
Special Announcement



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Greetings Westar members,

This notice is for all Westar members. I am writing to clarify enhancements and changes upcoming to our membership. I know that whenever a company announces, “enhancements and changes,” it sounds like code language for something mischievous, but this is not the case for Westar.

Westar has already announced intended changes to membership in the *Fourth R* and Newsletter mailings. With this special announcement, I am putting all the information you need in one place.

Starting in January 2023, Westar will move to a “unified membership.” This means a one-price membership for all with new advantages for everyone. There will also be some features unique to Westar membership categories: Scholar, Praxis, and Associate.

There is a lot to cover, and I will try to be succinct.

1. Starting in January, one membership price will be in place for everyone. It will be an annual fee of \$120.00 or \$10.00 per month. Members who hold the current regular rate (\$60.00 Associate, \$72.00 Praxis, and \$85.00 Scholar) may continue as legacy members, but a legacy member will not receive the advantages of the new membership. The new membership value well exceeds \$120.00 per year. We encourage the current regular members to upgrade to the new membership and be sure to receive all the great features.
2. The new membership includes Westar Wednesdays. When the pandemic started in 2020 Westar developed online learning events now called Westar Wednesdays. Westar staff and scholars coordinate and host these popular events. In January, Westar will fold into its new membership ten (10) Westar Wednesday events per year (a value of \$200.00). As a Westar member, you can attend these events free of charge as part of your membership.

What if you have a prior commitment and cannot attend a Westar Wednesday event? The event will automatically become part of your Westar library. You will be able to view it or review it at any time. These will be monthly events excluding July and August.

Seminar meetings and some special events will continue to have a registration fee. We still need to support Westar scholarship and to engage in fundraising.

3. The new membership includes other libraries as well. There will be a complete library of *Fourth R* issues from the very first to the latest issue. The *Fourth R* started as the “Westar Magazine” in 1987. All issues from that first publication onward will be available in your new Westar library.

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4. Like the *Fourth R*, all the issues of the Westar academic journal *Forum* will be made available. The *Forum* original series (1985-1994), the New Series (1998-2004), and the Third Series (2007-2021) will be in your library. The Fourth Series of *Forum* is starting soon, and you will have access to that with your new membership.
5. In the new membership, the Westar Jesus Seminar archive will be added to your library. This library consists of all the videos available of the original Jesus Seminar meetings from its inception in 1985 to the last recorded meetings in 2005.
6. Some other selected audio and video materials from the Westar archive will be made available strictly in the new membership model at no extra cost.
7. A new online community will be part of the membership. From January onward, you will not need to go to the Westar website to see what is going on. You will get the latest information and more when you sign into your membership. The existing website will become a public information center still featuring outstanding Westar blogs, the Westar store, seminar information, and membership promotion. But in the unified membership plan, you will sign into a different platform called Mighty Networks. This new member's home will feature:
 - a. A landing page called the Public Square. This page will be developed further, but here you will find your initial information and your entry into the Westar members only section called the Westar Community. The Westar Community is your location to learn, to share, and to discuss Westar issues or events with other members (Scholar, Associate, and Praxis members). You will see here announcements about upcoming Westar Wednesdays, which you will be able to freely join. You will see Westar Academy announcements, and you will learn Westar news. You will know what is new at Bible Search and Rescue. You will find out when the next seminar meeting is scheduled. This will be your Westar hub.
 - b. From the Online Westar Community, you will be able to enter your Peer Community. As a Scholar, Praxis, or Associate member, you can engage with members in your group. Scholar, Associate, and Praxis members will be able to share, discuss, and debate issues of importance unique to their experiences.

All these new features will enliven your Westar experience, get you connected in new ways, and provide a central location of resources for your personal learning and growth. There is great excitement among Board members and staff about this new phase in Westar's life.

We will certainly face challenges in transition, but we will be there to help you along the way. As we approach the new year, more information will follow to help us all debark on this exciting new venture.



David Galston