

# ABOUT TRINITY INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

## The Origins of Trinity International University

Trinity International University is composed of a liberal arts college, a divinity school, a graduate school, and a law school. Trinity is the educational ministry of the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA)<sup>1</sup>. The university's main campus is located in Deerfield, Illinois, with regional centers in Miramar, Florida; Dolton, Illinois; and Santa Ana, California. The Florida Regional Center and California Regional Center are campuses, while the South Chicago Regional Center is a site.

## Trinity's History

Trinity International University traces its roots to a ten-week Bible course begun by the Swedish Evangelical Free Church in 1897. This soon developed into the Bible Institute of the Swedish Evangelical Free Church of America. In 1884, the Norwegian-Danish Free Church Association had begun the Norwegian-Danish department of the Chicago Theological Seminary. In 1910, the department withdrew from the seminary and established the Norwegian-Danish Bible Institute and Academy, which was located first in Rushford, Minnesota, and then later in Minneapolis with the name Trinity Seminary and Bible Institute. Between 1946 and 1949 the Swedish school merged with the Norwegian-Danish school to form Trinity Seminary and Bible College, located in Chicago. During the 1960s the seminary (renamed Trinity Evangelical Divinity School) and the college (renamed Trinity College) moved to their present Deerfield campus. In 1992, the university acquired Miami Christian College, which became a branch location of the college, named Trinity College at Miami. In 1995, Trinity College (TC) and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (TEDS) were united to form Trinity International University (TIU). In 1997, TIU welcomed students into the newly established Trinity Graduate School (TGS) and, the following year, incorporated Trinity Law School (TLS) into the university. Located in Santa Ana, California, Trinity Law School is accredited with the State Bar of California and is moving toward application for American Bar Association accreditation. The traditional undergraduate program in Miami closed in 2000 and the site was renamed the Trinity International University—Florida Regional Center.

## What's in a Name?

People use the word university to mean different things. It can be just a label for a college or a way of describing a large college with graduate schools. But at Trinity, *university* emphasizes how every discipline is taught and studied from one common perspective (a uni-versity). This approach to education has been lost in many universities. All of the great Western universities of the world were founded on Christian principles. In fact, ninety of the first one-hundred colleges and universities founded in the United States were established to develop Christian character and to prepare people for ministry. However, cultural influence has eroded most schools' Christian convictions. Such schools no longer give students a Christian understanding of their disciplines or seek to prepare students for the demands of living the Christian life. Whereas these schools have a profound impact on students and society, they have no common philosophy or values.

The state of educational environments today is the reason it is so important to have a Christian University—why humanity needs to begin again to build great institutions that will explore God's

world while acknowledging that He is Lord in the natural and social sciences, humanities, fine arts, and every aspect of experience. It is the reason Trinity International University can offer a fine education to undergraduate and graduate students alike—an education for service to God in the workplace, family, church, and community.

## Governance

Preservation of a legacy calls for wise and careful leadership. We are governed by a 31-member Board of Regents (15 elected by the Evangelical Free Church of America Conference delegates, 13 appointed by the Board of Regents, two EFCA ex officio, and the TIU president) who carry the responsibility for the successful conduct of the school and for cooperation with local congregations of the EFCA.

<sup>1</sup> Trinity International University is an Illinois not-for-profit institution of higher education affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church of America.