

Presidential Search



*A world transformed by
God's love, mercy,
and justice*

The Presidential Search Committee of Brite Divinity School (Fort Worth, TX) invites applications, expressions of interest, and nominations of candidates in its search for its next President. Brite seeks a visionary and inspiring leader who has a deep understanding of graduate theological education in the 21st century, a nuanced understanding of the state of “Church” in our world today, a passion for preparing individuals who are called to serve, and an unwavering commitment to Brite’s vision of a world transformed by God’s love, mercy, and justice. The next President will both guide and sustain Brite Divinity School as it continues to realize its mission to educate and inspire people to serve God’s diverse world as leaders in the Church, the academy, and the community.

ABOUT BRITE DIVINITY SCHOOL

Brite Divinity School is one of the premier progressive institutions in graduate theological education. Located on the Texas Christian University Campus in Fort Worth, Texas, Brite Divinity School prepares leaders by focusing on excellent scholarship, pastoral training, and spiritual development through distinctive academic programs.

The faculty is composed of distinguished teacher-scholars who are leaders in the academy, the Church, and public life. In addition to academics, Brite provides comprehensive training and mentorship for ministerial candidates to preach, teach, and shepherd congregations, and it continues to offer educational programs and resources to clergy throughout their careers. Brite also prepares students pursuing vocations in related fields, such as hospital and military chaplaincies and non-profit leadership.

Brite Divinity School reports biennially to the Plenary Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest. It is a member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Council on Theological Education of the Higher Education and Leadership Ministries.

Vision

A world transformed by God’s love, mercy, and justice

Mission

Brite Divinity School educates and inspires people to serve God’s diverse world as leaders in churches, the academy, and public life.

Integrated Core Values

Scholarship that engages churches, the academy, and public life; Justice that enhances diversity, flourishing, and wholeness; and Practice that enlivens intellectual, spiritual, and professional growth.

HISTORY AND RELATIONSHIP WITH TCU

Texas Christian University was founded in 1873 by two brothers, Addison and Randolph Clark, both ministers of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). In 1914 a generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. L. C. Brite, West Texas ranchers, funded Brite College of the Bible under a separate charter. When the charter was renewed in 1963, the name of the College was changed to Brite Divinity School. Since 1914, Brite has been a separate corporation with its own board, assets, and employees.

Although Brite Divinity School and Texas Christian University are independent institutions, they have a rich historical relationship and enjoy a shared heritage, affiliation, traditions, and values with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Brite and TCU operate under a shared services agreement that articulates the University’s contractual commitment to provide essential administrative support, operational and maintenance services, and the vision of both institutions to assure a continuing spirit of mutual involvement, cooperation, and support for the benefit of students, staff, and faculty.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS, FACULTY AND STAFF

Brite’s 16 full-time teacher-scholars are accessible and take the time to build relationships with students. As students pursue their theological education, faculty walk alongside them in their journey of spiritual formation.

Brite offers the following degrees:

- Master of Divinity
- Master of Arts in Theology and Ministry
- Master of Theological Studies
- Master of Theology
- Doctor of Ministry
- Doctor of Philosophy, Biblical Interpretation

Brite engages with the Church and community in navigating the changing religious and social landscape of the day, sharing scholarship and spiritual practices while gaining relevant input from clergy and laity. Brite programs are developed to foster and strengthen Brite faculty and student relationships with congregations and agencies in the Southwest and beyond.

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS AND SPECIAL STUDENT STATUS

Brite Divinity School offers distinctive certificate programs for individuals desiring a more specialized ministry. Those interested may apply to enroll in one of these 15-hour non-degree certificate programs. Individuals who wish to experience a variety of classes on diverse topics, taught by permanent and adjunct faculty, without pursuing a degree, may be eligible to enroll in the Certificate in Theological Studies program. Those wishing to take a more limited set of courses may pursue Special Student or Community Auditor status.



SUPERVISED MINISTRY

Master of Divinity students must complete a Supervised Ministry Year that allows them to integrate what is learned in classroom settings with actual ministerial practice in the field. Under careful pastoral supervision and with the help of a lay training committee, a Brite Minister-in-Training works for a local church or agency, serving as a pastor, youth minister, student associate, or other agency-based role.

THE CENTER FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

For leaders of all faith communities, Brite offers educational opportunities for effective ministry through exposure to scholarly advances, information and skills related to the practice of ministry, engagement with contemporary issues of faith and society, and opportunities for worship, renewal, and fellowship.

MINISTRY WEEK

The centerpiece of the continuing education program for committed lay and clergy, the whole people of God, is Ministry Week, which brings a variety of persons to campus for three days of thought-provoking lectures, enriching workshops, inspiring worship, and creative events, including a world-class organ recital. This event is not only an opportunity for personal learning and renewal, but also an occasion to connect with colleagues from across the country.

STALCUP SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY FOR THE LAITY

The Stalcup School of Theology for the Laity, open to laity and clergy, offers a series of independent, short-term learning experiences led by Brite faculty and scholars from across the nation. Scholars explore the Bible and contemporary issues from a faith perspective and engage in interfaith dialogue and critical thinking related to a Christian understanding of God, humanity, and the world.

CARPENTER INITIATIVE ON GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND JUSTICE

The Carpenter Initiative on Gender, Sexuality, and Justice promotes conversations about healthy sexuality, enhances ministries with diverse communities that include bisexual, transgender, lesbian, and gay persons, and provides sanctuary and encouragement for ongoing dialogue and justice-oriented practice.

THE SOUL REPAIR CENTER

The Soul Repair Center is dedicated to equipping religious leaders and professional caregivers to respond to veterans and all affected by moral injury. With more than 750 global participants attending the programs annually, the Soul Repair Center offers public education and conducts research on moral injury and recovery for military veterans, giving primary attention to developing resources for equipping faith communities from many religious traditions to engage in caring practices with veterans affected by moral injury and their families.

STUDENT BODY

Brite Divinity School embodies an ecumenical and open spirit. Dedicated denominational programs and recognized partnerships provide the foundation for formation in various traditions and the coursework needed for ordination and standing in a number of Protestant denominations. Brite's nearly 100 full- and part-time students are diverse, and while most students are from mainline Protestant backgrounds, they represent more than 25 different denominations. This interaction in classrooms and through fellowship provides a deeper understanding of the different faith traditions they will encounter in ministry. Brite embraces inclusion and supports the community's religious and cultural diversity through programs such as:

- Asian/Asian American Pacific Islander Church Studies Program
- Black Church Studies
- Borderlands Institute
- Carpenter Initiative on Gender and Sexuality
- Jewish Studies Program



GOVERNANCE

In 1914, Texas Christian University and leaders of the Disciples of Christ in Texas established Brite as a separate corporation, with its own Board of Trustees, to provide education for the leadership of the churches. Trustees are charged with oversight and support of the Divinity School and are drawn from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and several other denominations. Qualifications include active membership in a church or synagogue.

FINANCES AND FUNDRAISING

Brite Divinity School's financial snapshot presents a strong, solid, and sustainable picture. Total assets exceed \$130 million with endowment funds comprising \$115 million of the total. Committed to long-term sustainability, the Board's current authorized spending

rate from endowment funds is 4.95 percent. Brite has no indebtedness and preserves over \$110 million of net assets available to support the institution's endeavors. Of that total, some \$26 million is classified without donor restriction. The fiscal year 2024 budget is \$7.5 million, of which \$1.2 million reimburses Texas Christian University (TCU) for shared support services provided. Additionally, the Board has committed \$500,000 annually for three years to fund new ventures envisioned in the emerging long-range plan. A \$3.5 million renovation of Brite's student housing, Leibrock Village, is currently in process and is fully funded. During the fiscal year concluded May 31, 2023, a total of \$4.4 million was generated by the Advancement team for current budget and endowment.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESS

Brite Divinity School is committed to fostering a community engaged in transforming scholarship, justice, and practice. With an advantageous student to faculty ratio and small class sizes that afford extraordinary access to faculty, students work closely with faculty to engage in critical scholarship with commitments to justice that promote the flourishing of all creation.

Students are encouraged to think critically and to engage in the major social issues of the day. Brite nurtures the gifts required to meet the challenges of congregational leadership, helping churches to grow and thrive as vital communities of faith. In addition, degree programs have been specially designed to equip leaders for non-congregational settings of ministry, with lay and continuing education programs that increase readiness for ministry with particular attention to underserved populations.

Beginning in the summer of 2023, all Brite Divinity School master's students will receive full scholarships covering tuition and fees. The commitment is guaranteed for an initial experimental three-year period, thanks to the generosity of donors who contribute to Brite's annual fund or have established legacy gifts for scholarships through Brite's endowment fund.

ACCREDITATION

Brite Divinity School is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award masters and doctoral degrees, with the next reaffirmation set for 2032. Brite is also accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS), with the next comprehensive accreditation visit set for spring of 2032. Through the ATS the following degree programs are approved: MDiv, MATM, MTS, DMin, ThM, PhD.



NOTABLE GRADUATES

Rev. Dani Loving Cartwright

*Vice President of Operations,
National Benevolent Association
(NBA)*

Rev. Allen Harris

*Regional Minister of the Christian
Church (Disciples of Christ) in Ohio*

Rev. Dawn Hood-Patterson

*Clinical Ethics Fellow at Children's
Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, Mo.*

Rev. Belva Brown Jordan

*Interim Executive Director of
Disciples Seminary Foundation, and
Associate Professor of the Practice
of Ministry, Claremont School of
Theology*

Rev. Andy Magnum

*Regional Minister for the Christian
Church (Disciples of Christ) in the
Southwest*

Rev. Stephanie Kendell

*Senior Pastor, National City
Christian Church, Washington, D.C.*

Rev. Dr. Nancy Pittman

*President and Stephen J. England
Associate Professor of the Practice
of Ministry, Phillips Theological
Seminary*

Rev. Mike Tarvin, COL, Chaplain Corps, USA (Ret.), (Retired)

*Director of Spiritual Care and
Values Integration, Houston
Methodist Willowbrook Hospital*



LOCATION AND REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Brite sits in the heart of Fort Worth, TX, which is currently the 13th-largest city in the United States. Embracing the spirit of the Southwest, Fort Worth has the charm of a historic small town, as well as a flair for the arts within its culturally rich environment. A thriving economy, low cost of living, and easy access through two major airports provide an infrastructure of support for study at Brite.

In Fort Worth and throughout the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, there is an abundance of opportunities to experience and engage the multiple cultures and faiths that co-exist in the region. The area is home to more than 2,000 churches, many with relationships to Brite. Brite is seen by many as a haven in the Southwest, one that seeks to foster global awareness and open dialogues that broaden our understanding of the world beyond us and its impact on our region. The blending of cultures and wide-open spaces that make up the Southwest create a uniquely inviting context for life and ministry.

ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT OF BRITE DIVINITY SCHOOL

The President is the executive leader of Brite Divinity School and reports to the Board of Trustees. Reporting to the President are the Executive Vice President and Dean and Chief Academic Officer, Vice President for Advancement, Vice President of Business and Finance, Director of Communication and Marketing, and Director of The Soul Repair Center. The President will be expected to lead with inspirational vision, discernment, empathy, and a sense of determination and purpose to ensure Brite's impact as a provider of the highest quality theological education. The President will be dedicated to the mission of Brite and lead with the integral purposes that Brite remain strong and its future promising.

In close collaboration with the senior leadership team, the President will have overall strategic, financial, and operational responsibility for Brite. The President will enhance the existing institutional strengths and foster new initiatives to continue to attract a diverse community of outstanding students, faculty, and staff, while developing effective programs to support their retention and success. The President will work closely with the Board of Trustees, fostering strong relationships and a collaborative approach between the Board members, the faculty, staff, and the Brite community.

The next President of Brite will join a community passionate about, and dedicated to, Brite and its distinctive place of service and preparation in the world of progressive theological education. Excellent programs designed to prepare students for Christian service led by distinguished faculty and staff, the strong relationship between Brite and Texas Christian University (TCU), Brite's location on TCU's campus, access to the Dallas/Fort Worth community, the institution's sound financial health, and the deep sense of purpose and relevance, are all sources of enormous pride for Brite Divinity School.



AGENDA FOR LEADERSHIP FOR BRITE'S NEXT PRESIDENT

Brite Divinity School is in the midst of vital transformation, and the new President will guide the Brite community as it further defines its goals and aspirations so that Brite can continue to thrive as a beacon of progressive theological education in today's world. Brite's integrated core values will help guide and shape the evolution and growth of Brite: Scholarship that engages churches, the academy, and public life; Justice that enhances diversity, flourishing and wholeness; and Practice that enlivens intellectual, spiritual, and professional growth. Among the most important priorities for the next President are:

Demonstrating Transformational Leadership, Vision, and Ambitious Strategic Planning

This is a unique moment in Brite's history – Brite is in the process of redefining its approach to graduate theological education, in terms of the scope of programming, the way in which programs are delivered, and ultimately, expanding the definition of how theological training can be applied in a variety of fields of service beyond traditional church pulpits. The President will be a courageous and transformative leader who will help set a vision for Brite that will propel it forward with distinction and relevance into the coming years. The President will enact an ambitious long-range strategic plan, crafted in consultation with the Brite community, and guide Brite's evolution. The new President will be creative and willing to take calculated risks while being anticipatory and proactive in the changing landscape of theological education.

Growing Enrollment, Restructuring the Curriculum, and Modernizing Instructional Modalities

The next President will be student-centric and understand the needs of current and future divinity students. As has occurred in many theological schools, Brite has been challenged by reduced enrollments in recent years. The next President will ensure enrollment growth at Brite, and therefore, will have a firm understanding of enrollment management strategies and the ever-growing challenges surrounding recruitment at divinity schools and seminaries across the nation. In partnership with Brite's Dean and faculty, the next President will oversee a curricular revisioning and the development of inspiring new programs to reach new markets that are mission consistent. Additionally, the President will lead Brite as it builds the technological infrastructure to meet the pressing imperative of offering programs in hybrid and/or virtual ways, in addition to traditional, in-person instruction.

Enhancing Fundraising and Building Financial Capacity

As Brite's chief fundraiser and ambassador, the next President will spend a significant percentage of time on fundraising and "friend raising" to help ensure that Brite has the resources needed to evolve and thrive in pursuit of its many goals. The next President will be expected to lead a campaign of significance, embracing the many individuals, churches, and other organizations that support Brite currently, as well as engaging new donors and partners. With a strong endowment, Brite enjoys financial strength and has

a history of careful fiscal management that has served it well over the years. The President must be a strong financial manager, knowledgeable about academic business models, keenly aware of the broader theological education landscape, innovative in forging new revenue streams, and capable of adjusting the business plan to improve Brite's financial security. An ongoing commitment to building the endowment will help Brite thrive in the current climate.



Building Community and Investing in People

The next President will be a visible and engaging presence on and off campus. The ability to collaborate, unify, and instill confidence in all constituents, including students, faculty, staff, administrators, Trustees, alumni, and Church and community partners, will be crucial. The President will model shared governance and employ inclusive and transparent methods in decision making and information sharing. The President will also think strategically about resources and building capacity to invest in faculty and staff in meaningful ways through competitive compensation and opportunities for professional development.

Advocating for Social Justice and Empowering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Efforts

As the leader of Brite's distinctive, progressive, and intentionally diverse community, the next President will be uncompromisingly committed to attracting and fostering an inclusive and culturally competent community that will engage and uplift all types of diversity. The President will lead Brite as it seeks to ensure social justice remains a priority. The President will foster excellent and transformative experiences and outcomes in an inclusive community, where students, faculty, and staff alike can thrive and find meaningful belonging. The President will lead by example by actively inviting dialogue, listening, cultivating a growth mindset, respecting those with different viewpoints, being informed by data, and understanding that the work is ongoing, collaborative, organic, and ever evolving.

Raising Brite Divinity School's Profile Nationally and Internationally

The next President of Brite must be able to communicate the uniqueness and value of Brite Divinity School as a destination for progressive theological education. The President will ensure that Brite's public perception and profile will inspire and continue to attract students, faculty, and staff of the highest caliber. With an excellent foundation on which to build, Brite is eager to, and deserves to, have its reputation better known nationally and internationally. Brite's next President will be a thought leader in theological education and will find ways to shine a light on Brite by contributing to important conversations about the evolving nature of theological education, the impact of the Church, and God's role in humanity's quest for meaning.

Engaging Deeply in Contemporary Issues Related to the Christian Church and Ecumenical Ministry

Brite's next President will be deeply engaged in connecting with myriad Church communities in Texas, the Southwest, the nation, and the world. Brite is one of seven seminaries or divinity houses in the United States that are in covenant with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Brite's next President will be deeply engaged in the meaning and work of the Church, in all its forms, as it relates to the Church today, including an ecumenical approach, deep commitment to social justice, diversity, equity and inclusion, and a conviction for the need for progressive theology.

The President will have a strong desire to engage and lead within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) community. The President will be Brite's chief representative in the arenas of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Council on Theological Education and Leadership Ministries and the Plenary Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest.



Fostering External Partnerships in Meaningful Ways

The President will be eager to work closely with the Brite, TCU, Dallas/Fort Worth communities, and Church communities, and to provide leadership to ensure the well-being of these entities, recognizing the symbiotic relationship between them. The President will continue to strengthen Brite's long affiliation with TCU and seek to build deeper relationships between the two institutions, both programmatically and administratively. Additionally, the President will actively seek, evaluate, and pursue new partnerships that broaden Brite's impact. The President will foster partnerships and collaborations with churches, community-based organizations, foundations, businesses, governments, non-profits, and other institutions in the region and beyond.

Guiding Brite Through Challenging Times

These are complex and evolving times in theological education, in the Church, and in the world. The President of Brite must be highly attuned to the challenges facing seminaries and divinity schools, the changing nature of the Church and ministry to congregations, and the ways a divinity school can provide meaningful and relevant programs to help serve God and humanity in a world fraught with tensions. The President must be able and willing to lead Brite as it takes a stand for social justice, equity, and diversity in its many forms. The President will be a wise, consultative, and astute leader, as well as an eloquent and compassionate communicator, especially during times of crisis. The President must be able to navigate these challenges, seek counsel when needed, keep a keen eye on the fiscal health of the institution, and serve as an exemplary leader under pressure.

DESIRED ATTRIBUTES FOR BRITE'S NEXT PRESIDENT

Brite Divinity School seeks a President who will embrace its distinctive mission, be a passionate leader in theological education, embody a courageous and entrepreneurial spirit, demonstrate the depth and breadth of knowledge needed to successfully shape a contemporary seminary/divinity school, and consult with and lead Brite's community with conviction and enthusiasm. The President will possess significant administrative experience, strong fiscal stewardship experience, and the ability to attract added resources and collaborative partners to Brite. The candidate of choice will be a servant leader with a highly relational approach, outstanding communications skills, humility, authenticity, self-confidence, integrity of the highest order, a strong work ethic, and a clear understanding of graduate theological education and the Church. While the Presidential Search Committee is eager to consider many possible pathways to the Brite presidency, candidates possessing a terminal degree will be preferred. Given Brite's long-abiding connection to The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), membership in The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) denomination is preferred but not required.

The candidate of choice will be:

- A faithful person and spiritual leader, committed to God, ecumenical Christianity, progressive theology, and the Church;
- A strategic, creative, and visionary leader and systematic planner with a proven ability to develop a shared vision, articulate a clear and sustainable plan, implement the plan, and unify constituents behind it;
- An entrepreneurial leader who can envision a transformed Brite Divinity School that honors its heritage while swiftly evolving to attract and meet the requirements of contemporary divinity students and Christian ministry;
- Deeply committed to building a community that celebrates diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice;
- Skilled in leading an organization through a time of significant change;
- An outstanding communicator able to listen carefully, navigate varying political perspectives, and synthesize ideas shared by members of the Brite community, as well as to speak boldly and eloquently about Brite to a wide range of constituencies;
- A gifted ambassador and fundraiser with experience finding traditional and non-traditional sources of funding, including but not limited to individuals, churches, foundations, corporations, and government sources;
- Technologically savvy with a fluent understanding of pedagogical strategies and programming, including technological approaches to program delivery;
- A genuine, enthusiastic, and highly visible leader who is interested in interacting with the various members of the Brite community and participating in the intellectual, spiritual, and social lives of the students, faculty, and staff;
- A forthright, balanced, accessible, and committed supporter of the principles of shared governance, transparency, and inclusive decision-making;
- A strong manager with the capacity to make timely, and sometimes difficult, decisions, to communicate those decisions with clarity and care, and to stress accountability;
- And an energetic, optimistic, authentic, relational, compassionate, and ambitious individual with good humor, who is attentive to a balanced life, models healthy living, and who will provide respected, long-term leadership for Brite.

COMPENSATION

This is a full-time position that will be performed on site in Texas. Salary is commensurate with experience and accompanied by a generous benefits package.

NOMINATION AND APPLICATION PROCESS

Nominations and applications should be submitted electronically as soon as possible. The Brite Divinity School Presidential Search Committee will begin to evaluate applications in July 2023. Although applications will be welcomed until the time that a new President is selected, candidates should submit materials no later than August 15, 2023, to ensure fullest consideration. The new President is expected to begin serving in early 2024.

Applications should include a letter of candidacy that responds to the agenda for leadership and the desired attributes for the President and a complete résumé or vita. All application materials will be considered in full confidence. Please send all nominations, inquiries, and applications, electronically to:

Julie E. Tea, Managing Director

Julie Williams-Krishnan, Senior Associate

Kate Phillips, Senior Associate

BritePresident@StorbeckSearch.com

Brite Divinity School is committed to providing a positive learning and working environment free from discrimination and harassment. Brite Divinity School prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of age, race, color, religion, sex (including sexual harassment and sexual violence), sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, ethnic origin, disability, genetic information, covered veteran status and any other basis protected by law, in the School's programs and activities as required by Title IX, Title VII, The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other applicable laws and regulations.

