

CONSTITUTION
OF THE
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
OF THE
GENERAL SYNOD
OF THE
Evangelical Lutheran Church

IN
THE UNITED STATES:

Located at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

TOGETHER WITH
THE STATUTES OF THE GENERAL SYNOD
ON WHICH IT IS FOUNDED.

PHILADELPHIA:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM BROWN.
1826.

PART I.

STATUTES OF THE GENERAL SYNOD.

WHEREAS, The General Synod regard it as a solemn duty imposed on them by their Constitution, and due from them to their God and to the Church, to provide for the proper education of men of piety and talents, for the Gospel Ministry:—Therefore,

Resolved, 1. That the General Synod will forthwith commence, in the name of the Triune God, and in humble reliance on his aid, the establishment of a Theological Seminary, which shall be exclusively devoted to the glory of our Divine Redeemer, Jesus Christ, who is God over all, blessed for ever. And that in this Seminary shall be taught, in the German and English languages, the fundamental doctrines of the Sacred Scriptures, as contained in the Augsburg Confession.

2. That this Institution shall be under the sole government of a Board of Directors, which shall

regularly meet semi-annually, and as often at intermediate times as they may think expedient. This Board are not, in any respect, under the control of the General Synod; but each member is responsible, individually, to the Synod by which he is elected.

3. That this Board consist of five Directors, viz. three pastors and two laymen from each Synod, which is connected with the General Synod, and contributes pecuniary aid to the support of the Seminary.

4. That the General Synod elect the first Board of Directors, agreeably to the preceding article, whose term of service shall be determined by their respective Synods; after which, the several Synods shall elect their Directors in such manner, and for such time, as may be deemed most expedient by themselves: *Provided always*, That one half of their quota of Directors vacate their seats at one and the same time.

5. That after the aggregate sum of ten thousand dollars has been collected, each Synod shall be entitled to an additional Director, for every five hundred dollars which it may subsequently contribute, until its number of Directors shall be NINE; after which, it shall be entitled to an additional Director for every thousand dollars, until its number of Directors amount to FOURTEEN.

6. That a Professor shall be elected by the General Synod, after which the Board of Directors shall forever have the exclusive authority of electing additional Professors, and filling up all vacancies.

7. Any Professor may be impeached, at any time, for fundamental error in doctrine, immorality of deportment, inattention to the duties of his office, or incapacity to discharge them; and, if found guilty, may be dismissed from office, by two-thirds of the Directors present: *Provided always*, That a motion for impeachment be made at one semi-annual meeting, and lie over for consideration until the next; and that the Secretary of the Board of Directors be required to give written notice to every Director absent from said meeting, within four weeks after the meeting at which such motion was made.

8. That the Board of Directors shall frame a Constitution in consonance with the principles fixed by the General Synod; and may, from time to time, form such By-laws as they may deem expedient, and as are in accordance with the Constitution.

9. Any alteration in the Constitution of the Seminary, or any election for a Professor, must be proposed at one semi-annual meeting of the Board, and cannot be acted on before the next semi-annual meeting. A fair copy of every such proposed measure.

shall be forwarded to each Director, who may have been absent from said meeting, whose vote must be accepted, whether by proxy or by letter.

10. The Directors are responsible for their conduct to the respective Synods by which they were elected, and may be removed for such causes, and in such manner, as said Synods shall specify.

11. The Board of Directors shall establish a Treasury, into which all contributions and bequests for the Theological Seminary shall be paid, and said Board shall have the sole control of the Treasury.

PART II.

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

ARTICLE I.

INTRODUCTION. *Design of this Institution.*

SECT. 1. It is proper to make a summary statement of the objects aimed at by the founders of this Institution, and of the benefits expected from it, in order that its design may be known to the public, and that it may always be sacredly kept in view by its Directors, Professors, and Pupils. It is designed:

2. To provide our churches with pastors who sincerely believe, and cordially approve of, the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures, as they are fundamentally taught in the Augsburg Confession, and who will therefore teach them in opposition to Deists, Unitarians, Arians, Antinomians, and all other fundamental errorists.

3. To meet the exigencies of our Churches, many of which require Ministers capable of preaching in both the German and English languages.

4. To educate for the Ministry poor young men of piety and talents; by affording them gratuitous instruction, and, as far as the funds will admit, and their necessity requires, defraying also their other necessary expenses.

5. To make the future Ministers of the Church devoted and deeply pious men; by educating a number of them amid circumstances most favourable to the growth of genuine godliness, and affording the most powerful stimulus to its attainment.

6. To make the future Ministers of the Church zealous and learned men; workmen that need not be ashamed, being qualified rightly to divide the word of truth, and to give unto each hearer his portion, both of instruction and edification, in due season.

7. To promote unanimity of views and harmony of feelings, among the Ministers of the Church, by having a large number educated by the same teachers, and in the same course of study; and thus to enable them to co-operate more effectually in promoting the kingdom of the Redeemer.

8. To increase the number of Ministers, and make it commensurate with the increasing wants of the Church.

ARTICLE II.

Board of Directors.

SECT. 1. The Board of Directors shall be chosen by the different Synods which are connected with the General Synod, and contribute pecuniary aid to the support of the Seminary, according to Statutes three, four, and five. And so soon as any other Synod, not now comprehended in the General Synod, shall enter into regular connexion with said body, it shall be placed on an equality with the Synods which were concerned in the original formation of the Seminary, and to which the fourth Statute particularly refers: that is, after having resolved to patronize the Seminary, and after having made some contribution to its funds, each such Synod shall be entitled to three clerical and two lay directors: and after its contributions shall amount to three thousand three hundred and thirty three dollars (the average sum paid by the original Synods in making up the aggregate ten thousand) then, for all contributions subsequently paid into the general fund, each such Synod shall be entitled to additional Directors, according to the ratio specified in Statute five.

2. Every Director, before he takes his seat as a member of this Board, shall solemnly subscribe the following formula, viz. "Sincerely approving the

design of the Seminary of the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, in the United States, as detailed in Article I. of its Constitution, and of the provisions of the Constitution and Statutes of said Seminary, I do solemnly declare and promise, in the presence of God and this Board, that I will faithfully endeavour to carry into effect all the provisions of said Constitution and Statutes, and thus promote the great design of said Seminary."

3. There shall be two regular semi-annual meetings of the Board in each year, the one at the end of the Summer session, and the other at the end of the Winter session. The transaction of the business of the Board, shall commence immediately after the conclusion of the examination of the Students, at which it shall be the duty of the Directors to attend. Seven members of the Board shall form a quorum, *Provided always*, that five of this number be ministers of the gospel, and two laymen.

4. The Board shall annually choose out of their own number, a President, Vice-President, and Secretary, who shall always be re-eligible. In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall preside, and in his absence, the Board shall elect a President pro tempore.

5. A special meeting of the Board shall be called by the President, or in case of his death, or inability to act, by the Vice-President, whenever a written request for such a meeting is presented to him, signed

by at least two clerical and one lay Director from each Synod in connexion with the Seminary. The mode of calling a special meeting by the President or Vice-President, when thus lawfully requested, shall be by a circular addressed to each Director, specifying the time of meeting, and the business to be transacted. This letter shall be sent at least fifty days before the time of said meeting, and no business can be transacted except that specified in the notice.

6. The Board of Directors shall elect some suitable person as Treasurer of the Board, who shall be required to give sufficient bond and security. The Treasurer shall receive all moneys to be paid into the Treasury, and shall hold them and his office subject to the exclusive direction of the board. He shall in no case whatever, pay out any money, except when ordered by a vote of the Board, and shall render to them at every semi-annual meeting, a faithful statement of his accounts.

7. Every meeting of the Board shall be opened and closed with prayer. And at every stated meeting in the spring, the whole of the Statutes and Constitution shall be read before the Board of Directors, in order that they may distinctly keep in mind the design of the institution, and the duties incumbent upon them.

8. The Board shall inaugurate the Professors, and give direction what exercises shall be performed on

such occasions. They shall prescribe the course of instruction to be pursued by the Professors: and any Professor wishing to introduce any important change in his department of the course, shall first submit it to the Board for their approbation.

9. The Board of Directors shall inspect the fidelity of the Professors, as well with regard to the doctrines actually taught, as to the manner of teaching them. If any just reason be given them to suspect either the orthodoxy, or piety, or habitual diligence, or capacity of a Professor, or his devotedness to the interests of the Lutheran Church, it shall be their sacred duty to institute an investigation at the next regular meeting, or, if the case be one of fundamental heterodoxy, they shall call a special meeting for the purpose. If, after candid and deliberate examination, they shall judge any Professor guilty of either of the above charges alledged against him, it shall be their sacred duty to depose him from office, to appoint immediately some suitable Minister of our Church to conduct, pro tempore, the instruction of the Seminary, (requiring of him the same doctrinal profession, and oath of office, as of the Professor) and to take the earliest constitutional measures to elect a new Professor.

10. It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to keep a watch over the conduct and interests of the Students, to redress their grievances, to review and sanction, or reverse the decisions of the faculty.

11. At every stated meeting of the General Synod, the Board shall forward to said body in writing, a detailed and faithful account of the state of the Seminary. The General Synod may recommend to the Board any measures which they deem conducive to the welfare of the institution; and every such recommendation shall be considered at the next regular meeting of the Board, and may be accepted or rejected, as the majority of the Directors present shall see fit. *Provided always*, That on every such measure recommended by the General Synod, those Directors who are absent may vote by proxy or letter.

12. If there should, at any time, be a doubt with regard to an applicant for a seat in this Board, whether he is lawfully entitled to such seat according to the Constitution and Statutes of this Seminary, the existing members of the Board shall decide the point by a vote.

13. In their efforts to promote the grand designs of this Seminary, and in short, in all their official acts, the Directors shall conform to the Constitution of the Seminary, and the Statutes on which it is founded: and if, at any time, they should act contrary thereto, or transcend the powers therein granted them, the party deeming itself aggrieved, may have redress by appeal to the Judges of the Supreme Court of the state of Pennsylvania, who are hereby constituted and authorized to judge in such cases, and a majority of whom may declare null and void any decision

of this Board, from which an appeal is made to them, and which, after mature deliberation, they believe to be contrary to the Constitution of this Seminary, or the Statutes on which it is founded, and with which it must ever harmonize.

ARTICLE III.

Of the Professors.

SECT. 1. No person shall be eligible to the office of Professor, who is not an ordained pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, of high repute for piety and talents. And no person shall be eligible to the Professorship of Didactic and Polemic Theology, who has not, in addition to the above qualifications, officiated as pastor in the church at least five years.

2. Every Professor elect of this institution, shall on the day of his inauguration, publicly pronounce and subscribe the oath of office required of the Directors, and also, the following declaration: "I solemnly declare in the presence of God and the Directors of this Seminary, that I do *ex animo*, believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the inspired word of God, and the only perfect rule of faith and practice. I believe the Augsburg Confession and the Catechisms of Luther to be a summary and just exhibition of the fundamental doctrines of the word of God. I declare that I

approve of the general principles of church-government adopted by the Lutheran church in this country, and believe them to be consistent with the word of God. And I do solemnly promise not to teach any thing, either directly or by insinuation, which shall appear to me to contradict, or to be in any degree more or less remote, inconsistent with the doctrines or principles avowed in this declaration. On the contrary, I promise, by the aid of God, to vindicate and inculcate these doctrines and principles, in opposition to the views of Atheists, Deists, Jews, Socinians, Unitarians, Arians, Universalists, Pelagians, Antinomians, and all other errorists, while I remain a Professor in this Seminary."

3. The preceding declaration shall be repeated by each Professor at the expiration of every term of five years, in the presence of the Directors; and at any intermediate time, if required to do so by a vote of the Board of Directors. And no man shall be retained as Professor who shall refuse to make and repeat this declaration, in the manner and at the times above specified.

4. Each Professor shall, if practicable, have at least six lectures or recitations in a week. Each lecture and recitation shall be accompanied by prayer.

5. The salary of the Professors shall be fixed by the Board, and shall be equal to a comfortable support and provision for a family.

6. Should any Professor wish to resign his office, he shall give the Directors six months previous notice of his intention.

7. The Professors of the Seminary shall constitute a Faculty, of which each member shall have an equal vote, and of which the Professor of Didactic and Polemic divinity shall, when present, be *ex officio* chairman. The Faculty shall convene at the request of any one of its members. They shall keep a record of their proceedings, which shall be laid before the Directors at every regular meeting.

8. The Faculty shall have power to determine the hours of recitation; to examine and decide on all cases of discipline and questions of order; to admit Students; to determine the rules of decorum and duty, which the Students are to observe, which rules shall be publicly read to the Students at the commencement of each session; to admonish and dismiss any Student, who shall prove immoral, or disobedient, or unsound in his religious views, or whom they shall judge on any account a dangerous or unprofitable member of the institution.

9. The Professors, together with the Students, shall stately worship with the Church established in the place in which the Seminary is located; and an arrangement shall be made, under the direction of the Board, by which each Professor shall preach to the Students once in each month: but the Professors shall have no connexion with the Church, nor per-

form any pastoral functions whatever, unless they are requested by the regular pastor of the Church, and find it consistent with their professional duties and their disposition to do so.

ARTICLE IV.

Course of Study, Examinations and Vacations.

SECT. 1. The regular course of instruction and study in the Seminary shall embrace the following branches: Greek and Hebrew Philology, Sacred Geography, Sacred Chronology, Biblical and Profane History connected, Jewish Antiquities, Philosophy of the Mind, Evidences of Christianity, Biblical Criticism, Exegetical Theology, Biblical Theology, Systematic Divinity, Practical Divinity, Ecclesiastical History, Polemic Theology, Church Government, Composition and Delivery of Sermons, and Pastoral Theology.

2. The time requisite for a complete course of study is three years: though Students may be received for a shorter time.

3. Each Student, who has the necessary physical and mental capacity, will be expected to pay a reasonable attention to sacred music.

4. At the close of each session, there shall be a regular examination of all the classes on the studies of that session, conducted by the Professors, in the

presence of such of the Directors, and other literary gentlemen as may be present. And at the close of their course, the senior class shall in like manner be examined on all the studies of the whole course. The theses of the senior class, shall be assigned them by the Faculty, three months before the time when they are to be publicly defended.

5. Particular attention shall be paid to the German language, and the course of studies shall be so regulated, that a due portion of them may be pursued in the German language by all Students who wish.

6. There shall be two vacations in each year, of six weeks continuance each. The first shall commence on the Wednesday before the third Thursday in May, and the second on the last Wednesday of September, in each year.

7. All Students shall be in their respective rooms during study hours, and no Student shall be absent from recitation or lecture, without having previously obtained the permission of the officiating Professor.

8. Every Student shall be required to read an original composition, on such subject as the Professors may appoint, at least once a month in the junior year, once in three weeks in the second year, and once in two weeks in the senior year. And once a month during the whole course, each Student shall commit to memory a piece of his own composition, and pronounce it before the Professors and Students.

ARTICLE V.

Of the Devotional Exercises of the Students.

SECT. 1. "It ought to be considered as an object of primary importance by every Student of the Seminary, not to lose that inward practical sense of the power of godliness which he may have attained," nor to suffer his intellectual pursuits at all to impair it; but on the contrary, to aim at constant growth in piety and enlightened zeal for the interests of religion: ever remembering that without this, all his other attainments will be of little value, and must ultimately prove detrimental to the Church. "He must remember, too, that this is a species of improvement, which must necessarily be left, in a great measure, to himself, as a concern between God and his own soul."

2. Religious exercises shall be performed every morning and evening during term time, either by the Professors, or such Students as they shall appoint. In the morning, a devotional chapter or psalm shall be read, and a prayer offered up. In the evening a hymn shall be sung, and the services concluded with prayer.

3. Every Student shall constantly, and punctually, and seriously, attend these religious exercises: as well as all the stated public worship in the Church.

All tardiness or absence from these exercises, shall be noted by Monitors, whom the Faculty shall appoint for the purpose.

4. During winter term, morning prayers shall be attended at seven, and evening prayers at five o'clock; and during summer term, at six o'clock morning and evening.

5. It is, moreover, expected that each student will, in private, spend a portion of time every morning and evening in devout meditation, self-examination, and prayer; and in reading the Holy Scriptures solely for the purpose of practical application to himself. The whole of every Lord's day shall be spent in devotional exercises, either social or secret. The books read are to be practical, and all intellectual pursuits not immediately connected with devotion or the religion of the heart, are on that day to be forborne. It is also recommended, that the first Wednesday of every month be set apart for special prayer and self-examination, and for exercises calculated to promote a missionary spirit.

6. If any Student shall be chargeable with levity, or inattention to practical religion, he shall be admonished by the Professors; and if, after due admonition, he persist in his course, he shall be expelled by the Faculty.

7. The Professors shall regard it as their most sacred duty, by every means in their power, to promote genuine piety and true devotion among the

Students, by inculcating them in all their lectures and instructions, and by warning their pupils against cold formality on the one hand, and enthusiasm on the other.

ARTICLE VI.

Of the Students.

SECT. 1. This Seminary shall be open for the reception of Students of all Christian denominations, possessing the qualifications hereafter specified.

2. Every applicant for admission shall produce satisfactory testimonials that he possesses good natural talents, is of prudent and discreet deportment, and in full communion with some regular church; that he has passed through a regular course of academical study, or wanting this, he shall submit himself to an examination of his preparatory attainments.

3. Every student, before he takes his station in the Seminary, shall make and subscribe the following declaration: "I declare it to be my serious intention to devote myself to the work of the gospel ministry: and I solemnly promise that, so long as I remain a member of the Theological Seminary, I will, in reliance on divine grace, faithfully and diligently attend on all the instructions of this institution, that I will conscientiously and vigilantly

observe all the regulations of the constitution and by-laws, and that I will pay due respect and obedience to the Professors, treat my fellow-students as brethren, and all other men as becomes the gospel of Christ."

4. Each Student shall be considered a probationer during the first six months after his matriculation. If, after the lapse of this time, he shall have proved himself, in the opinion of the Professors, unfit to proceed, they shall report the fact to the Directors, who, if they are of the same opinion, shall dismiss him from the Seminary.

5. Habitual diligence and industry in study shall be required of all the Students, unless the want of health prevent, for which the Professors shall make due allowance.

6. Every Student shall be expected to treat his teachers with the greatest deference and respect, and all persons with civility; and all students shall yield a prompt and ready obedience to all the lawful requisitions of the Professors and Directors.

7. Cleanliness in dress and habit shall be observed by every student; but all excessive expense in clothing is strictly forbidden.

ARTICLE VII.

Of the Library.

SECT. 1. The acquisition of a select and comprehensive Theological Library, shall be considered as an object of the highest importance to the Seminary.

2. The Directors shall therefore, from time to time, make such arrangements as they shall deem best calculated to attain the object in view: and so soon as the state of the funds will admit of it, they may make some appropriations for the purchase of the most necessary works.

3. A Librarian shall be appointed by the Directors for such time as they may think proper.

4. A suitable room shall be appropriated for the Library; and shelves shall be erected and divided into alcoves. If any Synod or individuals shall nearly or entirely fill one of the compartments, the name of the donor shall be conspicuously placed over it.

5. The Librarian shall keep a correct catalogue of all the books belonging to the Library, and of all the donors who have made contributions to it.

6. No person shall have a right to borrow books, except the Professors and Students of the Seminary.

7. The Librarian shall form a detailed system of regulations, embracing the items specified in this Constitution for the management of the Library;

which, after having been sanctioned by the Directors shall remain in force, subject to the amendment or revisal of the Board.

8. The stated time for loaning and returning books, shall be from one to three o'clock, of every Saturday afternoon, in term time. Nor shall the library be opened in the intermediate time excepting by the Professors, to whom the key of the library shall at any time be given.

9. A list of the most necessary books shall be presented to the Directors by the Professors, in order that those which are most needed, may be purchased first.

10. Books which are of such size or nature that they ought rarely to be taken from the library, shall be used in the library, during library hours; *Provided always*, that they may be taken out by the Professors or by a Student, who shall have obtained a written order from a Professor. The faculty shall give the librarian a list of the books referred to in this section.

ARTICLE VIII.

Of the Steward and Commons.

SECT. 1. The Steward shall be employed by the Directors, and shall hold his station under such stipulations as may be agreed on by them.

2. All Theological Students shall board in commons, special cases excepted, of which the Faculty shall take cognizance.

ARTICLE IX.

Of Beneficiaries.

SECT. 1. One of the prominent objects of this institution shall be, to defray, either in whole, or in part, the necessary expenses of indigent young men, destined to the gospel ministry.

2. The Directors shall, therefore, as early as possible, devise such measures, as may appear to them calculated to effect this object.

3. No person shall be received as Beneficiary, who does not furnish satisfactory testimonials that he is possessed of distinguished natural talents and piety. And if at any time it shall appear to the Professors, that any Beneficiary of this institution does not make such progress in learning and piety, as might be expected, he shall no longer profit by the charitable funds of the Seminary.

4. Poor Students shall pay nothing for room-rent in the Seminary, and shall be exempted from all the other expenses of the Seminary, as far as the state of the funds will admit.

ARTICLE X.

Of the Funds.

SECT. 1. The funds of this institution shall at all times be kept entirely separate and distinct from all other funds or moneys whatever; and the Directors shall deposite them in the hands of such Corporation, or dispose of them in such other manner for safe keeping and improvement, as they may see proper.

2. The Directors shall endeavour from time to time, to devise means for the gradual enlargement of the funds, until they become adequate to the necessities of the institution.

3. It shall be the duty of the Directors sacredly to execute the intention and directions of testators or donors, in regard to moneys, or other property, left or given to the Seminary.

4. All moneys collected or funds obtained, shall be paid into the general fund, until provision is made for the support of the Professors, and the erection of the necessary buildings: *Provided always,* that any number of individuals not greater than ten, may at any time found scholarships.

5. After the two fundamental objects, mentioned in the last section, shall have been attained, any congregation or synod, may also found scholarships.

6. Any congregation or synod, which shall found one or more scholarships, may, if it see fit, reserve to itself, forever, the privilege of nominating the persons to be received on said scholarships. And the nomination of persons to be received on scholarships, founded by a number of individuals not greater than ten, may be reserved by said individuals to themselves, during their life time, after which it shall be vested in the Directors, and ever remain with them.

7. If, at any time, no applicant possessing the qualifications specified in Article VI. Sect. 1. shall be nominated by the parties in whom the privilege of nomination is vested, then the Directors may nominate such applicant, who may continue the full course of three years. And if no properly qualified applicant be at the disposal of the Directors, the proceeds of said scholarship, during its vacancy, shall be paid over to the general funds of the Seminary.

