

THE RICH HISTORY OF FAITH AT NORTHWEST COLLEGE

The unique mandate of the Northwest College Constitution and By-laws confirms that we never operate beyond the needs of the sponsoring church. The constitution and by laws supports the Northwest College mission of providing leadership and service as directed by the Holy Spirit.

The constitution further dictates that the ownership responsibility is in the hands of the Districts. The college is a creature of the District and has no authority to operate as a sovereign entity. We exist to serve the need for vocational church ministries and professionally trained laymen who are the living sacrifice called of God to serve the Body of Christ.

If Northwest College is to serve within the fellowship properly, it must be driven by the membership within the church, for Northwest College is the Academy within the church. We are not a public institution. We are a private Christian higher education institution uniquely serving it's membership through the Districts and the churches.

Certain students from other Christian communities will always be allowed to enjoy the education and spiritual environment of the constitutional mandate of the sponsoring church. (However, the initiative, tenacity and determination of the moral ownership/ stakeholders of Northwest College will lift or lower her expression of excellence.)

(The college should not be the source of initiative, tenacity and determination. If it should, then it should be sovereign. Christ never attempted to be equal to or separate from His father - Northwest College should not attempt to be equal or separate from it's ownership, the sponsoring church.)

This is the foundation of our rich history and faith as a Christian higher education academy within the church. Reverend Henry Ness came from Fargo, North Dakota, to Hollywood Temple (now Calvary Temple) in Seattle to assume the pastorate in 1933. He was standing outside the building when the thought came to him, "What a shame that this beautiful building, which has been wholly dedicated to the Lord, should stand empty all day long. Why should it not be utilized every day of the week and not only on Sunday?" God gave him a vision then to establish a Bible school to train young people for the ministry.

From this vision came the constitution for the Bible school. Portions of preamble provide the foundation for the schools direction. "The objective and purpose of the school is to maintain, conduct and operate a non-profit institution of learning at college level, with particular emphasis upon ministerial and mission training.

The further purpose as stated in the preamble to the constitutional bylaws states among other things: Be it resolved that this college offer a thorough course of instruction in God's Word to all students, so that each one will have studied by the time of his graduation every book in the Bible.

That it organize the curriculum of study in such a way that each student will have an introduction to the basic fields of learning such as language, literature, history and science, as well as courses of specialized nature.

That it provide for training pastors and evangelists in suitable courses of instruction, and in various opportunities for actual ministry. That it provide for training in Christian Education for the student qualifying them to engage in full time Christian Education and youth work, or to return to their home churches and become active and effective lay worker

That it assist those who desire to prepare for the chaplaincy, teaching, nursing, education and other types of occupation and service as a recognized need develops.

1934 School Opens

The school opened its doors in 1934, and during that first year, 49 students enrolled in classes. Academic training was secondary to spiritual training. The spiritual life of the school was integrated with the academic life. Often, during the first years of the school's existence, classes would be canceled for days as the Holy Spirit was manifested in chapel services or even class sessions, and the students prayed and worshipped in His presence.

In Dr. Maxine Williams' complete history of the College from its beginnings to 1966, she wrote, "There is nothing that the college and the constituency have guarded more zealously throughout the entire history of the college than the preservation of the spiritual life of the school."

1949 Butterfield Presidency Begins

In 1949, Reverend Ness resigned his position as President of Northwest Bible College, and C.E. Butterfield was asked to serve. President Butterfield is remembered warmly among the students who came to Northwest during his administration.

God's Provision of Needed Funds

In the early years, the College sank deep into debt. It had (originally promised the Northwest District Presbytery that it would always be self-supporting) However, as standards rose, so did costs. Throughout this time of need, God provided in many miraculous ways on numerous occasions. President Butterfield told one story as an example:

"We had a financial need of about \$1,000.00, and I had been praying and had not seemed to get an answer. One day, I was going through the mail that I had allowed to accumulate to one side and I found a small, frayed envelope addressed to me at the Northwest Bible College, written very faintly in pencil--I could hardly make out the address--and there was no return address

on the envelope. But it was a thick envelope. When I first had noticed it on my desk, I supposed it was some dear old lady that was interested in sending out tracts, since I had received many bundles of tracts that looked just like this package. And so I nonchalantly tore open this envelope, and I almost fell off my seat when I saw that in this frayed envelope was a handful of bills that amounted to \$1,000.00. It was just the amount of money that we needed to meet our need."

1952 First Accreditation

On October 16, 1952, the College was accredited by the American Association of Bible Colleges. It was also listed as a school of higher learning by the United States Department of Education.

1955 Liberal Arts Division Introduced

The 1955-56 school year saw a Junior College added to the studies. Thus students not planning to enter full-time ministry were given the opportunity to attend Northwest and get a Christian education. The addition of the Junior College with its liberal arts courses broadened the vision of the school. From that time on, the liberal arts division of the College has grown significantly.

1955 Move to Kirkland

In 1955, plans were made known to build a new freeway through Seattle which would condemn the church and school property. The school received notification for the condemnation of the property. The Business Manager, Reverend Herbert Crowder, later said, "The college didn't have two dimes to rub together to be called a building fund. There wasn't any money in the treasury; there was hardly enough to pay the bills, let alone to start a college campus or to buy the land."

A 35-acre plot in Kirkland, Washington came to the attention of President Butterfield. This plot had been used as government housing during the war years and already possessed major improvements. President Butterfield knelt on part of the property which was later to become the C.E. Butterfield Chapel, asking God for the land.

God's Provision for the Main Kirkland Campus Buildings

The Lord told President Butterfield He would give the land to the school. In 1958, the U.S. government granted the deed for 23 acres to the school and an additional 12 acres were purchased for \$30,000, the amount which had been gained from the sale of the Seattle property to the government. The provision of the primary funds which made the building of the Kirkland campus possible was a miracle of God.

While praying for funds one day, President Butterfield felt impressed to write and tell a woman named Wanda Dickey about the school's needs. He received a curt and abrupt letter back, and President Butterfield felt he had been mistaken to write to her. However, a short time later, Mrs. Dickey sent another letter with a check for \$6,000.00. This was the exact amount that was needed for a particular financial problem the school was facing at the time.

When President Butterfield called to thank her, she invited him to her home in southern California. While he was there, she began to question him about the school, its government, the board members, what the school was doing, its attitude toward missionary work, and other things. President Butterfield did not expect much more money to come from her since the note, included with the \$6,000, had said that she had "scraped the barrel" to send the gift.

Some time later, President Butterfield was called by Mrs. Dickey's lawyer and asked to conduct her funeral service. The lawyer also told him, "I think you might be interested in knowing that Mrs. Dickey has made the Northwest College the residual heir in her estate." The lawyer went on to say that it would probably be about \$450,000. After the estate was all settled and the money had trickled in over a period of time, the school had received more than \$600,000 from the estate.

1966 Hurst Presidency Begins

After a long and full administration, President Butterfield retired in 1966, and Dr. D.V. Hurst took the presidency. President Hurst's vision showed a continuation of the growth on the Kirkland campus. During President Hurst's years at Northwest, the campus underwent major building construction and land acquisition, which increased the college to over 60

acres. He led the campus in the building of several new dormitories, a three-story library, married student housing, and the purchase of property adjacent to the rest of the campus.

1973 Academic Accreditation

In 1973, the school received regional accreditation from the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.

1990 Davis Presidency Begins

President Hurst retired in 1990, and his position was filled by Dennis Davis, the College's first alumnus president. President Davis has continued to propagate the mission and dreams of his predecessors Drs. Ness, Butterfield, and Hurst., which began over 60 years ago. Under the Davis leadership the college became the eighty-fifth member of the Coalition of Christian Colleges and Universities. Several new majors were established, including Business Administration, Secondary Education, Eco-intensive Biology, and the Adult Degree completion program. The Davis leadership also brought total computerization to the campus and library. The remodeling and expansion of the Pecota Student Center, the acquisition of the new Administrative Facilities, and the remodel of the Ness Academic Center were other projects of the Davis Presidency.