, intentional community, intellectual rigor, vocational discernment, and ministry formation. In addition, the Dean should retain an appropriate number of teaching responsibilities to stay grounded within the classroom and accessible to the student community.



Trinity offers Master of Divinity and Master of Theological Studies degrees. Each degree has its own distinctives, though all are academically rigorous, pursued in community, and taught by distinguished faculty eager to teach.

Deepen Trinity's Place Within Capital as One University

A defining opportunity of this role is to lead Trinity (TLS) not as an isolated seminary, but as one that is central to Capital University's shared mission and identity. The next Rector and Dean will need to embrace the promise and complexity of embedded seminary leadership, recognizing that Trinity's strength is enhanced when it is deeply connected to the life of the broader University.

This means building partnerships across academic and administrative divisions; contributing to the intellectual, spiritual, and cultural life of the institution; and helping Capital more fully embody its identity as a university shaped by vocation, faith, inquiry, belonging, and the common good.

The Rector and Dean should be an active and collaborative university leader, someone who works well with the Provost, President, faculty colleagues, and campus partners, and who can imagine productive intersections between Trinity and other parts of the University. Opportunities for collaboration may include shared academic programming, co-curricular initiatives, public events, leadership formation, spiritual care, interfaith engagement, ethics, community-based learning, and partnerships with areas such as student experience, business, law, social work, music, and the humanities.

The next Rector and Dean should help Trinity contribute meaningfully to Capital's aspiration to live its mission as one university.

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Our community shares meals together, worships together, grows together, laments together, and changes together. We're large enough to find friends different from you, who will challenge your thinking and assumptions, and we're small enough to learn everyone's name.



Trinity's strength is enhanced when it is deeply connected to the life of the broader University.

This means building partnerships across academic and administrative divisions; contributing to the intellectual, spiritual, and cultural life of the institution; and helping Capital more fully embody its identity as a university shaped by vocation, faith, inquiry, belonging, and the common good.

The Rector and Dean should be an active and collaborative university leader, someone who works well with the Provost, President, faculty colleagues, and campus partners, and who can imagine productive intersections between Trinity and other parts of the University. Opportunities for collaboration may include shared academic programming, co-curricular initiatives, public events, leadership formation, spiritual care, interfaith engagement, ethics, community-based learning, and partnerships with areas such as student experience, business, law, social work, music, and the humanities.

The next Rector and Dean should help Trinity contribute meaningfully to Capital's aspiration to live its mission as one university.

Expand Trinity's Public Witness, Ecumenical Reach, and Community Engagement

The next Rector and Dean should help Trinity become an even more visible theological voice in the public life of the University, the church, and the wider Columbus community. In an era marked by fragmentation, moral complexity, spiritual searching, and deep public need, seminaries have an opportunity to offer more than degree programs; they can serve as places of reflection, dialogue, formation, reconciliation, and hope. Trinity should be a place where the church and the world can encounter thoughtful Christian leadership shaped by rigor, humility, hospitality, and courage. Trinity's location within Capital and within the Columbus region creates a meaningful platform for this work.

The next leader should be able to imagine and advance a robust public role for Trinity - one that includes ecumenical engagement, interfaith dialogue, community partnerships, continuing education, and thoughtful engagement with issues of justice, leadership, ethics, vocation, and civic life. The successful Rector and Dean will understand that a seminary's witness is strengthened when it is intellectually serious, spiritually grounded, publicly engaged, and relationally open.

The Rector and Dean should be a leader in representing the Seminary in both ecclesial and scholarly public spheres. They should seek out an appropriate number of opportunities for presentations and publications. Doing this work in church and ministry-related settings will keep the Seminary grounded in its mission of forming leaders for Christ's Church;



Trinity is supported by friends, alumni of Trinity and its preceding bodies (Hamma School of Theology and the Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary), and neighbors near and far. The gifts we receive support financial aid, special events, day-to-day operations, and a myriad of other essential programs and activities.

doing this work in scholarly realm will keep the Seminary grounded in the second of half of its mission, to form those leaders for the sake of the world. The Rector and Dean can then leverage their own reputation as a scholar, a minister, and an administrator to elevate Trinity's public reputation in these settings.

Lead with Stewardship, Institutional Discipline, and Entrepreneurial Energy

The next Rector and Dean must bring a stewardship mindset to the role. Trinity's future will depend not only on vision, but on disciplined execution, strong partnership, sound financial judgment, and an ability to generate momentum and confidence around the Seminary's mission.

The Rector and Dean should be comfortable engaging in advancement work, alumni and donor cultivation, external storytelling, partnership development, and strategic prioritization. This is not a role for a passive caretaker. Trinity will need a leader who can identify opportunity, build support, mobilize relationships, and work in close partnership with University leadership to strengthen the Seminary's sustainability and impact.

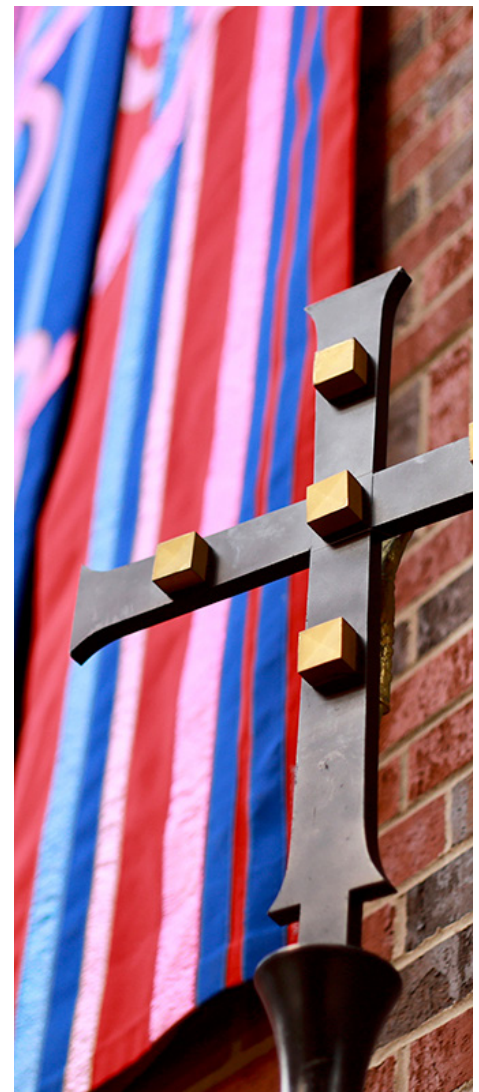
The successful Rector and Dean will understand that stewardship is both financial and moral. It includes care for people, programs, mission, relationships, and resources. The leader must be able to hold together aspiration and realism, imagination and accountability, hope and discipline.

Build Capacity Through Faculty and Staff Leadership

The next Rector and Dean must build the institutional capacity of Trinity by fostering a healthy, engaged, and adaptive faculty and staff culture. The Seminary will need a leader who can work collaboratively with colleagues, value shared governance and academic integrity, support innovation, and build alignment around a common direction.

The next Rector and Dean should be able to bring people together around shared priorities, support strong execution, and create the conditions for faculty and staff to contribute their best work. This means encouraging creativity while providing clarity, honoring tradition while inviting growth, and leading change in ways that are both thoughtful and energizing.

Trinity needs a Rector and Dean who can help others lead, not merely carry the work alone.



Strengthen Relationships Across the ELCA and the Broader Church

The Rector and Dean of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University must be a trusted and credible ecclesial leader who can deepen Trinity's relationships with the church it serves. This will include cultivating strong partnerships with bishops, synods, candidacy leaders, congregations, alumni, churchwide leaders, and other key partners in the ecosystem of theological education and ministry formation.

At a time when seminaries must demonstrate both responsiveness and relevance, Trinity Lutheran Seminary needs a Rector and Dean who can listen well to the Church, understand the realities facing congregations and leaders, and help position the Seminary as a thoughtful, faithful, and trusted partner. The next Rector and Dean must be capable of representing Trinity with authenticity and credibility in ecclesial settings while also inviting the Church more fully into Trinity's life and future.

This leader should help strengthen Trinity's standing across the ELCA while also embracing its ecumenical reach and its capacity to serve a wider set of communities and learners. The Rector and Dean's presence in these relationships will matter greatly, not only for reputation, but for enrollment, partnerships, fundraising, and the Seminary's long-term vitality.

In Summary

The next Rector and Dean of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University will be called to lead at the intersection of church and academy, tradition and innovation, formation and strategy, Seminary and University. This is a role for a deeply grounded and forward-looking leader, someone who can honor Trinity's theological heritage, build its future with imagination and care, and strengthen its contribution to Capital University and to the Church.

The opportunity is not simply to manage a seminary, but to help shape what an embedded Lutheran seminary can be in this moment: intellectually vibrant, spiritually alive, ecclesially trusted, publicly engaged, strategically aligned, and deeply committed to forming leaders for faithful service in a changing world.

Qualifications, Characteristics, and Experiences

The next Rector and Dean of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University will bring together ecclesial leadership, academic credibility, pastoral wisdom, and the capacity to lead a complex graduate theological school within a comprehensive university. Consistent with Trinity's relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and Capital University's expectations for academic leadership, candidates will demonstrate the qualifications necessary to lead both the Seminary's academic enterprise and its distinctive work of forming leaders for the church.



Required Qualifications

Candidates for the position will:

- At the time of appointment, be a rostered Minister of Word and Sacrament in good standing in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, consistent with ELCA requirements for the chief administrative officer of an unincorporated seminary, and be eligible to receive and maintain the appropriate call for service as a seminary administrator.
- Hold an M.Div. or equivalent graduate theological degree and an earned doctorate or other terminal degree appropriate to the candidate's field and the work of graduate theological education, with academic and professional credentials sufficient for appointment to the Trinity Lutheran Seminary faculty under Capital University's faculty qualification standards.
- Demonstrate a deep grounding in Lutheran theology and the Lutheran Confessions, a commitment to the faith and practice of the ELCA, and an ability to articulate the distinctive role of Lutheran theological education in forming leaders for Christ's church and for the sake of the world.
- Bring substantial and progressively responsible leadership experience in theological education, higher education, congregational or synodical ministry, the churchwide organization, or another closely related mission-driven setting, including experience leading people, programs, and institutional priorities.
- Demonstrate the capacity to provide academic and administrative leadership, including sound judgment, responsible stewardship of resources, collaborative decision-making, and the ability to move from discernment Demonstrate a record of effective preaching, teaching, theological reflection, ecumenical approaches, and communication appropriate to a leader who will represent Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University among students, faculty, congregations, synods, the ELCA, the academy, and the wider

APPLICATIONS, NOMINATIONS, AND EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Capital University is conducting this search. Confidential discussions, nominations, and inquiries about the position are encouraged and may be sent to: president@capital.edu

To apply, candidates should prepare a letter of interest addressing the leadership agenda and desired qualities, characteristics, and experiences outlined in this prospectus. Also required is a current curriculum vitae. References will be requested later in the search. The position is open until filled, but only applications received by October 23, 2026, will be guaranteed full consideration.