

## The Seminary Without Walls Returns this Spring 2017

The SWW is an educational opportunity designed to train lay people to be commissioned to serve in churches as ministers, hospice chaplains, campus ministries, etc. This program began with a motion from Presbyteries of the Yukon and Geneva in 1985 to help provide commissioned ministers for small and refugee churches. It evolved and became a way to prepare lay people to become commissioned lay ministers. Two people were trained to be Commissioned Lay Preachers in Boise Presbytery before the training became more formalized in 1999.

**This year the SWW will begin after Easter 2017.** It is a two year program for ordination. Either March 22 (Saturday from 9 am to 3 pm at a church) the first class will begin. On-line learning will continue with assignments and lectures over the next six weeks. Each student will be expected to have a mentor to help them understand the issues of ministry. Then the class will end the early part of June with another Saturday class. The assignments, papers and the completed reading on the assigned books will be discussed Saturday, June 3. The assigned books are

Returning the Ministry to the People of God by Greg Ogden

The Pastor by Eugene Peterson

The Minister by Will Willimon

Each year there will be three eight week classes offered. Every summer will be a Barbeque Theology session on a book on Spiritual direction. The first summer (2017) the book will be Mansions of the Heart by Thomas Ashbrook.

Each Presbyterian student will be expected to be endorsed and sponsored by the Presbyterian Church in which they are a member. Each class will cost \$35 paid by the student with the sponsoring church paying \$100 per course. There will be no charge for the Barbeque Theology book study.

The Oregon-Idaho Conference of The United Methodist Church will partner with us in the efforts to provide an effort for a meaningful education to create Certified Lay Mission Workers. In addition, other denominations and churches will be contacted. All Protestants are in the same boat.

At the present time there are two lead teachers for the first course:: **Dr. Gary Waller** is a retired Nazarene minister and Northwest Nazarene University professor. He brings a Wesleyan perspective to the theological conversations and was involved in the earlier efforts of the SWW. **Reverend Bruce Swanson** is a retired Presbyterian minister and started the first SWW efforts in 1999. **Additional teachers** will be drawn into the program as the seminary continues.