



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

November 12, 2024

Dear Messiah community,

In this month of Thanksgiving, let me express again my deep gratitude for Messiah University, its sacred mission and for you – the men and women who diligently work each day to serve students, families and the community at large. **Thank you for helping us thrive as THE Messiah University!**

As chair of the board of trustees and chair of the Presidential Search Committee (PSC), I'm writing with a summary and update.

The process for selecting the president resides with the university's board of trustees. As I shared in August at Community Day, the board of trustees delegated the identification of a presidential nominee to a search committee comprised of trustee members and members from across the Messiah campus community.

Messiah University Presidential Search Committee

Board of Trustee members

Dr. Craig E. Sider – trustee chair, Millersville, PA
Mr. David Millary '88 – trustee vice chair, Dillsburg, PA
Ms. Linda Eremita – trustee secretary, Pittsburgh, PA
Honorable Sherrie Bailey – trustee, Baltimore, MD
Mr. Scott Heintzelman '89 – trustee, Mechanicsburg, PA
Mr. Rod Musser '83 – trustee, Doylestown, PA
Dr. Alan Robinson – trustee/national director of BIC U.S., Dillsburg, PA
Mrs. Eunice F. Steinbrecher '58 – trustee, Lancaster, PA
Mrs. Jessica Thomas '08 – trustee, New York, NY

Faculty and staff members

Mrs. Kathee Clark – registrar, chair of the Community of Educators (2024-2025)
Dr. Leah Clarke – director and professor, Graduate Program in Counseling
Dr. Henry Danso – professor of psychology, chair of the Ranked Faculty Affairs Committee (2024-2025)

Dr. Brian Swartz –chair, professor, Department of Engineering
Ms. Tovah Wilson '15, M.A. '20 – director of annual giving and donor communication

Administrator member

Dr. Emerson Powery – dean, School of Arts, Culture and Society

Student member

Sam Ramos '25 – student body president

Mrs. Karin Bisbee '98 (non-voting committee administrator) – executive coordinator for the office of the president and board of trustees

The Presidential Search Committee (PSC) will identify a final presidential candidate as a nominee to the full Board of Trustees. The committee has partnered with a search advisory firm, FaithSearch Partners (FSP), to conduct a national search. Input from the broader Messiah community has been invaluable. In September we were able to gather significant feedback from nearly 500 university stakeholders via multiple community engagement sessions and surveys. Together with FSP, Messiah's Presidential Search Committee has drawn from these collective findings to create a presidential position profile, which was posted on the [presidential search website](#) in early October. The profile has also been shared by FSP with their network of more than 1,200 prospects. As I write this update, FSP is now working with an active prospect pool to refine the list of potential candidates.

The presidential profile reflects the input we heard from you regarding the attributes, personal characteristics, skills and experience that you want our next president to possess, including:

- A strong affinity for Messiah's distinct Christian educational mission
- A commitment to high academic standards, student learning and spiritual formation
- A collaborative, innovative leadership style
- A proven approach to effective decision-making and community-building
- A forward-thinking vision for strengthening all aspects of the university

The PSC will meet together in late November to review potential presidential candidates that have been pre-interviewed by FSP and select 2-3 candidates for in-person interviews. We expect that these in-person interviews will happen in early December at an off-campus location. Following those interviews, the PSC will continue to pray, reflect and deliberate and then recommend one presidential nominee to the Board of Trustees for their consideration.

Given the nature of a presidential search, and the desire for confidentiality among leading candidates, the identities of the finalists will not be made public before the new president is named. In fact, due to the highly confidential nature of the search process, each search committee member has signed a confidentiality agreement, both during the search and subsequent to the identification of the next President. Simply put, committee members will not divulge the names of the finalists, even years after the decision has been made.

In late January, The Board of Trustees will meet in Florida for their regularly scheduled winter retreat and it is our intent that at that time we will be able to fulfill the board's mandate of affirming and voting on the ninth President of Messiah University who will begin serving on July 1, 2025.

Our colleagues at FSP have said that they "are convinced that the greatest strength for the search is the Messiah brand, which is strong and respected." Because the Messiah community has not experienced a presidential search in 2 decades, the process may seem daunting. But we are confident in our Messiah, the One who gives wisdom and strength for days ahead. Join me in praying with hopeful expectation!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "CS", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Dr. Craig E. Sider, Chair
Board of Trustees