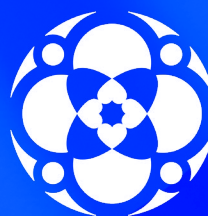


Lead with love

Seeding Generations of
Healing-Centered Leaders



Auburn
Theological
Seminary

Our History

- 1818

Founded in Auburn, New York. A Presbyterian seminary citing the need for a seminary to “go to the frontier.”
- ◆

1837

With the Auburn Declaration, “New School Presbyterians” at Auburn Theological Seminary declared doctrinal openness.
- 1854

Auburn closes its doors due to a decline in enrollment. It reopens the following year after alumni and the town provided financial support.
- ◆

1911

Summer School for clergy and laity is established. Largest certificate program in institution’s history, focused on accessible seminary education.
- ▲

1917

Ida Thorne was the first woman to graduate from Auburn Theological Seminary. She was a minister in the Society of Friends.
- 1921

Founded School of Religious Education focusing on training lay religious leaders for Sunday school and mission fields.
- 1924

Auburn Affirmation — “An affirmation designed to safeguard the unity and liberty of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.”
- ◆

1939

Auburn moves to Union Theological Seminary in New York City. Auburn no longer offers degree programs. Focuses on accessible ministry training.
- ✦

1944

Training for Rural Ministry program launched at Auburn Theological Seminary, focusing and recovering the seminary’s intent to train ministers in rural communities.
- 1956

Rev. Margaret Towner, alumni of Auburn, was the first woman to be ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA).
- ▲

1964

Center for Continuing Education established. This was the first program of its kind and is now replicated in almost all accredited theological schools.
- ✦

1968

Auburn Studies in Theological Education is established, providing research about accredited theological schools.
- ★

1976

Walter Wink is denied tenure at Union Theological Seminary and joins Auburn Theological Seminary where he remained until his death in 2012.
- ✦

1979

Barbara Wheeler named President and served in that role until 2009. She was the first woman to serve in the role and had the longest running tenure of any Auburn leader.
- 1985

Interreligious program for faith leaders established to support Christian leaders in a multi-religious world.
- 1991

Auburn Studies The Journal is established, Auburn’s formal publication of research in theological education.
- ◆

2007

Auburn’s Center for the Study of Theological Education is permanently endowed by Lilly Endowment Inc.
- 2009

Rev. Dr. Katharine Rhodes Henderson is elected President and leads for more than a decade. During her tenure, Auburn galvanized faith leaders to advance movements of social justice.
- 2011

Senior Fellows program is established and runs for ten years, connecting the nation’s leading progressive faith leaders.
- ◆

2021

Auburn welcomes Rev. Dr. Emma Jordan-Simpson as its 11th President and the first African American to serve in that role.

Who We Are

Leading For Ten Generations

For over 200 years, Auburn Theological Seminary has nurtured visionary leaders from the pulpit to the public square.

Today, our mission is as urgent as ever: to identify and strengthen faith leaders—from the pulpit to the public square—to build community, bridge divides, pursue justice, and heal the world.

Rooted in Christianity, Auburn serves a multifaith world. Our leadership programs are focused on practical impact—helping faith leaders at all stages of life gain the skills and support they need to transform their communities.



“What has taken generations to break cannot be healed by short-term fixes. *We need long-term investments in leaders who heal.*”

President, Rev. Dr. Emma Jordan-Simpson

The Challenge

A Leadership Gap *Threatens Our Future*

Leadership Under Strain

Many progressive faith leaders work in crisis mode without long-term leadership strategy or sustainability resources.

A Purpose Gap for Rising Generations

Young leaders crave meaning and belonging but lack access to mentors, networks, and leadership formation opportunities.

Polarization & Division

Deep divides strain our shared humanity, calling for courageous leadership to bridge them.



Our Solution

A Generational Investment in *Healing-Centered Leaders*

Auburn’s strategy, Lead with Love, is a long-view commitment to form leaders across faiths, generations, and geographies.

We focus on constellations, not stars—equipping communities of leaders who bring their people with them.




Janet Prindle Seidler Center for Prophetic Leadership

Auburn equips cohorts of emerging faith leaders to build community and bridge divides.



Center for Storytelling & Narrative Change

Auburn offers tools and gatherings to build narratives that heal and unify.



Center for Research

Auburn’s Barbara Wheeler Research Fellows provide cutting-edge data and analysis to address the education and formation of faith leaders.



“Our future is worth
healing for.”

Why Auburn?

Rooted in Legacy. *Seeding for Generational Impact.*



History of Impact

Ten generations shaping faith and justice leadership.



Multifaith & Inclusive

Programs rooted in Christian heritage and open to all.



National Reach

From cities to rural and digital communities, Auburn meets leaders where they are.



Visionary Partners

Auburn collaborates with leading seminaries, faith groups, and institutions committed to generational change.



From Our Leaders

● “There was something powerful about being in a space where vulnerability was not only welcomed but affirmed. Hearing people speak from their wounds and wisdom reminded me that leadership begins with being authentic with self.”

✕ “I had never been in a space with other people of different faiths, who are working from their own traditions in their own kind of context. And it was powerful to see the overlap of our values of shared dignity and humanity. People being made in the divine image.”


Our Impact

Seeding Leaders. *Growing Movements.*

Auburn’s planting hope. Every leader we equip carries the potential to grow communities of healing and justice far beyond themselves.

Through our emerging leader cohorts, we nurture more than 100 faith and cultural leaders each year. Through our storytelling and narrative-change programs, we reach 500+ leaders annually, cultivating new narratives that repair harm and inspire hope.

These seeds take root in congregations, movements, and public spaces, bearing fruit for years to come. The leaders Auburn forms do not stand alone. They cultivate communities of love and resilience—passing wisdom, courage, and compassion to future generations.



Your support equips the
next generation of leaders
to guide our world and faith
communities toward
*deeper understanding, shared
humanity, and a healed future.*

The Opportunity

We Invite You to *Lead With Love.*

We are seeking visionary partners ready to make a multi-year investment in healing-centered leadership for the next ten generations.

Your support will:

Expand leadership programs and scholarships for emerging faith & cultural leaders.

Fuel groundbreaking storytelling initiatives that heal historic harms.

Strengthen Auburn's capacity to sustain long-term systemic impact.

Strategy Support

Invest on one of our three key strategies for seeding a vision of a healed-future: Leadership Development, Storytelling, or Research.

Fellowships

Support participation in leadership development programs or research fellowships. Our named fellowships include:

- Janet Prindle Seidler Prophetic Leaders
- Walter & June Wink
- Barbara Wheeler
- Janet McCune Edwards
- Rosalie S. Ginsberg
- Derrick McQueen

General Fund

Support the team who deliver on Auburn Theological Seminary's vision.

Lead with love



Together, We Will
Heal the World.

Join us in building a future where love is the birthright of all.
Together, we can equip and sustain leaders who will heal our communities,
bridge divides, and inspire justice for generations to come.





Leadership Development Research Storytelling & Narrative Change

auburnseminary.org | Development@auburnseminary.org | 212.662.4315

475 Riverside Drive Ste. 438, New York, NY 10015