

## **Introduction**

Learning together in Christian community is both enriching and challenging. Members of this community seek to make evident the presence and work of God by His Holy Spirit in each of our lives. The Bible teaches that the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23a). As these characteristics take root, grow and mature, each member of this community will become more conformed to the image of Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit. As this work continues, community life will be ever more vital.

The community at Northwest University has chosen to call for obedience to moral law as taught in the Old and New Testaments and exemplified in the life of Jesus Christ. The privileges, and responsibilities outlined in this handbook attempt to reflect Biblical living. It is understood that the Christian community at large adheres to a variety of standards, opinions and interpretations of Biblical principles. Because all of us come to this community with varied backgrounds, traditions, and understandings, we acknowledge that it is impossible to create a community with expectations completely acceptable to every member. Nevertheless, expectations must be specified to assure orderly community life. This does not suppose or imply that other avenues of thought are necessarily wrong, but instead attempts to define a framework for this community where mutual respect and servanthood may flourish. For some this will require the limiting of their Christian liberty out of respect for fellow students; others will be required to offer understanding and grace to those who do not share their views. In the instance of disagreement about the standards outlined here, the University retains the right of interpretation of the Community Handbook. Violations of the student community handbook may result in judicial action as well as the filing of criminal charges for illegal activities.

Membership in the Northwest University community is obtained through application and invitation. As the result of an approved application, those who accept an invitation to join the community agree to live according to the principles of the community. Individuals who are invited to become members of this community but cannot, with integrity, commit to live by the Lifestyle Standards of the community are advised not to accept the invitation but rather to seek a living-learning environment more suitable to them. It is the hope and goal of the University that, as a community of believers, we will learn to live with one another in love.