



COVENANT

MAGAZINE

ISSUE 33 2021

A dark blue, high-angle photograph of a rowing team on a body of water. The rowers are in a long, narrow boat, and their oars are visible, creating a rhythmic pattern across the water's surface. The image is semi-transparent, allowing the text to be overlaid.

BIBLICAL SERVANT LEADERSHIP



NEW FACULTY ENDOWED CHAIRS + STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE *HOPE FOR THE FUTURE* CAPITAL CAMPAIGN



THE
FRANCIS SCHAEFFER
CHAIR OF APOLOGETICS



THE
RICHARD WINTER
CHAIR OF COUNSELING



THE
DAVID C. JONES
CHAIR OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY



THE
JERRAM BARRS
CHAIR OF PASTORAL THEOLOGY



THE
**PHILIP & REBECCA
DOUGLASS**
CHAIR OF CHURCH PLANTING
AND CHRISTIAN FORMATION



THE
DAVID B. CALHOUN
ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP



IN THIS ISSUE

FROM THE BOARD CHAIRMAN – 6

FACULTY & ALUMNI BOOKS – 8

FACULTY AND STAFF NEWS – 17

REMEMBERING DR. DAVID CALHOUN – 20

FEATURE ARTICLES

CELEBRATING A BIBLICAL SERVANT-LEADER – 28

HISTORICAL TIMELINE – 30

CELEBRATING THE MINISTRY OF DR. MARK DALBEY – 32

LOOKING BACK – 38

ANNUAL REPORT – 43

HUMILITY: THE HEART OF A SERVANT-LEADER – 56

PASTORS IN THE PLAGUE – 65

THE FOUNDERS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD – 68

THE CHURCH PLANTING TRACK OVERVIEW – 77

STUDENT PROFILE: MATT SNELL – 80

ALUMNI PROFILE: CRAIG HARRIS – 86

ALUMNI NOTES – 90

ALUMNI NEWS – 93

Covenant Magazine

is a publication of Covenant Theological Seminary, the denominational seminary of the Presbyterian Church in America. For sixty-five years, Covenant Seminary has equipped thousands of pastors, counselors and ministry leaders to lead and serve the Church globally. This magazine is a testimony to the Lord's work in and through the people associated with Covenant Theological Seminary.

Volume 33, Nos. 1 & 2

Copyright © 2021
Covenant Theological Seminary

Executive Editor: John Ranheim
Managing Editor: Kent Needler
Writer + Editor: Rick Matt
Designer: Kent Needler

Subscription

To receive a free subscription to *Covenant Magazine* (for you or your church), change your address, or cancel your subscription, please contact us.

inbox@covenantseminary.edu

Contact

Covenant Theological Seminary
12330 Conway Road
St. Louis, MO 63141

314.434.4044
1.800.264.8064

References

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture references are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, ©2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

from the
BOARD CHAIRMAN

*Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen and called its name Ebenezer; for he said, "Till now the LORD has helped us."
– 1 Samuel 7:12*

Normally this space is given to the words of President Dr. Mark Dalbey. This time, however, it is my privilege to claim this space as a way of paying tribute to the man who has led the Seminary so well for the last nine years. In his time as President, Mark has been a faithful example of wise and godly leadership. His calm and humble demeanor and unwavering trust in the Lord have been a source of steady strength for the seminary of the Presbyterian Church in America, especially through the challenging times our denomination and our country have experienced in recent years.

Last year, at Mark's request, we began an extensive search to find a talented younger leader who could step in as President to build on the expanded foundation Mark has laid. The search process has, by God's grace, now been completed and, as you will see in this issue of Covenant, the Lord has provided us with the man we feel is perfectly suited to lead us into a new chapter of God's faithfulness to Covenant Seminary.

In the meantime, Dr. Dalbey will be faithfully guiding the Seminary through the end of the current academic year. He will also remain close with us for a time after that to ensure a smooth transition for the new President. Covenant is the largest supplier of pastors to the PCA and beyond, so this transition is vital not only for the Seminary, but also for the future leadership of the church.

This issue is not only an appreciation for Dr. Dalbey and his character, but also an "ebenezer" of thankfulness for how the Lord uses people after his own heart to mold the future of the Church.

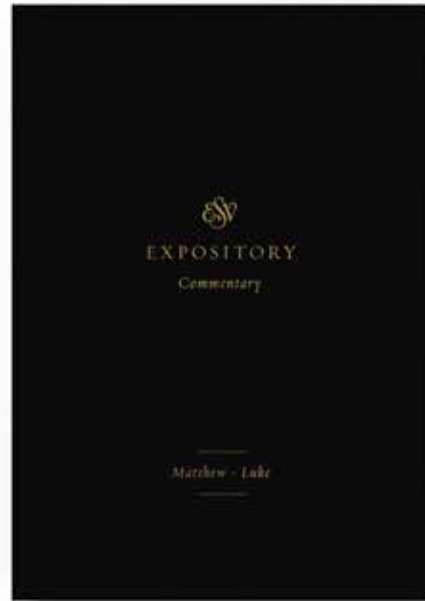


Dr. Miles Gresham
Board Chairman



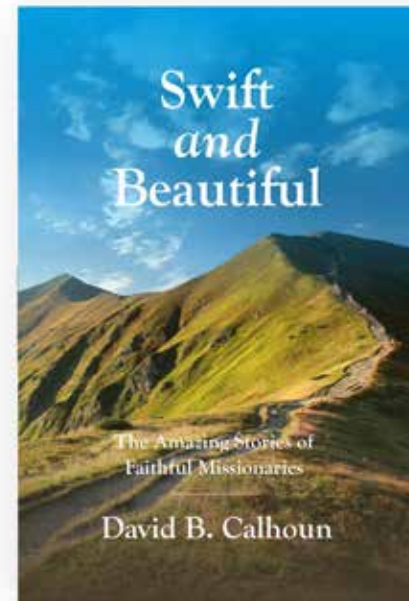
FACULTY BOOKS

a selection of recent faculty publications for the growth of the Church



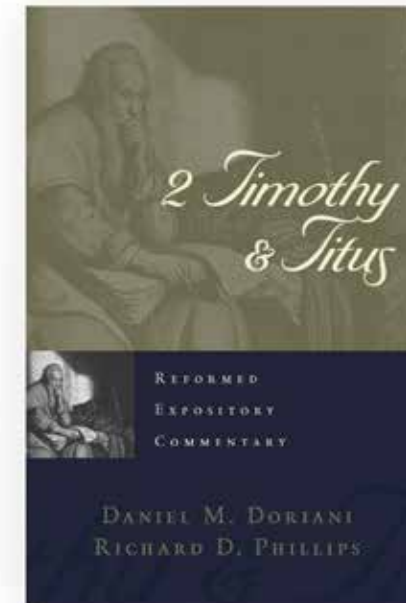
Matthew – Luke
The ESV Expository Commentary
Crossway

Dr. Hans Bayer, Professor Emeritus of New Testament, wrote the Mark commentary for the ESV Expository Commentary on Matthew–Luke (Crossway, 2021). This follows numerous other volumes he has written on the Gospel of Mark, both in English and German.



Swift and Beautiful: The Amazing Stories of Faithful Missionaries
Banner of Truth

Dr. David Calhoun, late Professor Emeritus of Church History, tells the amazing stories of a dozen men and women who at great cost gave their lives to take the gospel of God's grace to those who had not heard it. Some of these faithful missionaries are well-known, others almost forgotten, but all are "great in the life of God." See page 20 for a tribute to Dr. Calhoun, who passed away in April 2021.



2 Timothy & Titus
Reformed Expository Commentary
P&R

Dr. Dan Doriani, Professor of Biblical and Systematic Theology, along with Richard Phillips, show how the letters brim with the message of God's grace as it is practically applied, challenging us to embrace Paul's priorities and to remain faithful in suffering. They explore Paul's treatment of important doctrines such as election, predestination, assurance of salvation, and more.

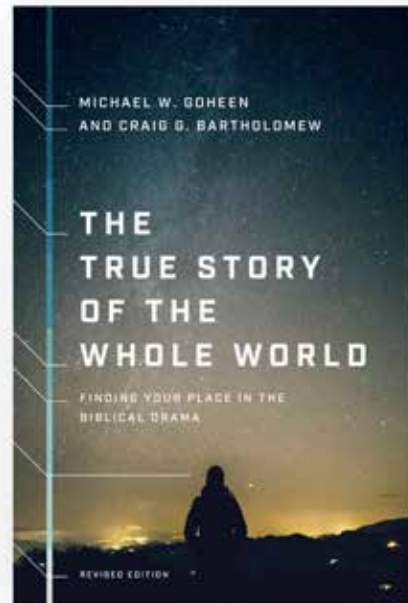


O Pastor Imperfeito
Editora Fiel

Dr. Zack Eswine, Scholar-in-Residence for the Francis Schaeffer Institute, had his highly-acclaimed book *The Imperfect Pastor* (Crossway, 2015), translated into Portuguese. From the book: "You stand at a crossroads. Jesus stands with you. You were never meant to know everything, fix everything, and be everywhere at once. That's his job, not yours. So what now? Let the apprenticeship begin."

FACULTY BOOKS

continued



*The True Story of the Whole World:
Finding Your Place in the Biblical Drama*
Brazos

Dr. Michael Goheen, Professor of Missional Theology and Director of Theological Education for the Missional Training Center–Phoenix, co-authored, with Craig G. Bartholomew, this book that unfolds Scripture in six “acts”. The authors clearly show God working in the world and in the lives of people to establish the great kingdom that has been God’s plan from the beginning.



*Clash of Visions: Populism and
Elitism in New Testament Theology*
Mentor

Dr. Robert Yarbrough, Professor of New Testament, wrote this book as an analysis of two contrasting approaches to biblical interpretation: one which has encouraged many to abandon the Christian heritage, the other which has informed the largest numeric increase of professing Christians in world history in recent generations and which is projected to continue.

ALUMNI BOOKS

*a selection of recent alumni publications**



Better Than Gold: The Wisdom of Proverbs
Kaleidoscope Kids

By **Chris Ammen** (MDiv '11). “Kaleidoscope aims to fill the gap between ‘baby Bibles’ and adult translations, which are written at a high school level. Kaleidoscope is the happy medium. We cover 99% of each book in single-volumes, written at a kid-friendly level.”



Preaching That Moves People
Clear Creek Resources

By **Yancey Arrington** (DMin '13). “In this practical guide for preachers of churches big and small, Arrington offers an innovative and effective paradigm based on his years of coaching preachers that brings the best to bear in both the ‘who’ and ‘how’ of the preaching event.”



Christ in the Time of Corona
White Blackbird Books

Edited by **Joshua Burdette** (MDiv '13), with contributions by **Laura Anderson** (MAC '11), **Ewan Kennedy** (MDiv, MAC '00), **Becky Kiern** (MAEM '11), **Scott Morris** (MDiv '16), **Dan Quakkelaar** (MDiv '13), **Doug Serven** (MDiv '00), **Brittany Smith** (MAEM '11), **Dan Smith** (MDiv '12), **Rob Wootton** (MDiv '08), **Lee Wright** (MDiv, MAC '12), and **Sarah Viggiano Wright** (MDiv, MAC '12).

*All quotes are taken from publisher or bookstore websites.

ALUMNI BOOKS

continued



Tough Issues, True Hope: A Concise Journey Through Christian Ethics

Christian Focus

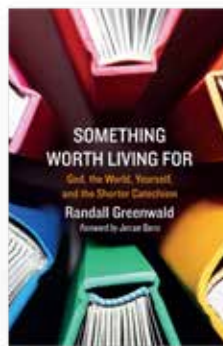
By **Luke Herron Davis** (MDiv '96). "A journey through some of the big questions in the arena of Christian ethics, highlighting why our ideas matter. He helps us to have a firm grasp of what the issue is, what God's Word has to say about it, and what practical impact that has on our lives."



The Spiritually Vibrant Home: The Power of Messy Prayers, Loud Tables, and Open Doors

InterVarsity Press

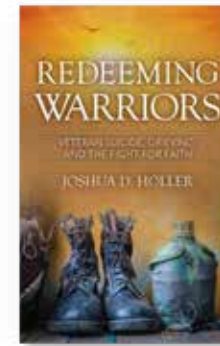
By **Don Everts** (MAET '14). "Original research from the Barna Group and Lutheran Hour Ministries shows that some of the healthiest, most vibrant homes extend beyond the nuclear family and include people that may not be biologically related but feel like family."



Something Worth Living For: God, the World, Yourself, and the Shorter Catechism

Christian Focus

By **Randy Greenwald** (MDiv '85). "The Westminster Shorter Catechism is designed to be a simple way of understanding the doctrine that is central to our faith. Greenwald takes the question and answer format that it follows and, in short chapters, encourages us to dig for the gold that is to be found in its pages."



Redeeming Warriors: Veteran Suicide, Grieving, and the Fight for Faith

Christian Focus

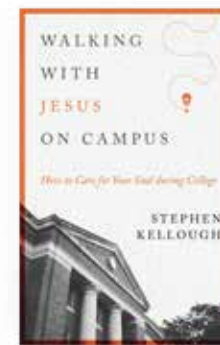
By **Joshua Holler** (MDiv '18), "Marine Corps veteran and pastor, argues that veteran suicide is not primarily a problem born out of exposure to combat and PTSD, but out of a broken relationship between people and God. He tells some of the stories of men he has known and addresses the true reason veteran suicide is such a problem."



The Beautiful Community: Unity, Diversity, and the Church at its Best

InterVarsity Press

By **Irwyn Ince** (DMin '16). "God reveals himself to us in his trinitarian life as the perfection of beauty, and essential to this beauty is his work as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The gospel imperative to pursue unity in diversity across lines of differences is rooted in reflecting the beautiful community of our triune God."



Walking With Jesus on Campus: How to Care for Your Soul during College

Moody Publishers

"Chaplain **Stephen Kellough** (DMin '84) explores 10 make-or-break issues. Whether you are heading off to college, ministering to college students, or are the parent of a college-aged kid, this book will help you better understand how to tackle what lies ahead."



Our Light and Life: Identity in the Claims of Christ

PCA Committee on Discipleship Ministries

By **Becky Kiern** (MAEM '11). "Jesus was the only person in history who was completely secure in His identity. In this study designed for all levels of Bible students, you will dig into Scripture to find not only who Jesus claimed to be, but also who He has created you to be, because there is no real knowledge of self without a knowledge of God."

ALUMNI BOOKS

continued again



Placed for a Purpose: A Simple and Sustainable Vision for Loving Your Next-Door Neighbors

GCD Books

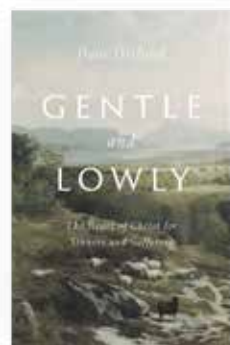
“Elizabeth and **Chris McKinney** (MDiv '18) seek to provide a sustainable vision for the 'low and slow' lifestyle of neighboring and supply practical tools that help people invest in their communities, value each step in the process, and build meaningful, gospel-motivated relationships with their fellow image-bearers right next door.”



Living & Active, vol. 1: Scripture Through the Lives of Luther, Calvin, and Knox

Besor Books

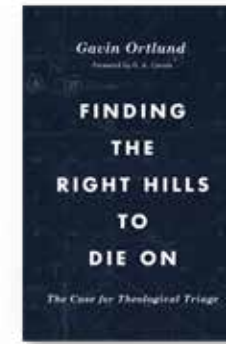
By **Stephen Morefield** (MDiv '14). “*Living and Active: Volume 1* introduces us to the catalysts of the Reformation, through the Scripture that shaped them, in hope that we too would find God’s Word alive and active in our souls.”



Gentle and Lowly: The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers

Crossway

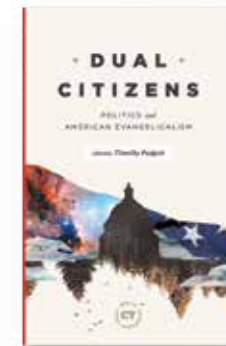
By **Dane Ortlund** (MDiv '05, ThM '07). “Christians know what Jesus Christ has done but who is he? What is his deepest heart for his people, weary and faltering on their journey toward heaven? Jesus said he is ‘gentle and lowly in heart.’ This book reflects on these words, opening up a neglected yet central truth about who he is for sinners and sufferers today.”



Finding the Right Hills to Die On: The Case for Theological Triage

Crossway

By **Gavin Ortlund** (MDiv '09). “In theology, just as in battle, some hills are worth dying on and others are not. But how do we know which ones? When should doctrine divide, and when should unity prevail?”



Dual Citizens: Politics and American Evangelicalism

Lexham Press

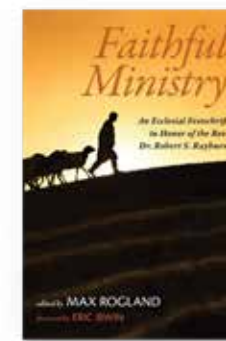
“Editor **Timothy D. Padgett** (MDiv '07) has collected a number of articles that trace a variety of perspectives in evangelical political thought, giving a more nuanced understanding of how American evangelicals have acted politically over the decades. These essential articles provide insight into our current situation and preserve the wrestling and wisdom of the past for the benefit of the future.”



Worship God with Love for Your Neighbor: A Biblical View of the Horizontal Dimension of Worship

New Creation Publications

By **Don W. Robertson** (MDiv '94). “This book provides a corrective to the entertainment-driven and self-serving styles of worship that have become so popular in the church today.”



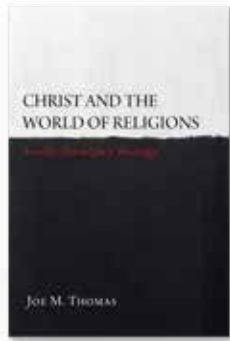
Faithful Ministry: An Ecclesial Festschrift in Honor of the Rev. Dr. Robert S. Rayburn

Wipf and Stock

Edited by **Max Rogland** (MDiv '96), with contributions by **Will Barker** (BDiv '60), **John Birkett** (MDiv '93), **Bryan Chapell** (MDiv '78), **Jack Collins**, **Eric Irwin** (MDiv '96), **David Jones**, **Joshua Moon** (MDiv '04), **Robert G. Rayburn II** (MDiv '11), **George Robertson** (MDiv '91, ThM '97), and **Kevin Skogen** (MDiv '90).

ALUMNI BOOKS

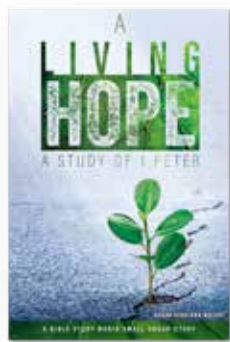
continued yet again



Christ and the World of Religions: Lesslie Newbigin's Theology

Wipf and Stock

by **Joe Thomas** (MDiv '87). "An account of Lesslie Newbigin's theology of interreligious dialogue, and of gospel and culture, all founded and centered firmly in Jesus Christ."



A Living Hope: A Study of 1 Peter

Bible Study Media

By **Sarah Wright** (MDiv/MAC '12). "Join Peter's first audience—'elect exiles' undergoing persecution—and experience the apostle's powerful call to follow Jesus in the midst of life's challenges, knowing your Living Hope is not a distant one, but a daily, glorious, life-giving reality!"

IS YOUR CHURCH LOOKING *for a* PASTOR?

There are three ways Covenant Seminary can help: by **posting your position** on its job board, by **recommending someone** who may be a good fit, or by **consulting with your search committee** to talk through best practices in hiring.

Email alumni@covenantseminary.edu for more information.

FACULTY & STAFF NEWS

recent updates about the people of Covenant Seminary



Dr. Hans Bayer, now **Professor Emeritus of New Testament**, retired in June 2020 after 26 years of service at the Seminary. Born and raised in Germany, Dr. Bayer came to Covenant in 1994 after teaching for ten years at the German Theological Seminary (now FTH) at Giessen, where he also planted and co-pastored a church. His PhD is from the University of Aberdeen (Scotland). With his expertise in critical scholarship and commitment to the authority and unity of the Scriptures, Dr. Bayer throughout his career exemplified our pastor-scholar model. His personal interest in world mission and his regular preaching and teaching around the US and throughout Europe added a deep multicultural dimension to his ministry and expanded our students' world vision for the gospel. Among his publications are contributions to the ESV Study Bible, a German commentary on the Gospel of Mark (Brockhaus Verlag/Brunnen Verlag), *A Theology of Mark: The Dynamic Between Christology and Authentic Discipleship* (P&R Publishing), and *Peter as Apostolic Bedrock: Christology and Discipleship according to His Canonical Testimony* (Paternoster/Wipf & Stock). Dr. Bayer and his wife, Susan, have three children and a growing number of grandchildren. We will miss his daily presence on our campus but wish him well in this new chapter of his life, and we know that the Lord will continue to bless the church greatly through him.



Dr. Paul Loosemore joined our faculty in July 2020 as **Assistant Professor of Counseling**. He completed a PhD in counselor education and supervision from Regent University, is a graduate of Covenant Seminary's MAC program (MAC '15), and also holds a bachelor of advertising from Gloucestershire University, and an MA in interior design from Portsmouth University—both in England. Dr. Loosemore has worked as a licensed professional counselor since graduating from Covenant's program, including co-founding the St. Louis Counseling Center. His PhD research focused on the impact of a relationship with God and how it relates to character growth and well-being. As a counselor, he has experience working with individuals, couples, and groups, with special focus on marriage concerns, trauma and abuse, relational distress, grief and loss, and those working in ministry settings. Paul and his wife, Courtney, have two daughters and a son.

FACULTY & STAFF NEWS

continued



Mr. Travis Stewart joined our Development team in 2020 as **Director of Development**. Before coming to Covenant as a student in 1999, Travis was on staff with The Navigators campus ministries. After graduating with the MAC and the MATS (both in 2001), he began work in the mental health field, specializing in the treatment of eating disorders. With experience as a clinician and marketer for several treatment centers, he has taught classes at Covenant and supervised students in the MAC program during their practicums. Travis believes strongly in Covenant's emphasis on treating people with dignity and empathy, which he saw modeled by the faculty and staff during his years as a student. He is humbled to be on staff at his alma mater and contribute to the mission of training pastors counselors and ministry leaders for the Kingdom. Travis is married to Susan, a professional organizer, and they have two adult children.



Dr. Robbie Griggs was recently promoted to **Associate Professor of Systematic Theology**. Dr. Griggs joined us in 2016 for a one-year appointment as Adjunct Professor of Theology and was named Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology in July 2017 before receiving his current appointment in July 2020. He holds a PhD in New Testament from Durham University and has served as a tutor in biblical studies for the Lindisfarne Regional Training Partnership. He also holds an MDiv from Covenant Seminary as well as a BA in philosophy and a BS in finance from the University of Missouri–Columbia. An expert in New Testament theology and early Jewish theology, his research focuses on Paul's theology of grace in Galatians in comparison with contemporary Jewish theologies of God as "giver." This research takes him to the heart of several key historic and contemporary debates in Pauline and systematic theology. Dr. Griggs previously served as a pastor in St. Louis for eight years at Central Presbyterian Church. He and his wife, Jane-Ellis, have three boys.



Mr. Steve Jamieson, formerly Public Services Librarian for the J. Oliver Buswell Jr. Library, was recently promoted to **Library Director**, following the retirement of long-time Director Jim Pakala (see next page). Steve began working in the Buswell Library after graduating from Covenant (MDiv '04) and now leads the Library in its mission to provide materials and services to aid the Covenant community in research and spiritual formation. As a Covenant alumnus, he draws upon his Covenant experience to help inform his work with students and faculty. Steve also brings to Covenant a passion for applying technology to research and education. Steve is married to Dorothy; they have two daughters, Caitlyn and Lindsey.



Mr. Stuart McClure, formerly Assistant Director of Admissions, was recently promoted to **Director of Admissions**. Stuart grew up in the Mississippi delta but considers St. Louis his home. After graduating from college with a BA in religion, he married his wife, Allison, and they moved to Kansas City for seminary, where Stuart earned an MDiv in 2013. Then it was back to St. Louis, where he worked for a local church as a care director and eventually as a pastor before the Lord led him to Covenant Seminary, where he has now served for several years in admissions, marketing, and recruiting. Stuart and Allison have one daughter, Kaylee Skye.



Rev. Jim Pakala, now **Librarian Emeritus**, retired in June 2020 as Library Director of the J. Oliver Buswell Jr. Library after nearly 30 years at Covenant. Prior to his arrival at the Seminary in 1991, Jim had, since 1974, directed the Biblical Theological Seminary Library. His three graduate degrees (MDiv, STM, MS) are from Philadelphia-area schools. He is ordained in the PCA and has been married to Denise since 1975. Since that time, Jim has, in addition to his library work, been involved in part-time chaplain ministry, first with the military, then with the police. He also has served on several library association boards. Milestones of his time at Covenant include overseeing the library's expansion to three times its original size; integrating its catalog into local, regional, and worldwide library networks; and developing better and faster access to vast digital and physical resources. He is grateful for the wonderful library staff with whom he has been able to serve for so many years and enjoys continuing to work with them on a part-time consulting basis during his retirement.



Dr. Mark Pfuetze, Assistant Professor of Counseling, and **Dr. Jeremy Ruckstaetter**, Associate Professor of Counseling, were in January 2020 named **Interim Co-Directors of the Counseling Department**, as Dr. Dan Zink, Professor of Counseling, stepped out of his administrative role as Director of Counseling to return to full-time teaching. Dr. Pfuetze (MAC/MDiv '04) and Dr. Ruckstaetter (MAC '11, MDiv '12) are both graduates of the program and have taught at Covenant for several years, Pfuetze since 2012 and Ruckstaetter since 2016. Both are licensed professional counselors with extensive experience in helping clients deal with issues in many different personal and professional areas. And both are PhD alumni of schools associated with the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)—the University of Missouri-St. Louis and Regent University in Virginia Beach, VA, respectively—providing strong intercollegiate connections that will benefit the Seminary's own pursuit of CACREP accreditation.



Mr. Andrew Stout, formerly Access Services Librarian, stepped into the role of **Public Services Librarian** in July 2020, replacing Steve Jamieson, who moved into the Library Director position (see facing page). Andrew (MATS '10) uses his experience as a seminarian and his training and experience in academic librarianship to help Covenant's students, faculty, and staff identify and locate the resources they need. His responsibilities in the library include assisting students at every stage of the research process. Andrew enjoys reading and writing, particularly in the areas of theology and literature.

REMEMBERING

DR. DAVID CALHOUN

1937–2021

Covenant Theological Seminary said goodbye to a dear friend, beloved teacher, and mentor to generations of students, faculty, and alumni as Dr. David B. Calhoun, Professor Emeritus of Church History, went to be with the Lord on Friday, April 9, 2021 after a decades-long battle with recurring cancer. He was 83. The entire Seminary community grieves with Dr. Calhoun's family and friends at the loss of this faithful servant of God, yet we rejoice as well that he is now face to face with the Savior he loved and served so well.

A graduate of Covenant Seminary, Dr. Calhoun was Professor of Church History at the institution for 30 years. Known for his gentle humor and engaging charm, Calhoun was a popular teacher who enjoyed helping students gain a greater appreciation of the history and heritage of the Christian faith. His unique ability to bring the people and events of the past to life and to see the grace of God at work even in the darkest periods of church history influenced the lives and ministries of generations of future pastors.

David B. Calhoun was born in the little town of Flat Gap, Kentucky, in 1937, the son of David Harris Calhoun, an itinerant preacher and pharmacist who had once been a semi-professional baseball player, and Pauline Bays, who had once heard her future husband preach at her church. The senior Calhoun's frequent work with African-American churches in the era of the segregated South, and his contact with the many missionaries who often visited the Calhoun home, gave the young David a good grounding in his faith, a broadened perspective, and a heart for missions.

After graduating from Columbia Bible College (now Columbia International University) in 1959, Calhoun came to Covenant Seminary, earning first a Bachelor of Divinity then a Master of Theology in Old Testament. He was ordained to the gospel ministry in 1963, then went back to Columbia to teach a variety of subjects at his alma mater for four years before fulfilling his long-time desire to be a missionary. He served as principal of Jamaica Bible College in Mandeville, Jamaica, from 1967 to 1971. In 1972, he received a ThM in New Testament from Princeton Theological Seminary.

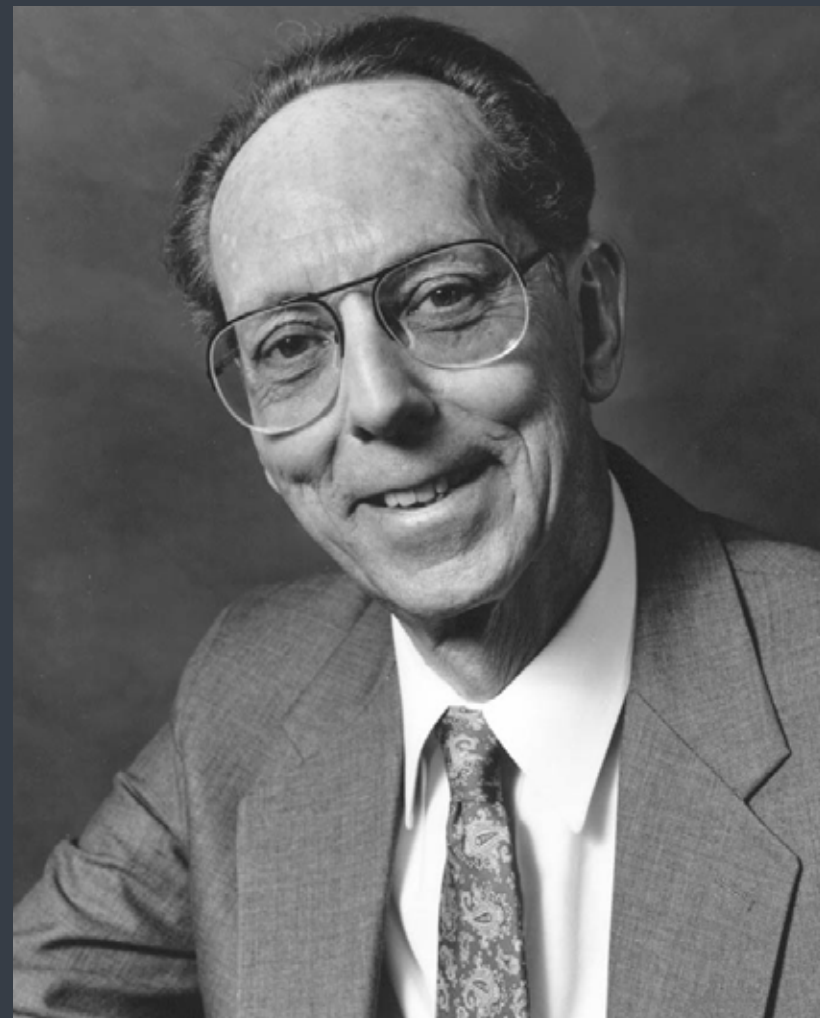




Returning to the West Indies, Calhoun served for three more years as a coordinator and trainer for Ministries in Action (MIA), an interdenominational mission organization headquartered in Miami, Florida, and for which he helped to develop evangelism and church growth training materials. He would later develop similar materials for Mission to the World (MTW), the foreign missions arm of the PCA, and he would become a founding board member and President of Presbyterian Mission International (PMI), an independent mission agency that assists international students trained at Covenant Seminary in bringing the gospel back to the people of their native lands.

LEFT TO RIGHT:

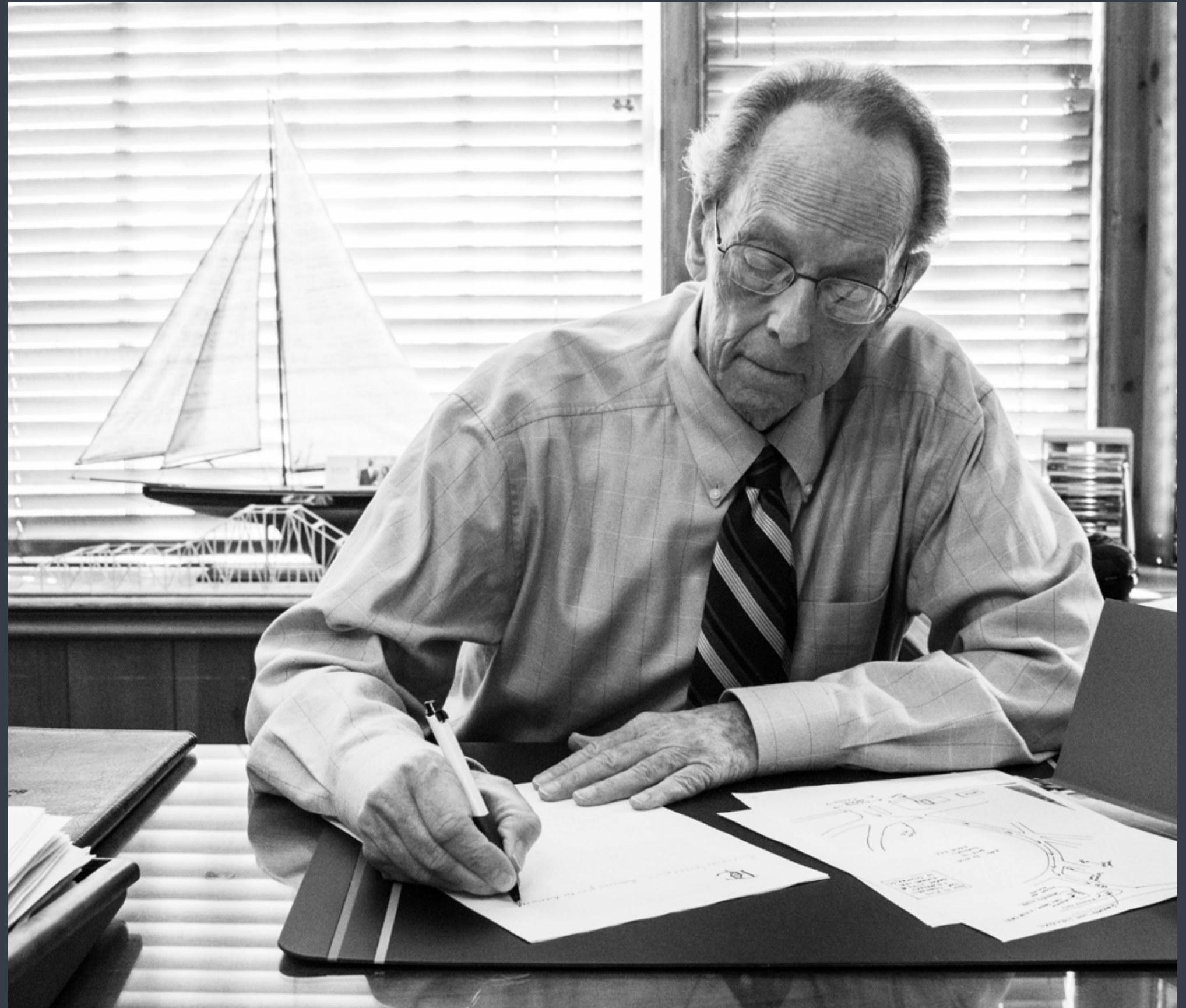
- DR. DAVID JONES AND DR. DAVID CALHOUN, LONGTIME FRIENDS AND FELLOW FACULTY MEMBERS, LAUGHING TOGETHER AT GRADUATION.
- DR. CALHOUN GIVING THE BENEDICTION AT GRADUATION.
- A FACULTY PHOTO OF DR. CALHOUN..
- DR. CALHOUN WALKING ACROSS CAMPUS IN 2011, CARRYING HIS SIGNATURE LARGE BRIEFCASE.



In 1978, after receiving his PhD at Princeton, Calhoun came back to Covenant Seminary, where he taught church history until his retirement in 2008. Even after that, he maintained an office on campus for several years, continuing to teach occasional classes and blessing the larger church with his teaching, preaching, and writing projects before moving to Chicago to be closer to family. He is survived by his wife, Anne Fleece Calhoun, two adult children, Allen and Isabel, and two grandchildren.

A respected scholar and author, Dr. Calhoun published many books, including *In Their Own Words: The Testimonies of Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Knox, and John Bunyan* (Banner of Truth, 2018); *Knowing God and Ourselves: Reading Calvin's Institutes Devotionally* (Banner of Truth, 2016); *Pleading for a Reformation Vision: The Life and Selected Writings of William Childs Robinson* (Banner of Truth, 2013); *Grace Abounding: The Life, Books, and Influence of John Bunyan* (Christian Focus, 2005); the highly regarded *Princeton Seminary* (Banner of Truth, 1994/1996), a two-volume history of one of the most influential institutions in American Presbyterianism; and, most recently, *Swift and Beautiful: The Amazing Stories of Faithful Missionaries* (Banner of Truth, 2020), a subject near to his heart. In 2020, Covenant Seminary published a special limited edition volume of many of Dr. Calhoun's shorter writings titled *The Dr. David Calhoun Collection: Celebrating 40 Years of Writing*. The volume was part of a tribute to Dr. Calhoun in conjunction with the establishment of the endowed David B. Calhoun Alumni Scholarship, funded through the Seminary's recently completed *Hope for the Future* capital campaign.

Calhoun battled cancer off and on for several decades, often speaking openly about his struggles with the disease and writing frequently about the relationship between suffering and faith. The strength of Dr. Calhoun's faith and his sense of grace and humor in the face of adversity were a great source of inspiration and encouragement to generations of his friends, colleagues, and students. He will be greatly missed.

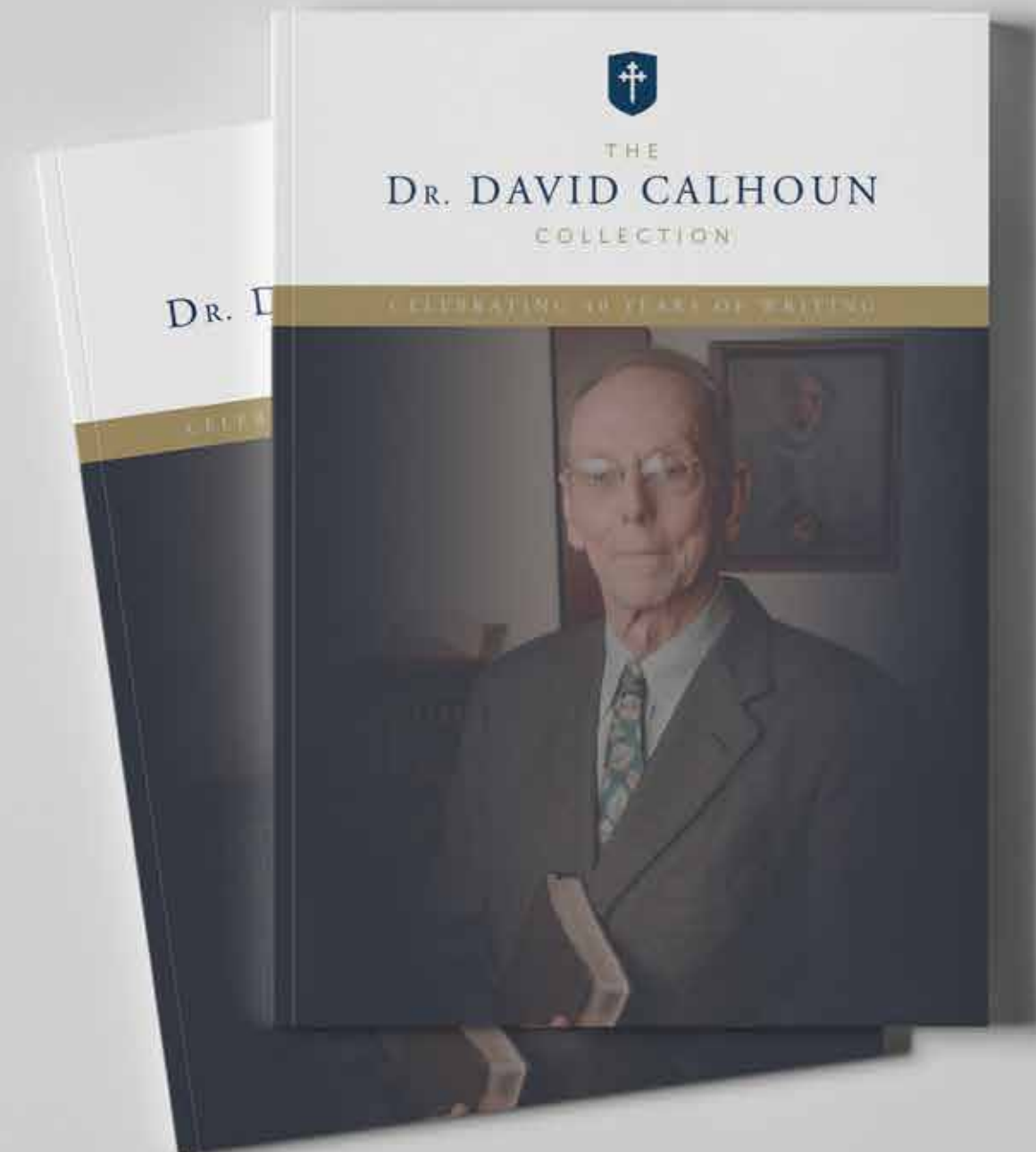


DR. CALHOUN IN HIS OFFICE IN EDWARDS HALL.

Collected Writings

The Dr. David Calhoun Collection

Last year the Seminary introduced *The Dr. David Calhoun Collection* as a free gift for anyone who donates to the newly-endowed David B. Calhoun Alumni Scholarship to benefit future pastors and ministry leaders. This limited edition book includes select articles written by Dr. Calhoun across 40 years of ministry. Individually, these pieces show biblical faithfulness throughout church history. As a whole, they serve as a testimony to the faithfulness of this beloved professor for a lifetime of ministry, and the faithfulness of his Savior to the church. Limited copies are still available. www.covenantseminary.edu/store





COVENANT
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



CELEBRATING A BIBLICAL SERVANT- LEADER

As Dr. Mark Dalbey prepares to retire as President of Covenant Seminary at the end of the 2020–2021 academic year, his successor, Dr. Tom Gibbs, prepares to continue his predecessor’s heritage of maintaining Covenant Seminary’s focus on training gospel-centered pastors, counselors, and ministry leaders to serve the Church.

The Board, faculty, and staff of the Seminary invite the entire Covenant community to celebrate Dr. Dalbey with us for his years of faithful service and exemplary servant leadership, and to rejoice with us for God’s provision of Dr. Gibbs as he becomes the sixth President of Covenant Seminary on July 1.

COMPILED AND EDITED BY RICK MATT

COVENANT SEMINARY HISTORY

65 Years of Kingdom Service



As the College and Seminary both continue to grow, the College moves to a new location atop Lookout Mountain, Georgia.



Dr. William Barker becomes the second president of Covenant Seminary.



Dr. Paul Kooistra becomes the third president of Covenant Seminary.



Dr. Richard Winter, a British psychiatrist and friend of Jerram Barrs, begins the Master of Arts in Counseling program.



Dr. Mark Dalbey becomes the fifth president of Covenant Seminary.



Under the leadership of Dr. Dalbey, Covenant Seminary completes the *Hope for the Future* campaign, its largest campaign in history.



Dr. Mark Dalbey is named President Emeritus by the Board of Trustees.

1956

1964

1973

1977

1982

1985

1989

1993

1994

2012

2017

2020

2021

2021



Covenant College and Theological Seminary is located in St. Louis to train students in the Bible and Christian worldview under its first President, Dr. Robert Rayburn.



The Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) is formed out of the PCUS upon a commitment to the inspired and inerrant Bible as the word of God.



Covenant Seminary becomes the official denominational seminary of the PCA.



Dr. Kooistra hires Prof. Jerram Barrs to begin the Francis Schaeffer Institute, named after the apologist who often taught at Covenant Seminary.



Dr. Bryan Chapell becomes the fourth president of Covenant Seminary.



Covenant Seminary adds the Missional Training Center—Phoenix, as a part of its campus.



Dr. Tom Gibbs is named the sixth president of Covenant Seminary, effective July 1, 2021.

CELEBRATING THE MINISTRY OF
DR. MARK DALBEY
PRESIDENT, 2012–2021



BETH & MARK DALBEY

Dr. Mark Dalbey is part of a long lineage of pastors. His father was a pastor, as were his wife, Beth's, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, two brothers, and two uncles. Carrying on that tradition of pastoral leadership, Mark served in pastoral and educational positions for two decades before coming to Covenant. He was student-pastor of Bridgewater United Presbyterian Church in Beaver, Pennsylvania (1975–1977), during his time at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (where he was blessed to be shaped for ministry by such eminent Reformed teachers as Dr. John Gerstner). After that he served as Assistant Dean of Religious Services (Chaplain) and Instructor in Bible at Geneva College in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania (1977–1984); Solo Pastor of Church of the Covenant (PCA) in Cincinnati, Ohio (1984–1992); and Senior Pastor of Christ Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Richmond, Indiana (1992–1999).

In addition to his lineage, the budding pastor's early days were also shaped by his experiences as a college basketball player and his time with Sports Ambassadors, the sports evangelization ministry of Overseas Crusade, now known as the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Here Dalbey learned the essentials of playing basketball and practicing evangelism effectively, and also the basics of teamwork and of strong humble leadership, especially leadership under fire—key themes that would be central to his pastoral and educational work and his tenure as President at Covenant (see his article “Humility: The Heart of a Servant-Leader” in this issue). Also a talented singer, Mark was for many years active in the world-renowned, award-winning Ambassadors of Harmony vocal group, of which his son, Eric, is currently a member.

As a churchman, Dalbey has been active on a variety of committees at the presbytery and denominational levels for the Presbyterian Church in America, and is a founding member and past chairman of the steering committee for the Worship Reformation Network, a group of mostly PCA pastors and worship/music directors committed to promoting biblical, Reformed, and gospel-driven principles for worship. That subject is dear to Dalbey's heart, as evidenced in the subject of the dissertation he wrote to complete his Doctor of Ministry degree from Covenant in 1999: “A Biblical, Historical, and Contemporary Look at the Regulative Principle of Worship.” In addition to his DMin, Dalbey also holds a BA in philosophy from Tarkio College, and an MDiv from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

Dalbey first came to work at Covenant Seminary in 1999, when he stepped into the role of Dean of Students and Assistant Professor of Practical Theology. Since that time he has worn many hats, including those of Vice President of Student Development and Vice President of Academics and Faculty Development, a post he held until becoming Interim President in 2012. In 2013 he became the institution's fifth President. In his capacity as Associate Professor of Applied Theology, he has continued to teach courses on Christian Worship, Gospel-Centered Leadership, and Gospel-Centered Spirituality, as well as an occasional class on Gospel-Centered Parenting, co-taught with his wife, Beth. That last course is another subject dear to Mark's heart as he and Beth have been married for nearly 50 years and have three grown, married children and eleven grandchildren.

Dalbey has seen many changes at Covenant since he first came here more than twenty years ago. The campus has grown a lot since then, and the educational needs and demographic makeup of the Seminary's students have changed a lot as well. His own time as President has seen many innovations in terms of new degrees and delivery methods, the development of new extension sites and field education opportunities, strengthening the Francis Schaeffer Institute, a new Church Planting Track to accommodate the growing need for trained leaders to plant more gospel-preaching churches, increased scholarships and other kinds of support for students, and expanded partnerships with churches and institutions around the country and the world that help the Seminary meet the educational challenges brought by learning in a digital age amidst a global pandemic (see sidebar on "Ministry Timeline at Covenant Seminary"). Through it all, Dalbey's leadership has remained steadfastly focused on the gospel of God's grace and on the Seminary's primary purpose to "glorify the triune God by training his servants to walk in God's grace, minister God's Word, and equip God's people—all for God's mission."

As he prepares to retire at the end of the 2020–2021 academic year, Dr. Dalbey offers this reflection on his time as President of Covenant: "It has been a great honor and privilege for me to be called to follow in the footsteps of past presidents in serving during this latest chapter in the life of the institution. I am grateful for the prayers and support of all our friends, alumni, donors, Board, faculty, and staff over the last nine years, and especially grateful to the Lord for the opportunity to lead the Seminary through several new initiatives—and some challenging times—to further expand and enhance our ability to equip pastors and leaders for his church and Kingdom. It has been the greatest privilege of my vocational life in ministry."

“[Serving as President] has been the greatest privilege of my vocational life in ministry.”

– DR. MARK DALBEY

DR. MARK DALBEY

MINISTRY TIMELINE

AT COVENANT SEMINARY

1999

Dr. Dalbey arrives at Covenant to serve as **Dean of Students** and Assistant Professor of Practical Theology.

2000–2009

Dr. Dalbey expands the role of Student Life in walking with and caring for students and their families.

Teaches courses in Gospel-Centered Parenting; Gospel-Centered Spirituality; Gospel-Centered Leadership; Calling, Vocation, and Work; and Theology of Ministry and Worship, which will continue throughout his tenure.

2009

Appointed **Vice President of Faculty Development** to oversee expanded faculty resources and further develop the academic and pastoral focus of the faculty. Continues serving as Assistant Professor of Practical Theology.

2012

Named **Interim President** by Board of Trustees.

2013

Elected **President** by Board of Trustees. Continues teaching as Associate Professor of Practical Theology.



Dalbey is excited about assisting with the transition to the leadership of his successor, Dr. Tom Gibbs, who will take over as President in July 2021 (see page 54): "I am very pleased with the selection of the search committee and to now see Dr. Gibbs appointed to this role. I have known Tom for many years and have seen firsthand his high commitment to the truth of God's word and the grace of the gospel in his own life as well as those he serves. He is a man of deep faith and character with a track record of strong vision and gracious leadership. I am thrilled to hand the baton to him and have every confidence he will lead the Seminary with excellence in the years ahead."

We are grateful for Dr. Dalbey's years of faithful service and we rejoice in the many blessings God has brought under his leadership. Please rejoice with us as we look forward to seeing what the Lord will do through Mark as he enters a new chapter of his life and ministry.

MINISTRY TIMELINE

AT COVENANT SEMINARY

2013

Appoints **Rev. Mark Ryan** as new Director of the Francis Schaeffer Institute (FSI) and Adjunct Professor of Religion and Culture to lead the Institute into a new season of fruitfulness, including a partnership with L'Abri Fellowship that produces the first of a series of St. Louis L'Abri Conferences.

2014

Invites **Dr. Dan Doriani**, who taught at the Seminary for several years before re-entering pastoral ministry, to return to Covenant as Vice President of Strategic Academic Initiatives and Professor of Theology. Doriani currently serves as Professor of Biblical and Systematic Theology.

2015

Launches the **\$40 million Hope for the Future capital campaign**, the largest campaign in the Seminary's history, to increase the institutional endowment, provide more scholarship support for students, ensure long-term growth and stability for the faculty, expand the accessibility and flexibility of the Seminary's degree programs, and upgrade the school's technological infrastructure.

The **Edwards Hall Community Center** reopens following a massive 18-month renovation program

aimed at making the building, which has served a variety of functions over the years, more inviting and conducive to fostering the deep, gospel-centered relationships vital to the formation of effective pastors and church leaders. The renovations were funded by from private donors, Seminary alumni, and a gift from the PCA's Women in the Church.

2016

Inaugurates Covenant's first extension site in **Nashville, Tennessee**, to expand the Seminary's ethos and theological training resources to those unable to relocate to St. Louis, offering both online and in-person classes for the full MATS degree and an on-ramp for further MDiv study at the main campus.

Seminary establishes **new scholarships** to assist Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) leaders and interns in pursuing further ministry training, and a scholarship for Doctor of Ministry (DMin) students as well.

2017

The Missional Training Center—Phoenix (MTC) becomes a degree-granting site of Covenant, offering a Master of Arts in Missional Theology (MAMT) degree for students already

in ministry or serving as interns in local churches in Phoenix. MTC has approximately 60 students in four cohorts, led by Dr. Michael Goheen, Professor of Missional Theology and Director of Theological Education at MTC.

Other cohort-based **educational partnerships** begin with a pilot program involving various churches in the Pacific Northwest. The goal is to provide "on the ground" training for those in ministry who seek further education while serving where they are.

The Seminary establishes the **Philip and Rebecca Douglass Chair of Church Planting and Christian Formation** to honor the life and ongoing work of long-time professor Dr. Phil Douglass in this field and to underscore our commitment to preparing leaders to plant new churches for new generations of believers. Dr. Douglass is the first professor to hold the chair, which was funded through the *Hope for the Future* capital campaign.

2018

Covenant develops and launches **new degree programs** to increase our ability to meet the educational needs of a changing world with greater flexibility and accessibility.

These include the Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies (MABTS), Master of Arts in Ministry (MAM), and their related options and sub-tracks. A Hybrid Master of Divinity (MDiv) begins as well, making the degree available to those who cannot come to St. Louis full-time for study.

The Church Planting Track is added as an option for the MDiv and later for the MABTS. The track provides specialized training for those called to and gifted for church planting, with enhanced mentoring and internship opportunities and fundraising training. See page 77 for more details.

Mr. Jeremy Main, a Covenant graduate and Adjunct Professor of Applied Theology, is named the first full-time Director of Field Education, tasked with overseeing the expansion of the field ed program, developing more mentoring and internship opportunities for students, and increasing resources for students seeking to fulfill internship requirements.

Several new **strategic partnerships** begin: with NEXT (formerly Global Youth and Family Ministries), Christian Heritage Cambridge; The Chalmers Institute in St. Andrews, Scotland; and disability

ministry expert Stephanie Hubach. These expand students' access to vital resources and expertise for reaching and ministering to the next generation and those with special needs, and also to expand our institutional reach and gospel impact nationally and internationally.

2019

Seminary institutes changes to the **Master of Arts in Counseling (MAC)** curriculum to make the degree more portable, allowing graduates to become licensed in states other than Missouri, and preparing the program for further accreditation with the Counsel for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

Covenant marks the 30th Anniversary of the establishment of the **Francis Schaeffer Institute (FSI)** on campus with a year-long celebration of events, activities, and lectures focused on the theme of Speaking the Truth with Love. The Seminary also celebrated the completion of the endowed **Francis Schaeffer Chair** of Apologetics.

Updated Covenant Seminary branding is launched to better reflect both our historic heritage and unchanging mission in a changing world.

Counseling Department presents the inaugural **Professional Counselor Training Series** to provide professional counselors licensed in the state of Missouri with quality continuing education units in which Covenant counseling faculty help participants think Christianly about important topics facing counselors, their clients, and the church.

Seminary begins offering **30% Church-Match Scholarships** for most degree programs, in which the scholarship matches up to 30% of tuition funding given by a student's church, totaling a 60% tuition reduction for qualifying students.

Dr. Dalbey announces plan to retire in two years and asks Board of Trustees to begin search process for the next President of Covenant Seminary.

2020

Completed the *Hope for the Future* campaign which expanded the Seminary's endowment from \$20 million to \$44 million (see pages 43–53 for more).

2021

Dr. Dalbey named President Emeritus by the Covenant Seminary Board of Trustees.

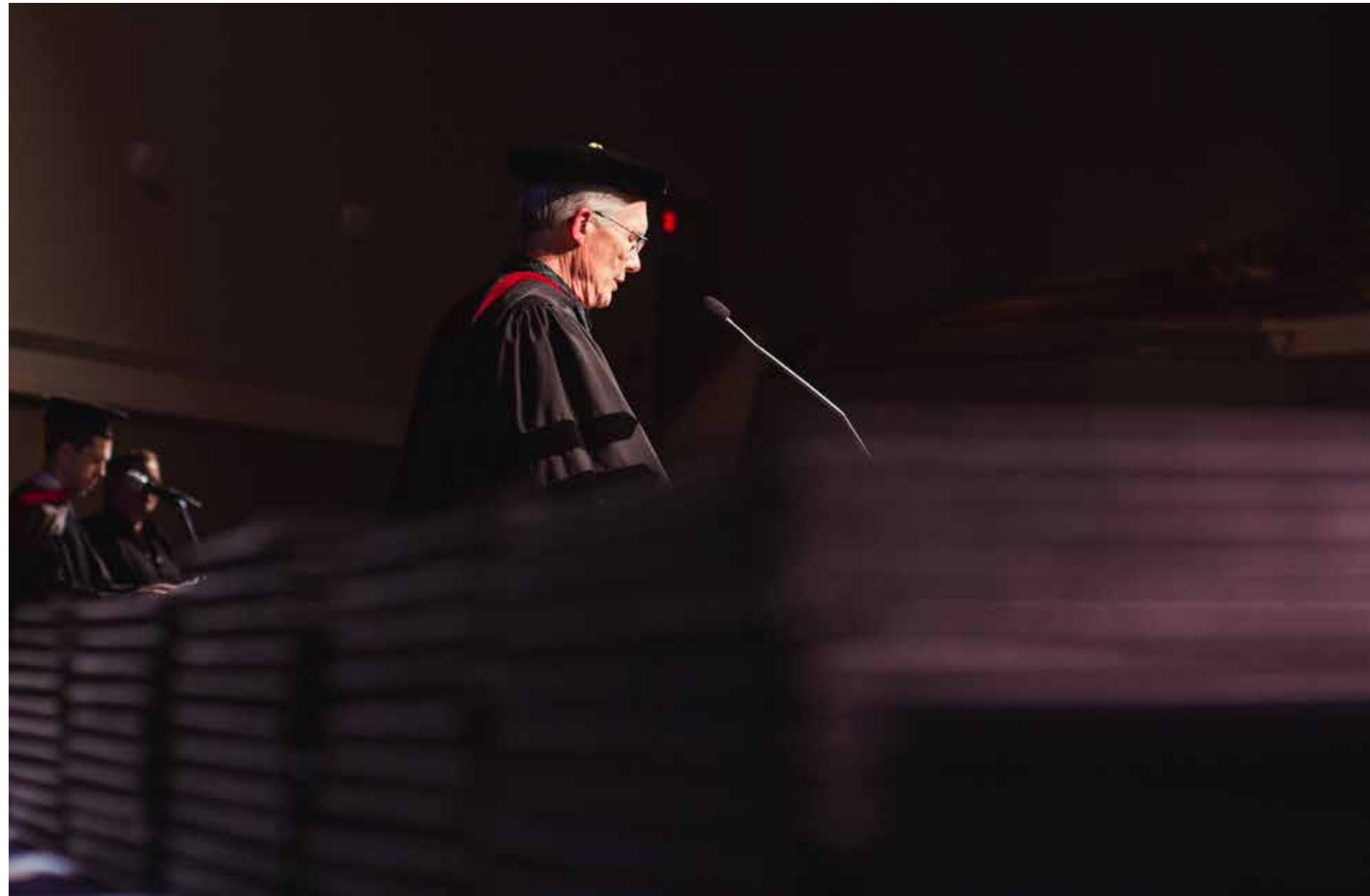
Looking Back

BY DR. MARK DALBEY

Coming from a family in ministry, and having served as a local church pastor and Christian college chaplain for many years before coming to Covenant Seminary, I'm well aware of the importance of good leadership for our churches. God's people need strong, well-trained leaders to guide and shepherd them through the ups and downs of life and the many life challenges they will face. And the same is true of institutions like Covenant Seminary.

In my role as President, I am not anyone's pastor in particular, but I do have a pastoral role in many ways for our faculty, staff, and students, and in some degree for our denomination as well. In the more than twenty years since my wife, Beth, and I followed God's call to St. Louis so I could serve here as Dean of Students and in other roles before becoming President, I have had the deep privilege of guiding and shepherding the process of equipping and sending out more than 3,000 gospel leaders who are now serving the church across the country and around the world.

At Covenant Seminary, we launch leaders who serve as pastors, church planters, counselors, missionaries, teachers, campus ministers, and a host of other callings—both in our own denomination and in many others besides. Those many ministry leaders and Kingdom servants touch the lives of thousands—perhaps millions—of other people throughout the course of their lifetimes. And that is one of the things I love most about being at Covenant Seminary: I have seen firsthand the expanding influence of graduates whose lives and ministries reach and equip so many with the saving and transforming power of the gospel. I am deeply grateful to be a part of this worldwide and generational ministry.



DR. DALBEY ABOUT TO AWARD DIPLOMAS AT GRADUATION.

Our emphasis on training servant leaders has always meant prioritizing educational excellence in a combination of academic rigor and Christian formation in whole life discipleship with real-life ministry application. That has been particularly difficult to accomplish during the current global pandemic, but it is a wonderful testimony to the grace of God and to the creative energies of our faculty, staff, and students that we have been able to keep this most basic aspect of our mission going through it all. We've not only managed to keep it going, but to explore successfully new ways of making our courses and degree programs more flexible and accessible for learners both on campus and around the world—including the creation of some new degrees like the MABTS, the MAM, and the hybrid MDiv. Much of this was already in the works before the pandemic hit as we sought to adjust to the changing educational needs of the larger church, but much also was sparked by the innovation necessary to meet the challenges none of us could have expected. I commend our faculty and staff for their ability to adapt so quickly and graciously, and I commend our students for their flexibility, endurance, and grace during what has been a difficult time for all of us. The success and fruitfulness of our graduates in ministry over the long haul remains the greatest evidence of God's blessing on our efforts and of his faithfulness to his mission of equipping his church for ministry.

A second priority for the Seminary's leaders has always been providing strong financial support for all our students, but especially for those who show particular promise as future pastors. Our Founders

Scholarship Award was established many years ago to provide full-tuition support for select Master of Divinity students in their final year of studies so they can focus fully on preparing for their ministerial callings without the need for full- or part-time jobs. It also enables us to launch them into ministry without the harmful burden of student debt that can hinder or limit their ministry opportunities. We were recently able to expand this scholarship program greatly, and add to or create several other student scholarships, thanks to the generous support of donors to our *Hope for the Future* capital campaign (see page 48.) Our donors understand the importance of such a strategic investment in the future leaders of the church, and we are grateful for their commitment to our students. You can see more about the Founders Scholarship and some of its recent recipients elsewhere in this issue of *Covenant*.

Another result of strong Seminary leadership over the decades is our commitment to training church planters. Our efforts in this area has positioned us to be a great place to get training and experience for the Presbyterian Church in America and beyond. Though this important but challenging field has been a priority for us since our beginning, we have in recent years been able to greatly increase our focus on it by establishing the Philip and Rebecca Douglass Chair of Church Planting and Christian Formation and creating the Church Planting Track, a specialized learning track that offers expanded training and mentorship opportunities for those gifted and called to church planting (see page 77). Like so much of what we do, these opportunities were also made possible through the generosity of our *Hope*



DR. DALBEY AT GRADUATION.

for the Future campaign donors and campaign, whose heart for the advancement of the gospel is so incredibly essential to our mission. To find out more about how church planters trained at Covenant are making an impact in our world, see the story about alumnus Craig Harris later in this issue.

While serving as president, it has been rewarding to see the seminary go deeper than ever into the Bible and theology for the sake of the Church and its mission in God's world of proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God to everyone, everywhere, and all the time. We have strengthened our commitment to equip leaders for the Church who winsomely engage the culture with grace and truth; who value the vocational calling and work of the whole people of God; who utilize the gifts of men and women, young

and old, rich and poor, majority culture and minority culture; and who recognize that they need the deep transforming power of the gospel of grace in their lives as much or more than the people they serve.

It is such a joy to have been part of these and so many other amazing things the Lord has been doing at and through Covenant Seminary! I love serving as President. I have loved stewarding this role and its engagement with so many students, alumni, faculty, staff, donors, and churches. I do not necessarily wish for my time here to end, though I love the future of Covenant Seminary too much to see one person go on in its leadership indefinitely. That is why, a year or so ago, I asked the Board of Trustees to begin the process of looking for my successor.



DR. DALBEY WITH SOME OF HIS GRANDCHILDREN.

Over my years in this role I have seen the Lord's faithfulness on display in his care for the mission of Covenant Seminary to equip pastors and ministry leaders for God's church and Kingdom. This has included a strong commitment to deep biblical and theological study for the sake of the church and its mission in God's world with a renewal of the Francis Schaeffer Institute's vision of winsome cultural engagement. I have also seen God's faithfulness in his care for our alumni who are faithfully proclaiming the gospel; and in his care for the Presbyterian Church in America as we all strive to bring the gospel to the world around us. I have seen firsthand how the Lord has guided the Seminary through changes, the development of new degrees that enable us to serve the church with greater flexibility and accessibility, the meeting of economic challenges, and the navigation of unforeseen opportunities. Sometimes it is a wearying work, as cultural change outside the church and internal strife within the church tempt us toward fear. But our God is faithful.

Through it all, the Lord has led the Seminary to a wonderful place of serving the church and denomination during this critical time. There is always a cost to meaningful work, and though it has been difficult at times, I count it as joy as the Lord has called Covenant Seminary to be a leader in equipping future generations of church leadership. I consider it a privilege to welcome a new President, Dr. Tom Gibbs, who will take up the reins later this year. I know the Seminary will be in good hands, not only because I know and trust Tom and the choice of our Board, but also—and most importantly—because I trust our Lord Jesus Christ, who alone is head of the church and is sovereign over all things. He is ultimately in charge of the church, of the Seminary, and of its mission, which after all, is his mission, not ours. We are merely the instruments he uses to play the music of the gospel in the larger ongoing symphony of his work to redeem and transform the world.



ANNUAL REPORT

8
DEGREE
PROGRAMS

741
CURRENT
STUDENTS

95%
MINISTRY
PLACEMENT
RATE

4,490
ALUMNI

34
DENOMINATIONS
REPRESENTED



What makes Covenant Seminary unique?

OUR STUDENTS & ALUMNI: ROOTED IN GRACE FOR A LIFETIME OF MINISTRY

They come from many different backgrounds, many different states and nations, and more than 30 different denominations. They come with a wide range of aspirations, dreams, and goals. When they leave, they serve in equally diverse ways in equally diverse places—as pastors, church planters, missionaries, counselors, chaplains, teachers, translators, business or government leaders, and more—in all 50 states and more than 40 countries. No matter where they come from or where they go, one thing unites them: a powerful desire to serve the Lord in ways that bless his people and glorify his name.

While they're here, they form strong and lasting bonds forged in the context of a living,

learning, worshiping community of grace—bonds rooted in the gospel, the redemptive and transformative love of Christ, and the common calling to join God's mission to bring his good news to all people and every area of life.

Grounded in extensive study of the Bible and commitment to the Reformed faith, every part of our campus life is designed to facilitate the kind of deep and meaningful personal relationships that foster effective gospel ministry. Students, faculty, and staff engage together in the daily, weekly, and yearly process of study, prayer, worship, and work as we all seek to grow in Christ-likeness in creative, challenging, and life-changing ways.

What makes Covenant Seminary unique?

OUR FACULTY OF PASTOR-SCHOLARS

God's people need gifted, called, and trained pastors and leaders to guide and shepherd them. The biblical pattern for molding and shaping such leaders suggests that they should be taught and mentored by those who themselves are experienced gospel ministers and shepherds, as well as expert scholars and interpreters of God's Word.

Covenant's faculty draws together just such a distinguished community of pastor-scholars—a group whose love for the gospel, commitment to the Reformed faith, rigorous academic excellence, practical pastoral and other ministry experience, and active involvement in many aspects of the broader church make them uniquely qualified to prepare new generations of faithful and fruitful ministry leaders.

Having served an average of 9 years in ministry—as pastors, church planters, campus ministers, missionaries, chaplains, and other ministry leaders—before teaching at Covenant, our faculty now give their time and energy to teaching, mentoring, and training new gospel leaders for Christ's church and Kingdom. Collectively, they devote more than a thousand hours each semester to meeting with students one-on-one, and are often instrumental in connecting graduates with appropriate ministry opportunities. Faculty members frequently serve our alumni as ongoing sources of wise counsel and encouragement.

As models of Christian humility, service, and compassion, these seasoned ministry practitioners and recognized biblical scholars are key to the success of our graduates year after year.

18
FULL-TIME
FACULTY

1,500
HOURS EACH
SEMESTER DEVOTED
TO 1-ON-1 STUDENT
MENTORING

4
FULL-TIME
ADJUNCT
FACULTY



13
FACULTY
MEMBERS WHO
HELPED WRITE
THE ESV STUDY
BIBLE

50+
BOOKS
WRITTEN

9
YEARS AVERAGE
MINISTRY
EXPERIENCE
BEFORE JOINING
FACULTY



THE
HOPE FOR THE FUTURE
CAMPAIGN

★★★ COMPLETED ★★★

Through your support we completed the largest campaign in Covenant Seminary's history. \$42 million was raised to relieve student debt, strengthen and recruit faculty, and provide stability to the operating budget of the Seminary for years to come.

STUDENT-FOCUSED
CAMPAIGN OUTCOMES



*Student Debt
Eliminated*

The campaign eliminated more than \$2.25 million in student debt through providing scholarships to future pastors, counselors and ministry leaders.



*24 Full-Tuition
Scholarships*

24 Founders Scholarships were awarded, which provides 100% of tuition for future pastors in their final year of seminary.



*9 Endowed
Scholarships*

9 new endowed scholarships were created for students of different degree types and backgrounds.



*6 New Online
Learning Programs*

Online and hybrid versions of many degree programs were created through resources from the campaign so that students may study the Bible wherever they live.



*Church-Planting
Track Established*

The Church Planting Track was established to equip future church planters for the PCA and beyond.



*Expanded Field
Education*

The Field Education program was expanded to provide mentored training opportunities to ensure that students are receiving real-world ministry experience.



*Expanded
Endowment*

The Seminary's endowment was doubled from \$20 million to over \$40 million to enable a more stable yearly operating budget.



*Upgraded
Classrooms*

8 classrooms were fully equipped for video and audio production to allow for more courses to be broadcast online. This allows more international students to participate in seminary education.

FACULTY-FOCUSED CAMPAIGN OUTCOMES



Completed 2 Endowed Faculty Chairs

The Philip and Rebecca
Douglass Chair of Church
Planting and Christian
Formation

The Francis Schaeffer Chair of
Apologetics

Established 3 New Endowed Faculty Chairs

The Richard Winter Chair of
Counseling

The David C. Jones Chair of
Systematic Theology

The Jerram Barrs Chair of
Pastoral Theology

Expanded 2 Endowed Faculty Chairs

The Resilient Ministry
Leadership Faculty Chair

The World Missions Faculty
Chair

New Faculty Announcements



Dr. Robert Kim named Philip and Rebecca Douglass
Chair of Church Planting and Christian Formation



Prof. Jerram Barrs named Francis Schaeffer Chair of
Apologetics



Dr. Paul Loosemore named Assistant Professor of
Counseling



Dr. Mark Pfuetze named Interim Co-Director of the
Counseling Program



Dr. Jeremy Ruckstaetter named Interim Co-Director
of the Counseling Program

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF WELL-TRAINED LEADERS?

THE MULTIPLYING EFFECT OF ONE TRAINED PASTOR



Training a pastor has a multiplying gospel impact.

How does Covenant Theological Seminary change the world? Through sending trained and faithful pastors, counselors and ministry leaders across geographies and generations to bring the gospel to a lost and suffering world.

4,490 graduates

across **65** years

sent out to **50** states

and **100** countries



Looking ahead

INTRODUCING OUR NEW PRESIDENT

The Rev. Dr. Thomas C. “Tom” Gibbs

After a rigorous 14-month search process, the Covenant Seminary Board of Trustees has called its sixth president, **Rev. Dr. Thomas C. “Tom” Gibbs**.

Tom has served in pastoral ministry for 24 years. After graduating from Auburn University, he pursued both a Master of Divinity and later a Doctor of Ministry degree from Covenant Seminary. He successfully planted a Reformed University Fellowship college ministry at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. He later planted Redeemer Presbyterian Church of San Antonio, Texas, where he has served as senior pastor for almost 20 years.

In addition to planting Redeemer Presbyterian Church and Baylor RUF, he has overseen numerous church plants through his role as the chairman of the Southwest Church Planting Network, a network encompassing more than 60 churches across four states. Tom also founded and leads Reach South Texas – an organization focused on strategic church planting in South Texas to reach a rising generation amidst the nation’s changing demographics.

Tom also currently serves at the denominational level as Church Planting Assessment Director with Mission to North America (MNA). His work of mentoring church planters and ministry leaders will see further fruition as president of Covenant Seminary.

The calling of Covenant Seminary’s sixth president was the result of a global search begun at the request of current President Dr. Mark Dalbey. After serving over 20 years on the faculty and staff at Covenant Seminary, Dr. Dalbey requested that the board begin to prepare for the next generation of leadership to steward the ongoing mission of equipping leaders for the Church.

The search committee—comprised of Covenant Seminary faculty and staff, along with ruling and teaching elders from the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)—considered more than 75 candidates and conducted dozens of interviews.

Dr. Gibbs will assume the presidency on July 1, 2021.

Tom and his wife Tara have been married for 26 years and have four children: Anna Catherine, Thomas, Lucy and Caroline.





HUMILITY

THE HEART OF A SERVANT-LEADER

BY DR. MARK DALBEY

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE A GOOD LEADER?

It takes the right combination of gifts and skills, but it also takes something else—a humble heart attuned to the ways of the greatest leader, our Lord Jesus Christ.

“What kind of leader will you be?”

That question was explicitly asked of me when I first became President of Covenant Seminary more than nine years ago. But the question—and the answer to it—had really been on my mind and heart in some form for much longer than that. I continue to ponder it even today.

From a biblical perspective, of course, the foundational answer to that question is, “I want to be a servant-leader.” That’s the kind of leader Jesus was. But there really is a whole lot more to that one term than can be conveyed by simply saying it. And as I have thought about that answer over the years, I’ve begun to see that, while there are many qualities that make one a good leader in the biblical sense—such as being collaborative, courageous, calm, gospel-shaped, Spirit-empowered, and Kingdom-missional (all terms I don’t have space to elaborate on more fully here)—there is one characteristic that undergirds them all and typifies what it means to be a servant-leader: humility.

So, what then does it mean to be humble?

“ALWAYS WALK UNDER CHAIRS”

When I was in college I had the good fortune as a college basketball player of winning an award as a scholar-athlete in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), a small college athletics association for basketball. I was thrilled about it, and as young men in their early twenties often do, I got rather puffed up and proud of myself for that accomplishment. I thought I was really something. Then I got a letter of congratulations from one of my father’s friends, a pastor by the name of Harry Fisher. Harry had actually written one of the letters

recommending me for the award. Here he was now commending me for receiving the award, encouraging me, and expressing thankfulness for me. I was soaking it all up. And then, at the close of his letter, he made a comment that didn't make much sense to me at first. He said: "Remember, Mark, to always walk under chairs." I thought: What does that mean? How can a person walk under a chair?

I thought: What does that mean? How can a person walk under a chair?"

— DR. MARK DALBEY

Then I started thinking about it in a very literalistic sense, imagining myself actually walking under a chair—and then it dawned on me exactly what Harry was trying to tell me. The only way to walk under a chair is to get yourself down low enough to squeeze yourself under it. And getting down low was exactly the opposite of what I'd been doing since I'd won that award. I had been standing on a mountaintop yelling, "Look, how wonderful I am!" What Harry was reminding me in his own unique way was that I should be walking humbly with the gifts that God had given me. It was a call to humility, a call I desperately needed, and a call many of us who are in positions of leadership—whether in the church or in business or in families or wherever—desperately need to hear and be reminded of frequently. We cannot be good leaders of God's people if we cannot get low enough to "walk under chairs" in humility. It's a posture of worship before God, a posture of offering ourselves as living sacrifices to him. It's a response to the greatness and the grace of God in our lives.

About 20 years after this, I was listening to Dr. Jack Miller, who was a pastor, professor at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, and the founder of World Harvest Mission (now known as Serge), who made the point that God's grace only flows one way: downhill. God condescended to reveal himself to us and he pours out his grace into our lives. We can't receive it if we're puffed up and trying to be higher than those around us or trying to live as though we are God. If we do that we cut ourselves off from the downward flow of God's grace. We can only receive it if we are low, if we are humble. Even then, this kind of humility is not something we can acquire for ourselves; it comes about only through the work of the Holy Spirit in us. God grants it to us, and he does so not simply for our own sakes, but for the sake of others whom we are called to serve as leaders.

The first thing we have to say about biblical leaders, then, is that they are to be humble servant-leaders. They are called to lead by serving others, not by serving their own interests.

THE KING OF HUMBLE SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

We can see examples of this kind of humble servant-leadership all throughout the Bible. The greatest example is, of course, our Lord himself. In Philippians 2:4–8, we're told:

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

We can't get more basic or fundamental than that. The Son of God himself, who had the right to every honor and glory under heaven, humbled himself for the sake of others. Indeed, he took on human flesh and became a servant, submitting himself even to the point of a horrible, painful death on the cross—for the sake of sinners like us! And in Mark 10:42–45, when Jesus's disciples are arguing over who would be the greatest in the Kingdom, Jesus says to them,

You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

So, whether it's in the church or anywhere else, leaders are to be humble servant-leaders. A humble leader does not see others as somehow inferior and doesn't "lord it over" others, as Jesus says, but looks to the interests of others and "in humility counts others as more significant" than himself or herself. That doesn't mean that you as a leader are weak and let people walk all over you. It means that you carry out the charge given to you in a manner that is not domineering, that respects the rights and dignity and abilities of others who are made in the image of God, that considers their needs without letting your own needs get in the way. If all authority to lead comes ultimately from God—and it does, as Paul notes in Romans 13:1—then he intends that authority to be used wisely on his behalf and for the sake of those he has placed under that particular authority in that particular time and place.

LEADING FROM BELOW, NOT FROM ABOVE

Another important example of this can be found in 1 Peter 5:1–11, where the apostle Peter speaks to the elders of the church about how they are to conduct themselves.

So I exhort the elders among you as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed. Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him because he cares for you. Be sober-minded and watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

The first thing we see in this passage is the call for elders in the church to lead under God’s grace. The interesting thing here is to remember who’s writing this: Peter the Rock, the apostle, the one who boldly proclaimed Christ as the Messiah and boasted that he would be willing to die for him. Yet, here Peter doesn’t claim to be any better than anyone else. He doesn’t pull rank and say, “I’m the famous apostle Peter. Listen to what I say!” No, he writes to these church leaders “as a fellow elder.” He writes as one who knew the strength of God’s mighty hand and the importance of being humbled by that mighty hand. He writes as one who had boldly proclaimed Christ as Messiah, but also as one who had tried to stand in the way of Jesus going up to Jerusalem and the cross, being called by Jesus an agent of Satan. He writes as one who boasted of his loyalty to Christ and his willingness to die for him, but who then denied his Lord three times. And he writes as the one who, thirty days after that, chastened and humbled by his failures, met Jesus on the seashore, leaping out of the boat to swim to him and

fall on his face before the risen Lord to be forgiven and restored by the very one he had betrayed. He is even commissioned then to go forth to feed and shepherd God’s flock. What great humility we see here, then, in the way Peter addresses his readers in this letter.

Part of leading others is recognizing how much we as leaders—just like all of those we lead—need the restorative grace of God. It’s recognizing our need to get low enough to receive the outpouring of grace from God that will propel us forward into serving as humble leaders in ministry in the church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Next, Peter says to his fellow elders, “Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.” In other words, we are to be shepherds of God’s flock, not because we must but because we want to. That speaks to having the right kind of heart. And we’re to shepherd the flock not because we’re greedy for power or recognition, but because we are eager to serve. That speaks to having the right motive. And finally, we’re to shepherd the flock of God not by “lording it over” those in our charge, but by being an example to them. This speaks to having the right manner.

Some Christians today might argue that the most fundamental doctrine for which we must stand firm, over and above all others, is the authoritative primacy of the elders over the congregation, of husbands over wives, and of men over women. And in such a scenario, our response to the sin of those who deny or rebel against authority is to assert our authority as leaders in the church. But I certainly don’t see that attitude expressed in 1 Peter 5 where Peter the apostle is directly addressing the elders in the church. He tells them to be models of grace, repentance, care, forgiveness, and holiness in Christ. We must get under the sheep and lift them up—not ourselves.

The stresses of ministry today are such that those of us who lead often find ourselves called to impossible tasks. Yet, we’re expected to succeed at those tasks without good job security, with lots of financial pressures, and with lots of unprocessed personal baggage in our lives that threatens to hinder our effectiveness. So Peter is warning us here against some of the temptations that present themselves to leaders in those situations: the temptation to greed, the temptation to power, and, though he doesn’t mention it here specifically, the temptation to sex outside of marriage, whether in our thought life or in our actions. It’s crucial that we get down low enough every day and face the Chief Shepherd of the church to receive afresh from him the grace that he pours out upon us as leaders in the church.

WRAPPING OURSELVES IN HUMILITY

In 1 Peter 5:5, Peter exhorts us to “Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’” He doesn’t say, “Feel humble,” or “Pray for humility”; he says, “clothe yourselves with humility,” express it toward one another. The sense he’s aiming at here is that of putting on humility like a garment, wrapping ourselves in it. We get the idea that he means we’re not fully dressed without it.

Back in the days when Covenant Seminary still did in-person registration, before it was all done online, we often had “theme days” to try and lighten up the tedium of all the waiting while signing up for classes. One year we had a Hawaiian theme in January. All the staff working registration that day dressed in Hawaiian-style clothing. Some of the women wore beautiful wrap-around garments. The clothing was bound around them. No one was quite sure how they stayed together, but they did. That’s a pretty good picture, I think, of what Peter is telling us here. The term he uses for “clothe yourselves” actually has the sense of “bind around yourself” in a way that holds you together.

Then in the second part of the verse Peter says, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” It doesn’t say God tolerates the proud. It says he opposes the proud. Most of us are pretty willing to confess the sin of pride and then move on and say, “What I good boy am I, I confessed my sin of pride.” But if you think about what Peter is saying here, it gives us a different perspective on the magnitude of pride and God’s hatred of it. Peter says in verse 6, “Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you.” We don’t lift ourselves up. God lifts us up—in his own way, in his own time. In this season of time between Pentecost and the Second Coming, there are some days when he lifts us up, and there are some days when he lowers us under his mighty hand. But the day is coming—and it’s in view in this passage and anticipated by Peter—that we’ll be lifted up in eternal glory with him and joined with him in the new heavens and the new earth. There may be suffering now, there may be struggles now, there may be humiliation now, but God is going to lift us up into that eternal glory and the place that he’s prepared for us. He will complete the work that he has begun. But for God to lift us up, we have to be low enough to be lifted up. If we, even as his adopted sons and daughters, are walking in arrogance and pride in some facet of our lives, then at that point and in that way, he is opposed to us and will confront us. He will either bring us low in a good way as we respond to him by clothing ourselves in humility, or he will allow us to be brought low in a less pleasant way through the humiliation that can come from not dealing with unconfessed sin or through suffering that reveals the true nature of our pride.



In Francis Schaeffer’s book *True Spirituality*, there is a section where he speaks about this pattern of humility in the life of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Schaeffer calls it “active passivity.” It’s actively taking hold by faith of that which only God can give us—which is exactly what God is asking us to do: to humble ourselves under his mighty hand, and he will lift us up in his time. We have to get under the outpouring of God’s grace; we can’t get above it. When we try to go above it and our need for it, then we cut ourselves off from the flow of grace.

The Enemy is prowling around, seeking to devour us, looking for some crack in our armor that he tries to widen so he can get in. And that crack is often at the point where we are prideful enough to think we have it all together. We’re called to stand firm, yoked to Christ in humility, and delighting in his design for our dependence on him.

LEADING FROM OUR KNEES

As leaders in Christ’s church, we are called to a life of humility. But that’s not something we can just get for ourselves. It’s a gift of the Holy Spirit, a gift that comes through prayer. We’re called to a life lived on our knees, a place of being low enough to receive what God pours out on us in a downward way.

One of the great blessings I’ve encountered as President of Covenant Seminary is being with the Board of Trustees three times a year on campus. Each Friday when the Board gathers is a powerful testimony to the very thing that Peter is talking about in this passage. Before we even begin the business of the meeting, the Board will spend an hour or more praying together. They pray for each other, for the staff, for the faculty, for the students, for the mission and ministry of the Seminary, and for the business items they’ll be taking up later in the day. It’s an amazing time of basking in God’s grace and seeing how these PCA pastors and elders in leadership roles come before the Lord and seek his will in humility so that they might shepherd well the flock of God which they’ve been called to lead at Covenant Seminary. It always convicts me about how little I do that, except when the Board is in town, and it reminds me how crucial that is to God’s pouring out of his grace on those who are called to lead his people.

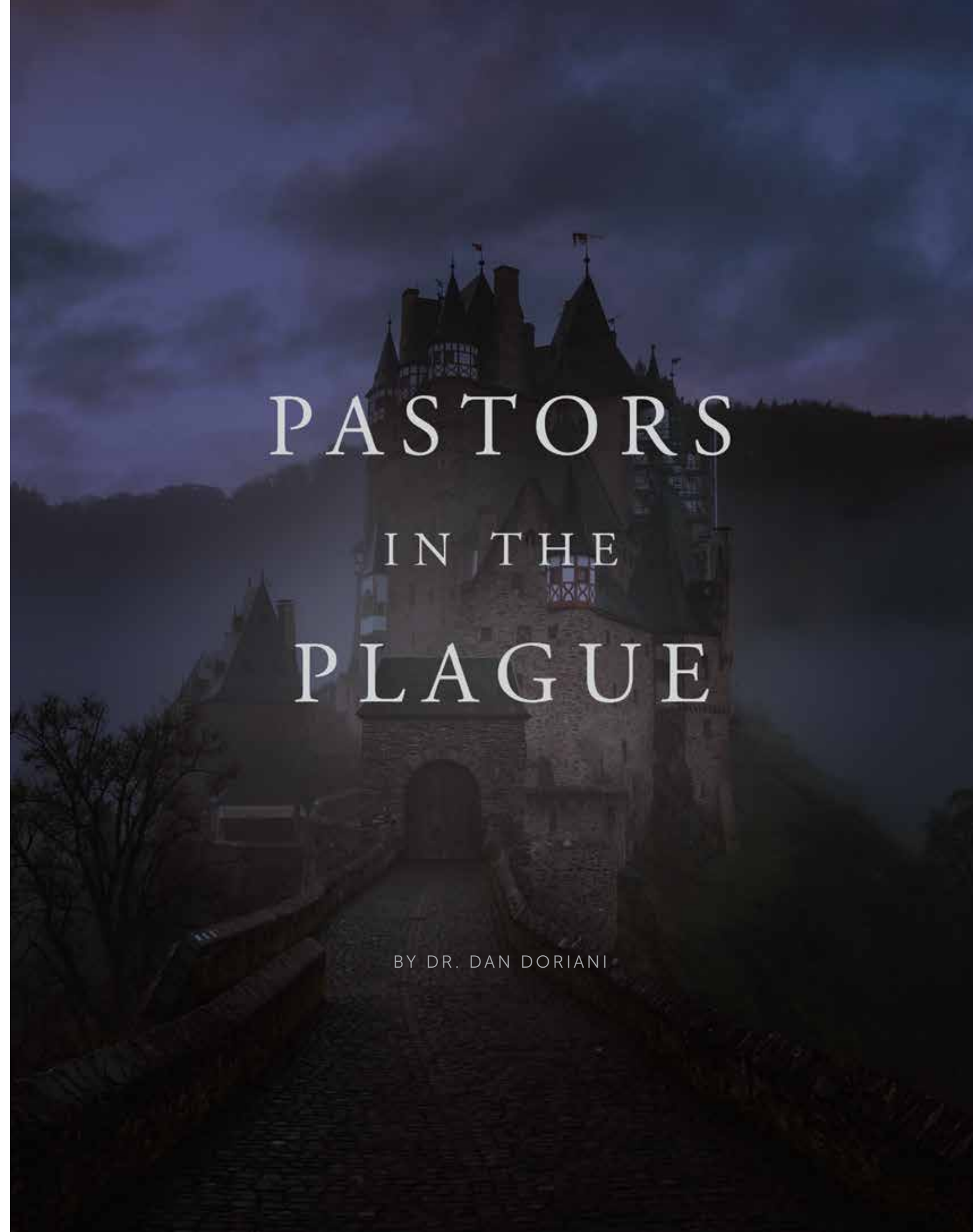
The call to humble prayer is absolutely critical. Peter reminds us that the devil is out to get us, and we can't possibly resist him unless we are constantly on our knees in prayer. That's the place of real power and authority in ministry. The image that comes to mind for me here is in Judges 7, when Gideon is called to face a great enemy army with only 300 men. As a test to see which men would accompany Gideon on the mission, they got down low to drink from the water as God had told them. But their heads were up—they were, in a sense, low under God but looking up to him as they prepared to face the enemy. That's a ministry posture. That's a leadership posture. That's the posture of parents in families, Sunday school teachers, counselors, and business leaders who love the Lord—on our knees before God, low and looking to him to pour out his grace to empower us for the impossible tasks he puts before us in ministry. God delights to have us co-labor with him in his work of bringing the good news of the gospel to everybody, everywhere, all the time; but we can only do so when we know that we cannot do it ourselves and are low enough to let him lift us by the grace he pours out upon us from above.

The great Lutheran minister Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote a book called *Life Together*, which was published in 1954, nearly a decade after his death. The book is mainly a discussion of Christian community, but Bonhoeffer also wrote about seven principles for eradicating selfish ambition. He said, first, that “We must understand that Christian authority is characterized by service and does not call attention to the person who performs the service.” He added:

Every personality cult that is concerned with important qualities, outstanding abilities, strengths, and the talents of someone else—even though these may be thoroughly spiritual in nature—is worldly and has no place in the Christian community. Indeed, it poisons that community. The demand one hears so often today for “people of episcopal stature,” for “priestly men,” and for “powerful personalities,” springs too often from the spiritually sick need for the admiration of people, for the erection of visible structures of human authority, because the genuine authority of service seems too unimportant. (Life Together, 108)

Brothers and sisters, the only posture to have to avoid that happening in our lives, no matter what large or small “kingdoms” we may think we have authority over, is to be on our knees and on our faces before our God, praising him, receiving from him humbly the grace he gives us so that we might rise and serve him in whatever he calls us to do. *Soli deo gloria!*

Dr. Mark Dalbey is President of Covenant Theological Seminary.



HOW CAN PASTORS AND MINISTRY LEADERS DISPLAY SERVANT-LEADERSHIP THROUGH CRISES LIKE THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC? DR. DORIANI PROVIDES SOME INSIGHT FROM A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE.

Living in the time of a new, dangerous, easily transmitted disease like the coronavirus, we are glad to be able to lean on Christian leaders who faced similar problems centuries ago and can give us direction.

The plague (a.k.a. the “black death”) reached Europe via Genoese traders in 1330. It spread slowly until it reached a four-year peak, from 1347 to 1351. More than 90% of those who contracted the plague died of it within a week. Historians estimate that Europe lost 30–60% of its population in the fourteenth century. In that era, priests, monks, and nuns courageously cared for the sick and the dying, knowing that it might cost them their lives; great numbers did perish. The plague lingered, in a slightly less dangerous form, until the seventeenth century. Infections that killed 5, 10, or 15% of the population were common in European cities for centuries afterward, striking every ten or twenty years.

Dr. Mark Dalbey, President of Covenant Seminary, recently shared a comment from Martin Luther from when a plague reached his city, Wittenberg. Luther said:

I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine, and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance infect and pollute others, and so cause their death as a result of my negligence. If God should wish to take me, he will surely find me and I have done what he has expected of me and so I am not responsible for either my own death or the death of others. If my neighbor needs me, however, I shall not avoid place or person, but will go freely.

– MARTIN LUTHER



MARTIN LUTHER

“If my neighbor needs me,” represents the attitude of godly pastor in plagues.

In Calvin’s day, quarantine of the sick in homes or hospitals was widespread. When the plague struck Geneva several times, some pastors tried to evade hospital visitation. Calvin quickly volunteered to minister to the sick in the hospital. Geneva’s other leaders forbade him, since they believed he was essential to the city, and he reluctantly acquiesced. Nonetheless, Calvin visited many in their homes and he conducted funerals, at great risk to himself.

Calvin and Luther illustrate the fearless faithfulness common to most pastors. In those days, those who could afford to flee the cities did.

Plague also struck London repeatedly in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Puritan pastors like Thomas Gataker and William Gouge did not flee, although they could have. They stayed in the city and served their people. So they model faithfulness and fearlessness, born of trust in the Lord and a vibrant conviction that this life is short



JOHN CALVIN

and that eternal life is our destiny. They show us how to be faith and fearless today.

Today, the front line includes pastors, health care providers, family members, even neighbors caring for each other.

Luther, Calvin, and the Puritans never ran from trouble. They endured, preaching, teaching, and visiting as always. Today we have safer ways to visit and preach while we obey our authorities: we can call upon our congregations over FaceTime or Zoom. We can drive to our neighbors’ doorsteps and see them from our car. We can lead Bible studies over Facebook and sing hymns together. These things feel cumbersome for now, because they are not the ways in which we are used to doing life together as the church of Christ.

However, our union with Christ, by faith, empowers us to be brave and loving in an era of arduous ministry. May we lay hold of what is ours by faith in the Lord and by the strength of the Holy Spirit.

Dr. Dan Doriani is Professor of Biblical and Systematic Theology at Covenant Seminary. This article originally appeared on Covenant Seminary’s *Orthodoxy and Orthopraxy* blog in March 2020.

A group of approximately 12 men in various styles of suits (including purple, grey, and dark blue) are standing on a large green lawn. In the background, there is a large brick building with arched windows and a prominent tree with bright green leaves. The scene is set outdoors on a bright day.

THE FOUNDERS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

HELPING FUTURE PASTORS LAUNCH (NOT LIMP) INTO MINISTRY

BY RICK MATT

For more than six decades, Covenant Seminary has been committed to helping future pastors and ministry leaders obtain the training necessary for a lifetime of fruitful service. Part of that commitment means continually seeking ways to provide more and better financial and personal support for students—especially as they prepare to graduate and move out into ministry. This is why the Founders Scholarship Award was created.

In 2006, an idea for a new scholarship was born in the Development office at Covenant Seminary. After considering how donors might “sponsor a student” during seminary, the team developed the concept for a scholarship that would both help promising future pastors financially and also connect donors personally to students training for ministry. Over the last fifteen years, the result of that initial brainstorming session—the Founders Scholarship Award—has grown into the largest scholarship program in the history of the Seminary.

Most students receive some form of financial assistance while in seminary but those preparing for pastoral ministry often face particularly daunting stresses as they seek to complete their studies; fulfill internship, field education, and presbytery requirements; and manage a full load of classes amidst the responsibilities of ministry, family, and, sometimes, part-time jobs. The fact is, getting through seminary is a tough road and requires a lot from students and their families.

The final year of seminary can be difficult. Finances and relationships are often stretched, the hours in a day never seem to be enough, and the search for potential ministry positions can seem overwhelming. Assisting students during this time provides critical help during a significant moment in their ministry training. This is why the Founders Scholarship Award was created.

A STRATEGIC INVESTMENT IN FUTURE CHURCH LEADERS

John Ranheim, Covenant Seminary’s Vice President for Advancement, says that the Founders Scholarship grew out of a twofold desire to provide the financial assistance students needed while also providing caring donors with a more personal way to know students while supporting the mission and ministry of Covenant.

Ranheim notes: “In 2006, we were looking at ways to help promising pastoral students get through seminary financially. We wanted to help launch them well into ministry, not have them just limp across the finish line. After careful observation, we came to realize that it was in the final year that these guys found themselves especially strained and tested. Many wouldn’t be able to continue at that point without additional assistance or having to get some kind of full- or part-time work. We didn’t want them to have to take out loans, which would add to their debt burden and potentially limit what kind of ministry opportunities they could accept at graduation. And we didn’t want them to have to work extra jobs and miss out on participating fully in campus life or the many internship possibilities that could greatly benefit their future ministries. In talking with some of our faithful donors with hearts for the Seminary’s mission, we found a handful who were willing to help us fully support or otherwise sponsor a student in his final year of studies and walk with that person as he prepared to graduate

and begin a life of ministry.”

From that small group of donors fifteen years ago, the base of support for the Founders Scholarship has grown considerably. The award is now the largest and most successful scholarship program in the school’s history. Since the program’s inception, 160 Founders Scholars have benefited from the award as they finished their studies and entered vocational ministry; 98% of them are still serving in ministry in some capacity. Gifts to the *Hope for the Future* capital campaign (see page 48) over recent years have enabled the Seminary to greatly expand the number of scholarships offered.

But the Founders Scholarship provides more than financial support for struggling students—important as that is. It is also a strategic—and personal—investment in their lives and future ministries.

Ranheim continues: “We didn’t want the scholarship to be simply a transfer of money from the donor’s account to the student’s account. We wanted it to provide more of a personal connection between the giver and the receiver, to build relationships between them that beautifully illustrate how the various parts of the body of Christ need and support one another. The gift of the scholarship does help fill a financial need for students, but more importantly, it gives a much-needed confirmation of their call to ministry. Many of these final year students come into their last year without a lot of support. They are usually out of money, often do not have church or family support, are feeling the stress of working multiple jobs while taking classes and wondering if they should or can keep going. Many consider dropping out and some begin to question their call to ministry. It’s at this point that we’ve seen the Founders Scholarship serve in a strategic way.”

A STRATEGIC SURPRISE

The Founders Scholarship is a surprise to those who receive it. Students do not apply for the award but are selected by Seminary faculty and administrators. Thus, recipients have no idea they’re even being considered for the award until

“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? ”

ROMANS 10:14–15

they receive a call from the Financial Aid office telling them that their last year of seminary is paid for. “They are basically told, ‘Someone out there believes in you and wants to shoulder this last year for you as you prepare for ministry,’” Ranheim says. This is a powerful moment in the life of a student—to receive the grace of God through this provision and to learn firsthand how the church gives support to the body. The scholarship not only serves as an answer to many prayers for financial provision but also as a much-needed confirmation of their call to ministry. It helps future pastors understand directly the interconnectedness of the larger church, part of which they will one day lead. This is also a deep benefit to the life and future of the church itself.

Ranheim notes that while the program certainly benefits the student, it also blesses the donors: “The scholarship puts faces to their gifts. Donors receive a ‘picture on their fridge,’ so to speak, which gets them more deeply connected in the work of the Seminary. We try to provide multiple opportunities for donors and students to connect in personal ways during that final year of studies. Those relationships can have a profound impact on both students and donors. It’s been a wonderful example of the church in action.”

A MULTIPLICATION OF MINISTRY EFFECTIVENESS

Effective as it is in supporting promising students, reducing student debt, and building mutually beneficial relationships between one generation of believers and the next, the impact of the Founders Scholarship reaches far beyond a strategic investment in the lives and ministries of a limited number of future pastors each year.

Ranheim says, “The leaders supported by the Founders Scholarship are committed to serving our congregations, our families, and our communities in gospel ministry. But their ministries have a multiplying effect that reaches way beyond a few local churches. Covenant graduates tend to remain in ministry at a rate four times higher than the national average and serve an average of three churches over the course of their ministries. And their impact on the lives of the people in those churches expands outward to the people impacted by those people—and so on and so on. Based on national averages, this means that each of our graduates can potentially impact more than one million people over the course of a lifetime of ministry. Thus, an investment in one Founders Scholar is a powerfully effective way to help multiply the gospel through churches, other ministries, on college campuses, and in many other contexts around the world.”

Dr. Miles Gresham, a physician in Birmingham, Alabama, Chairman of the Covenant Seminary Board of Trustees, and a long-time supporter of the Seminary, agrees: “I have supported Covenant Seminary for many years because of its commitment to training the next generation of leaders. It is a multiplying ministry through which churches are impacted exponentially, both now and for the future. I believe that Covenant is the best place in which to invest if you want to have a profound impact on the future of the church and on the gospel going forth.”

As Founders Scholars have graduated and entered the fields of ministry around the globe,

they have done so with a shared experience of blessing and with a similar heart of gratitude. All have benefitted from the deep generosity of others and most remember the surprise gift coming during very trying times as an answer to prayer.

Kent Woodrow (MDiv '17), for example, a former Founders Scholar who now serves as Next Generation Pastor at Holy Cross Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Staunton, Virginia, recalls the importance that receiving the scholarship had for him and his wife: “Having returned from a two-month mission trip just prior to our final year at Covenant, my wife and I were beset with feelings of loneliness, fear, and wondering if the Lord was truly with us. I had applied for a \$200 presbytery scholarship, praying I could get through my final year. Then I received the call: I had not received the presbytery scholarship but had received a Founders Scholarship. When I told my wife, she burst into tears. God’s gifts always come at just the right time.”

As noted, the recent *Hope for the Future* capital campaign greatly increased Covenant’s ability to provide scholarships for future generations of students. Currently, the Seminary awards Founders Scholarships to roughly 25% of the MDiv class, with the goal of eventually expanding this level of award to all of those training for pastoral ministry. The need, however, is great and ongoing, and the Seminary’s Development staff continues working tirelessly to seek the resources and relationships that can ensure a solid foundation for this important aspect of its work.

John Ranheim notes, “Central to our mission is sending out healthy, thriving graduates who will bear much fruit in ministry. That means helping students as much as we can to succeed in their studies without incurring debt that can hamper their future effectiveness. We are grateful for the many generous friends and donors whose gifts provide these strategic scholarships each year. We are eager to welcome greater numbers of donors into this exciting program. We couldn’t do this without our incredible partners and friends.”

THE 2021

FOUNDERS SCHOLARS



Gage Arnold (MDiv '21)
From: Nashville, TN
Ministry Desire: Youth Pastor



Tanner Johnsrud (MDiv '21)
From: La Cañada, CA
Ministry Desire: Pastoral Ministry



Caleb Blow (MDiv '20)
From: Homewood, AL
Ministry Desire: Youth Pastor



Josiah Kaniarz (MDiv '21)
From: Howell, MI
Ministry Desire: Bi-vocational Pastoral Ministry & Carpentry



Cameron Brown (MDiv '21)
From: Tampa, FL
Ministry Desire: Campus Ministry or Church Planting



Joshua Kim (MDiv '20)
From: Newport News, VA
Ministry Desire: Pastoral Ministry



Leif Danielson (MDiv '21)
From: Kenai, AK
Ministry Desire: Pastoral Ministry



Zach Meyer (MDiv/MAC '21)
From: Kennesaw, GA
Ministry Desire: Pastoral Ministry or Campus Ministry



Eric Fadel (MDiv '21)
From: Thornton, CO
Ministry Desire: Pastoral Ministry



Si Mitchell (MDiv '21)
From: Annapolis, MD
Ministry Desire: Campus Ministry



David Gallagher (MDiv '21)
From: Green Bay, WI
Ministry Desire: Pastoral Ministry



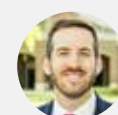
Jeb Ralston (MDiv '21)
From: Jacksonville Beach, FL
Ministry Desire: Pastoral Ministry & Post-Graduate Studies



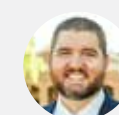
Thomas Harsley (MDiv '21)
From: St. Louis, MO
Ministry Desire: Chaplaincy



Matt Sims (MDiv '21)
From: Champaign-Urbana, IL
Ministry Desire: Pastoral Ministry & Post-Graduate Studies



Harrison Holbrook (MDiv/MAC '21)
From: Greensboro, NC
Ministry Desire: Youth Pastor



Charles Stover (MDiv '21)
From: Tyronza, AR
Ministry Desire: Pastoral Ministry

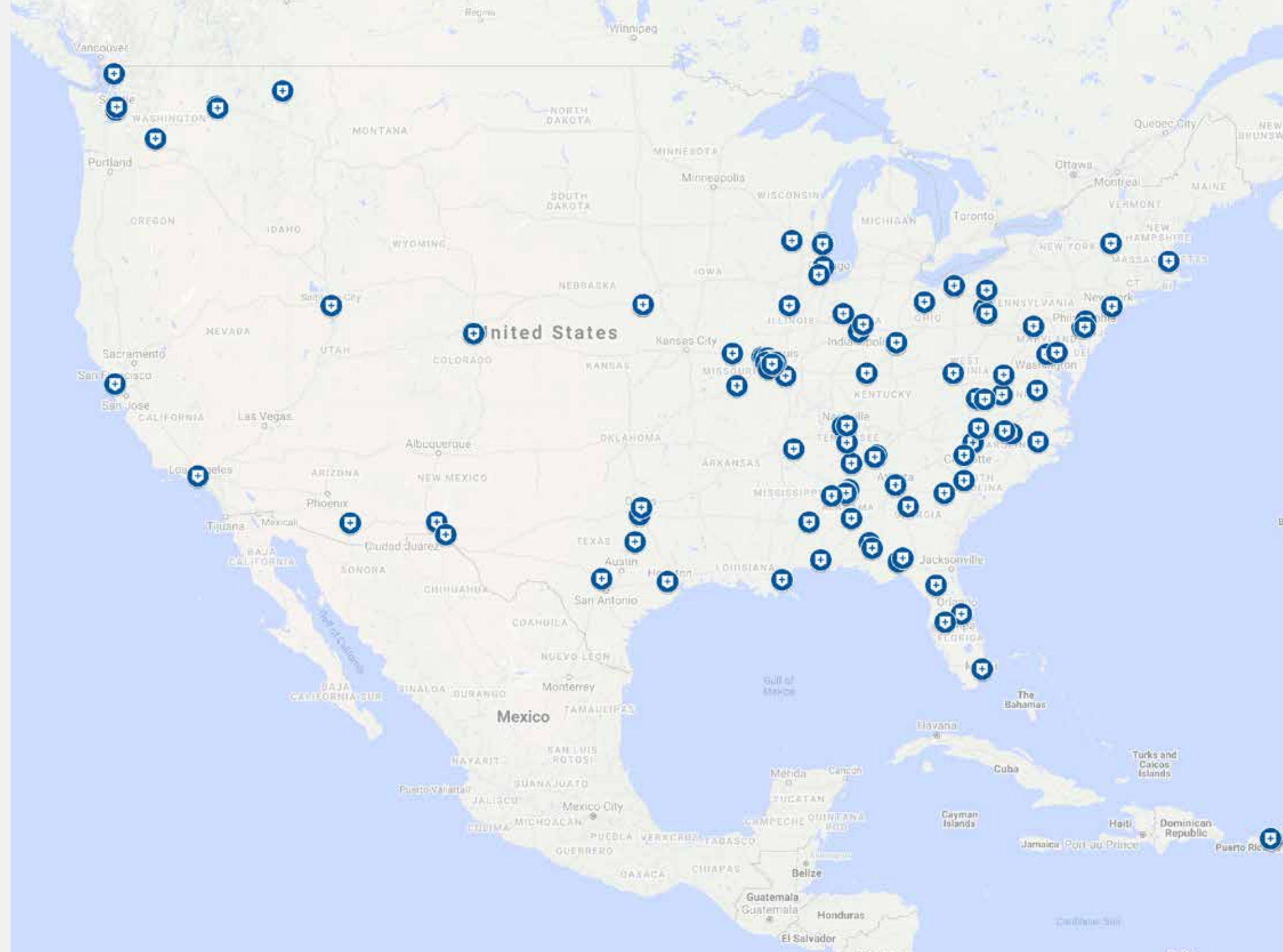


Keisuke Idota (MDiv '21)
From: Chiba, Japan
Ministry Desire: Pastoral Ministry

THE
WORLDWIDE REACH
 OF THE FOUNDERS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



FOUNDERS SCHOLARS OVERSEAS
 (Google Map data)



FOUNDERS SCHOLARS SERVING IN THE UNITED STATES
 (Google Map data)

We are grateful to report that over 160 graduates have now had their final year sponsored and have entered the fields of ministry—in this country and around the globe. Founders Scholars are pastoring churches, serving on college campuses, and serving as missionaries all across our nation and around the globe.

FOUNDERS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FACTS

160 = Total number of Founders Scholar Award recipients since the program started in 2006.

98% = Percentage of Founders Scholar Award recipients launched **who are still serving in ministry.**

\$15,000 = A gift of this amount will cover **the cost of all courses for one student for one year.**

\$400,000 = A gift of this amount will establish an endowed scholarship in perpetuity, funding all courses for one student every year.

SUPPORT *the* FOUNDERS SCHOLARSHIP VISION

The church needs well-trained pastors and ministry leaders in all kinds of ministries to guide, lead, disciple, and shape God's people for transformative gospel-centered living in every area of life. Your gifts make it possible for us to prepare those leaders. Please join us in this mission by giving today.

Online: www.covenantseminary.edu/give

By Mail: Development Office, Covenant Theological Seminary, 12330 Conway Road, St. Louis, MO 63141

By Phone: 1.800.264.8064



THE CHURCH PLANTING TRACK

PRACTICAL TRAINING FOR POWERFUL KINGDOM GROWTH

The need for more Bible-based, gospel-preaching churches is great—and so is the need for well-trained leaders to plant and nurture those churches.

This is especially true in the midst of a global pandemic, when so many people are seeking hope, healing, comfort, and answers to hard questions about life and death—answers that can only be found in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Additionally, many existing churches are struggling to survive the effects of the pandemic; new churches will be needed to serve believers and, in many cases, re-evangelize areas where older churches have closed. Experience has shown that new churches are generally better able to reach and evangelizing new people than older, more established churches.

And, as Dr. Robert Kim, the Director of the Church Planting Track, notes, “Churches that are surviving have been forced to adapt. They are in many ways functioning more like church plants as church leaders begin to think more locally about how to better address the growing anxieties and other needs of those in their communities.”

Where will all these new churches come from? Where will we get the trained leaders to plant them? And how can other church leaders think more like church planters in the current situation and beyond?

Covenant Seminary's Church Planting Track is one vital piece of the answer to those questions.

THE CHURCH PLANTING TRACK

WHAT IS THE CHURCH PLANTING TRACK?

The Church Planting Track enables qualified students in the MDiv and MABTS programs to add 5 credit hours of church planting courses. The track provides expanded opportunities for externships and residencies under the mentorship of seasoned church planters and in cohort groups of peer church planting students; offers valuable training in the often-neglected area of fundraising; and features comprehensive assessments and evaluations of church planting skills, giftedness, and readiness at multiple points in the program, including ongoing assessment meetings with Dr. Kim. Additionally, the track provides connections to church planting networks throughout the US and globally. Students may pursue the Church Planting Track through on-campus study or through hybrid learning that features a combination of on-campus and online components.

The track prepares students for the challenging task of planting a new church from the ground up: working with presbyteries, churches, and church planting networks to identify potential areas for a plant; gathering a core group and beginning the process of developing contacts and community relationships in the target area; seeking individual donors and church partners to support the work prayerfully and financially; identifying possible future officers to help lead and shepherd the congregation of the plant; finding a suitable location to meet; and many other details. Apprenticeship/externship opportunities with experienced church planters enable students to

The Need for Church Planting

- Nationally, **4,000** new churches are planted each year, while **3,700** close—a net annual gain of only 300 churches.*
- It would require a gain of **2,000–3,000** new churches each year to keep up with population growth.*
- The PCA plants approximately **50** new churches each year.*
- Some researchers say **80%** of churches in the US are plateaued or declining, though others says the rate may be closer to **60–65%.****
- Fewer than **5%** of churches actively reproduce themselves by planting daughter churches.**

draw on the valuable knowledge of those who have gone before so they can be better prepared for what they will face in the field.

Dr. Kim notes, "Covenant Seminary has a long-standing tradition of church planting, with over 280 PCA church plants established by Covenant alumni. For such a time as this, when the need is becoming greater, Covenant is one of the very few institutions that has a proven track record and a developed educational track to raise up movement leaders for the next generation of the church."

OTHER RESOURCES FOR POTENTIAL CHURCH PLANTERS

Students who think they sense a calling to church planting, or who are simply interested in finding out more about the possibilities of church planting, have regular opportunities to interact with experienced church planters through panel discussions on campus or online. The Seminary also organizes annual weekend field trips to cities like Chicago, Indianapolis, Madison, and Nashville that provide the backdrop for extended times of conversation and learning with multiple successful church planters.

And Covenant works closely with the Presbyterian Church in America's Church Planter Assessment Center, run by Mission to North America (MNA) in Atlanta, to provide extensive assessment and evaluation opportunities both at the Center and through seminars on campus or at local churches. Covenant has held the Church Planter Readiness Seminar (CPRS) by MNA almost annually, led by MNA's Church Planter Development Director Jim Hatch, which also provides internship possibilities for CTS students. This summer, in fact, the Seminary will host the full assessment center on our St. Louis campus for the first time so that students interested in church planting can be evaluated without needing to travel to Atlanta.

HOW DO I FIND OUT MORE?

Visit www.covenantseminary.edu/plant or contact Dr. Kim at robert.kim@covenantseminary.edu to find out more about the Church Planting Track.

THE CHURCH PLANTING TRACK

5 Foundational Courses

- Church Planting Foundations – 1 credit
- Church Planting Field Trip (2 times) – 2 credits
- Resiliency in Church Planting – 1 credit
- Church Planting Elective – 1 credit

5 Distinctive Features

- **Cohort Groups** — Meet regularly on campus, online, or via existing networks for peer learning, support, and relationship building.
- **Externship/Residency Year** — Gain experience under seasoned ministry leaders in contexts that fulfill field ed/internship requirements.
- **Comprehensive Assessments and Evaluations** — Get insights from skilled evaluators who help determine giftedness, calling, and readiness for church planting at multiple points in the program.
- **Fundraising Training** — Learn from experienced practitioners the ins and outs of this challenging and often neglected aspect of ministry training.
- **Personalized Learning** — Use opportunities for independent study and research to meet unique ministry goals.

2 Learning Pathways

- **On-Campus Option** — Study in St. Louis through in-person classes.
- **Hybrid (Online/On-Campus) Option** — Take some classes online and some on campus if you cannot relocate long term.

Special scholarships available to help pastors plant churches without the burden of debt.

* Stats provided by Mission to North America (MNA), the church planting agency of the Presbyterian Church in America.

** See Malphurs Group at <https://malphursgroup.com/state-of-the-american-church-plateaued-declining/> and Christian Post at <https://www.christianpost.com/news/dispelling-the-80-percent-myth-of-declining-churches.html>

OPEN HEARTS, OPEN HOME: BRINGING GOSPEL GRACE TO MILITARY FAMILIES

MATT & MEREDITH SNELL: STUDENT PROFILE

BY RICK MATT



THE SNELL FAMILY (Photo by Katrina Dalbey)

During the uncertainties and challenges of Matt Snell's military career, he and his family found gospel rootedness and grace to grow through a Christian hospitality ministry. The Snells' calling now is to bless other military families in the same way they were blessed—through open hearts and an open home.

Military families face unique challenges. How do you stay connected to your family and to the body of Christ as your life circumstances keep changing?

This was the question that faced Matt and Meredith Snell during Matt's 22-year career in the U.S. Army. The answer God provided surprised them and set them on the path toward ministry in a way they never would have expected.

Matt and Meredith were both blessed to grow up in Christian homes with parents who gave them a good model for what a strong, committed marriage should look like. They met and started dating when both went to Wheaton College, Matt coming from Pennsylvania and Meredith from Indiana. While there, their mutual love for the Lord led them to attend Urbana, the international student missions conference that meets to inform, equip, and inspire young people's interest in Christian missions. In this case, it definitely succeeded.

"We were very excited about the idea of doing mission work, especially if it involved traveling to some place where many people weren't willing to go," Matt notes. "There was just one catch: I was in the ROTC program at Wheaton and had a four-year commitment to the Army upon graduation. Any idea of mission work was put on hold while we finished school and I prepared for military training. The thought was that we'd do those four years and I'd be out, then we could pursue the mission thing."

So the Snells loaded up all their belongings at Wheaton and drove to Fort Benning, Georgia, where Matt attended the Infantry Officer Basic course. Meredith was part of the process too as the Army offered a program for spouses to help them be more involved in their husbands' training. Other military wives served as mentors. Early on the couple connected with a group called Officer Christian Fellowship and got deeply involved in their home-based Bible studies. They were excited about being Christian and being in the military, and, as Matt says, "We were all young and optimistic and gung-ho."

STUDENT PROFILE

After finishing Officer Basic, Airborne School, and Ranger School, Matt was ready for his first assignment—at Fort Drum in “very upstate New York,” about 30 miles south of the Canadian border. The weather was often cold and dark and bleak. Meredith remembers, “It seemed to be raining or snowing all the time. It felt lonely and isolated. We were really having trouble connecting all that we’d been hyped up to do. Matt felt like the only Christian in his unit, we were having trouble finding Christian community, and we were navigating the challenges of being newlyweds. We couldn’t find our feet.”

In the midst of the darkness and confusion, God provided a ray of hope.

One night, while the Snells were “navigating the challenges of being newlyweds,” Meredith realized that Matt just needed to get away from her for a while. She encouraged him to take a drive to get some breathing room. Matt got in the car and drove. There wasn’t even a coffee shop in the little town where they lived, so he just drove the same route he drove every day to work. He came upon a sign he hadn’t seen before that said: North Country Hospitality House. Totally uncharacteristically, he pulled into the driveway, knocked at the front door, and asked of the man who answered, “What is this place?” Thus began the adventure that would eventually lead the Snells all the way to St. Louis and Covenant Seminary.

The man at the door was named Lou Harrison and he worked for an independent mission organization called Cadence International, which specializes in providing Christian fellowship and hospitality to military personnel. He invited Matt in, made him a good cup of coffee—thus sealing their friendship—and they spent several hours talking about the home-based ministry of Cadence. Meredith remarks: “Matt came home a different

man. I knew something had happened and it really changed our time in the military.”

“That ministry became the center of our life at Fort Drum,” Matt says. “We had Christian friends there, and we had the opportunity to really get to know the missionaries who ran the house. They invested in our lives and in our marriage. They called us into service to help them minister to other service members. I was able to start leading Bible studies with them. We started working to get guys out of the military barracks and away from the drinking scene. I’d take them out on the Great Lakes and go fishing, canoeing, trips to Canada, whatever we could do to help build Christian community, to build a different culture. We really fell in love with this kind of ministry.”

It was hard balancing both the military and the ministry aspects of their lives. Matt notes, “The military life is not conducive to Christ. I kind of wanted to get out, but I also really loved doing ministry and wanted to pursue that in some way. I actually enrolled in some distance education courses through Gordon-Conwell Seminary and started working on my ministry degree. But at the same time it seemed like the Lord was telling me, ‘No, you need to stay where you are.’ More and more, he impressed on us through circumstances that this was our mission field, that this was a place for us to learn to minister, but also to learn the discipline of living the military life.” Matt had been in the Army two and a half years at that point and was preparing to transition to Fort Benning, Georgia, for instructor training. Then 9/11 happened.

Matt says of that time, “I don’t think we really grasped the gravity of what was about to happen, but first at Drum and then at Benning, we really settled into the military as our mission field. Even though there wasn’t an official hospitality house at Benning, or at my later post at Fort Riley, Kansas,



ABOVE: MATT AND MEREDITH SNELL AFTER MATT RETURNED FROM DEPLOYMENT

RIGHT: THE SNELL FAMILY AWAITING MATT’S RETURN.



we implemented those principles of hospitality and service we had learned from Cadence to care for and serve the military community where we were.”

By this time the Snells had a rapidly growing family. Their first five children (Emma, Grace, Jacob, Anna, and Chloe) were born within five years of each other and the sixth (Caleb) would come along later, which meant that ministry couldn’t look exactly like it had at the beginning. But they were able to host people in their home, around their kitchen table, sharing their lives—and the gospel—with them at every opportunity. They simply looked around for people to meet, people who could use a friend or a hot meal. The Lord used and blessed what they were doing and confirmed for them that the military, at least for the time being, was their mission field and that they needed to keep doing what they were doing.

During this time Matt was deployed twice to Iraq, once for four months and once for a year. As a company commander he had many opportunities to care for the soldiers under him, while at home, Meredith served as a leader for the Army’s Family Readiness Group to help care for wives, girlfriends, parents, and families of soldiers. As the Snell

children grew, they participated in the ministry as well. “We really served together,” Meredith says. “We always felt like our family was a team and whatever we did, we did as a team. Our family really sought to serve other families as a family.” Through it all—for a total of 22 years, including a five-year move to Germany for the family and two one-year deployments to Afghanistan for Matt—the Snells were faithful to what they felt God was calling them to do. They still sensed a tug toward ministry, but they were sure that God was telling them to stay where they were.

In Germany, they again had the opportunity to connect with a hospitality house run by Cadence. It was a true godsend for Meredith when Matt was off in Afghanistan. She and the children, and Matt when he was home, again had the opportunity to be part of that Christian community, ministering together as a family with the family who ran the house, and that tug in their hearts grew stronger. Then, through a series of events only God could orchestrate, they found themselves moving to St. Louis.

Matt was at a point in his career where some decisions had to be made. He was eligible for

“We always felt like our family was a team and whatever we did, we did as a team. Our family really sought to serve other families as a family.”

— MEREDITH SNELL

some important and very competitive opportunities, including a battalion command, one of the most sought-after in the Army. He prayed fiercely about what to do. “My friend Brian at the Cadence house told me, ‘Don’t make your decision out of pride or fear, but out of faith.’ When I looked at it in that framework and asked whether I should stay or move to something else, I really began to sense the Lord releasing us to start transitioning out of the military. I needed to do one more assignment and knew I’d really like to end my career with the ROTC teaching college students how to be officers. That is a very competitive area and hard to get what you want.” Matt really wanted to go to Wheaton, where he had been in ROTC in his college days, but he was told another officer had already accepted that post. The Army offered him Washington University in St. Louis instead. He checked it out, thought it looked promising, and accepted. The next day Wheaton called to say the deal with the other officer had fallen

through and the job there was his if he wanted it. “Of course, I couldn’t take it because I had already accepted the other job. There was a lot of peace about it, though, because I could see that God had orchestrated things to get me in St. Louis for some reason. I didn’t know why then, but he wanted us here.”

So when Matt returned from his second deployment to Afghanistan, the family made an international move to Missouri and began looking for a home near Washington University. The housing market at the time forced them to look elsewhere. They ended up renting in the Chesterfield area of West St. Louis County and found a good, gospel-based church nearby, which brought them into contact with many people who have connections with Covenant Seminary. That resparked the interest in pursuing further seminary studies in preparation for potential ministry opportunities.

Meredith notes, “It just sort of kindled things. I think originally we felt like the Lord was releasing us now so we’d ride out the rest of the Army career and see what happened. But we also both felt that if we were going to do some sort of ministry after that we should do it well. Our heart was with Cadence so that was what we thought we’d like to do. For their purposes, through our undergrad work and Matt’s seminary courses, he would have been really close to fulfilling their requirements on the Bible and things like that. But we felt like we wanted to prepare well for this next season.”

Matt adds, “Walking through that last assignment and preparing to retire, we were thinking about what would be the thing to prepare us for ministry with the military. There were a couple of things we wanted and some we really needed. First, we always want to keep grounded in scriptural teaching. Second, everyone in Cadence told us to get as much counseling as you can. And third,

because the military is wrestling with decisions made recently about gender and women in combat and such, we wanted a good grounding in cultural apologetics. Seeing the Francis Schaeffer Institute at Covenant Seminary, I thought that was perfect. We could get all of those things here. That was exciting to us.”

Through connections at their church, the Snells got in contact with Covenant, visited the campus, and began the process of applying. The Seminary even helped find them housing closer to school—right on campus in fact, in the house formerly known as the RUF House in the northeast corner of campus. “They worked with us through the whole process and helped us get settled in well.” Readjusting to civilian life was both a challenge and an opportunity. But the Snells felt increasingly confirmed that they were in the right place and doing the right thing. This was brought home to them in a special way by the very first class they took together at Covenant: Counseling in the Church.

“That class became like a personal marriage and family class for us,” Matt says. Meredith agrees: “We didn’t realize we needed it. After a high-intensity army life for 22 years, we knew in theory that we needed time to transition well, but we didn’t realize how much time and how deep the rebuilding would go. We didn’t know we had so many emotions or so much in our own personal stories that we needed to deal with. It began to change how we related to each other, how we parented our children, how we dealt with our own coping mechanisms and sin patterns. Though hard in some ways, it’s been a really sweet time of growth, not just for the two of us but for our whole family. And again, we see how God has been using our time at Covenant to prepare us for ministry with Cadence, because these are all things folks in the military need to learn to deal with as well.”

Another class that has been helpful for the Snells is Growing in Cultural Intelligence. Meredith says, “It’s really timely and good stuff for us to think of about. The military is composed of people from many different cultures and we want to have a home that is welcoming to all of them. The Cadence motto is ‘Sharing the gospel and our lives with the military community,’ based on 1 Thessalonians 2:8. We want to be able to do those things well, to share the gospel in our lives, to connect well.”

One aspect of the Seminary the Snells are especially grateful for is the Spouse Teamwork Scholarship. “That program is amazing,” Matt says. “For Meredith to be able to take classes for free is truly wonderful and has been a huge blessing to us. Not every spouse in ministry gets that kind of opportunity.” Meredith laughs, “Yes, we like to say we’re getting a ‘two-for-none’ because I’m going free and Matt is here on the GI Bill. It’s really a blessing.”

During their time at Covenant, the Snells have been in conversation with the leadership of Cadence International and undergone the organization’s rigorous candidacy process. They were appointed as missionaries and entered the partnership development stage—putting together a prayer and financial support team. They were actively raising funds for their support when the COVID pandemic hit in early 2020. That work was put on hold for a while, but since has continued steadily over the last year as they graduate in May 2021, Matt with a Master of Arts in Ministry and Meredith with a Graduate Certificate.

After that, they’ll begin a new—yet in some ways, not so new—chapter of their lives as they go to bless other military families in the same way they have been blessed: offering gospel rootedness and grace to grow by opening their hearts and home to people in need of both.

RICK MATT (MATS '05) is Senior Writer and Editor for Covenant Theological Seminary.

PLANTING CHURCHES, BUILDING COMMUNITY —FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

CRAIG HARRIS: ALUMNI PROFILE

BY RICK MATT



THE HARRIS FAMILY (Photo by Jordan Rowland)

The need for Christ-centered, gospel-focused churches founded firmly on the Word of God has never been greater. Along with that comes the need for trained leaders to plant and guide those churches. Covenant Seminary graduate Craig Harris is one of a growing number of men who have answered God's call to the unique, and uniquely challenging, task of church planting—and he did it in the midst of a global pandemic.

From the window of his home in Yakima, Washington, Craig can see in the distance both Mt. Rainer and Mt. Adams. This view is one of the benefits of living and serving where he does—as a church planter in one of the least churched areas of the United States. Yakima County, in which Yakima sits, is in the heart of the state. Craig actually grew up not too far from here, about 35 miles southeast, in Sunnyside, where his ancestors had come as homesteaders in the late 1800s. Growing up in a Christian home there, Craig knew from the time he was in middle school that he wanted to be in ministry. “I preached my first sermon when I was in the seventh grade,” he says. “I have felt called to and pursued ministry within the church ever since then.”

After high school he took an internship with a church in Seattle, where he worked with college students and the youth group. Those two years of service confirmed for him his call to ministry, and he attended Columbia Bible College in British Columbia for formal training. Both during and after college, he served as an assistant pastor for a couple of different nondenominational churches in Washington and Canada over the course of ten years. He also got married and he and his wife, Jen, began a family. Raised with a Baptist church background, Craig's theological views began to shift during the latter part of his time as an assistant pastor. He found himself increasingly drawn to Reformed theology and to the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). He also grew more aware of his need for further training if he wanted to be effective in ministry. He began to think about going to seminary.



“I had heard a couple of guys preach around this time and I thought, ‘I want to preach like them!’ They had both been to Covenant Seminary, and as Covenant was the seminary of the PCA, I decided to look into it.” Craig and his wife, Jen, already had four very young children by this time, and knew moving the family across the country for seminary would be a major undertaking. As they explored the possibility of Covenant, their anxiety eased. “We were very impressed by Covenant's emphasis on family and family housing, and on building a strong sense of community among the students, faculty, and staff. That turned out to be not only a vital part of our time at Covenant but also an essential building block in the kind of ministry we hoped to do.” Thus, in 2015, the Harrises made the move to St. Louis.

As with many seminary families, the challenges of married life, parenting young children, and days full of study and work made life hectic and sometimes stressful. But they also found it refreshing and spiritually nurturing. “Covenant's whole-person approach impressed us,” Craig recalled. “The focus wasn't just on learning material about the Bible, but on how to use what you learn to love and serve others well. We were also impressed by the humility of the faculty, their emphasis on being servant-leaders with a pastoral focus. One thing that really stuck with me was Dr. Jay Sklar's potent reminder that ‘I am not the Christ.’ I learned that ministry is not so much the result of me or the planning or work I do—important as those can be—but rather the

“Communities flourish when lives are transformed by the beauty of the gospel. This is why I want to plant churches in my home state. It’s through the expansion of the church and the proclamation of the gospel that God brings about transformation. The gospel changes everything.”

— CRAIG HARRIS



result of God’s work in and through me. I learned to depend on God and not myself in all things. We felt very loved and cared for while in seminary, and well equipped for what we’re doing now.”

Another thing Craig liked was Covenant’s evangelistic approach to ministry, the idea of building bridges between people: “You have to be in real relationship with people before you can challenge them with the gospel in the areas where they need to be challenged. That’s especially important in church planting. People at Covenant spoke lovingly into our lives, helped us assess our gifts and calling, and affirmed my desire to plant churches. They and we were committed to the process, no matter what it might tell us. We wanted to get it right. It was a very good experience.”

Though Craig considered other ministry options during his time at Covenant, he always hoped at some point to return to his home state and plant churches. “I am passionate about reaching and ministering to the broken people around us who are often ignored. This is especially true of rural communities and Native American reservations where there are hurting people whom the church has often ignored. I wanted to serve those people by bringing the healing of the gospel to all who would hear. My heart was for pastoring an existing small church in such an area or for planting one in a place of desperate need.” Yakima ultimately was just such a place. The area is approximately 50% Hispanic, with the nearest Reformed church an hour and a half away, and the nearest PCA church at least two hours away.

When he graduated in 2018, Craig was able to return to Washington for a two-year church planting residency with a church in Bellingham, Washington. The church is part of the Northwest Church Planting Network, a network of PCA churches in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Alaska committed to planting more churches in that region. For part of that residency, Craig and Jen would

travel for four hours once a month from Bellingham to the Yakima area to establish relationships with people there, making neighborhood and community connections, and to lay the groundwork for eventually planting a church. Then, in the midst of all this planning and preparation, in spring of 2020 the coronavirus pandemic hit.

“We couldn’t meet as a church in person, so we decided to launch online on Palm Sunday of 2020. We had a recorded weekly service and established a weekly online Bible study. Not ideal, but surprisingly, we began to grow. People were getting to know each other. They were tithing. We began to develop a church life.” The Harris family moved to Yakima in June 2020. To build on the success of the plant thus far, they began to hold weekly communion services outdoors. People would participate in the online worship service, then drive to the Harris’ house for communion on the front lawn. The church, named Saint Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, continued to grow. Attendance averaged 30–35 people over the summer. In September, they shifted to doing the entire service outdoors on the lawn. Attendance grew from 35 to 50. Then, colder weather started to set in. One Sunday the high temperature was 30 degrees. The church needed a more permanent place to meet, and soon. The Lord, of course, had a plan.

At one point, Craig had looked into renting sanctuary space in one of Yakima’s oldest and most iconic church buildings, the historic First Baptist Church. A beautiful castle-style building originally built in 1909, the church had been vacant and for sale for five years. He hadn’t yet gotten an answer to his inquiry. Then, unexpectedly, Craig received a call at 3:30 on a Friday afternoon saying the owners had finally agreed to let Saint Andrew’s rent the space. The catch was that the paperwork had to be filled out right away—and the office closed at 4:30 that afternoon. Breathlessly, he managed to get there before the deadline and get the paperwork taken

care of. It was an answer to prayer, and a blessing for Saint Andrew’s. “We’ve been meeting in the building for a few months now and attendance has grown to 70 people. Church life is flourishing. We have five small groups that meet throughout the area and we’re continuing to disciple and shepherd people.” The experience of planting a church in the midst of a global pandemic has only strengthened Craig’s love for God and his dependence on his grace. He says he is never tempted to think that any of the new church’s success is his doing. Dr. Sklar’s admonition that “I am not the Christ” is still strong in his mind: “I know it’s not my doing. It’s all God’s doing. It’s a beautiful reminder of his grace. We’re just here to gather the fruit.”

What would Craig say to others thinking about planting a church, which is hard enough even without the additional challenges of a pandemic? He again recalls his time at Covenant as being formative for his thinking: “Trust the process. It can take a long time to verify and affirm that you are called by God to do this, but the process is long for a reason. You need to talk to people in your presbytery, talk to the experts who have done this. Listen to what they tell you and don’t try to force your own will on it. Let the process bear fruit in its own way, whether it’s what you expected or not. When you trust the process and trust in the Lord to guide you, you can have confidence in whatever answer you get. I wouldn’t want to be doing this without that assurance backing me up.”

The most important thing, though, whether one is planting churches in a previously unreached area or ministering in the suburbs or inner city, is the gospel itself: “Communities flourish when lives are transformed by the beauty of the gospel. This is why I wanted to plant churches in my home state. It’s through the expansion of the church and the proclamation of the gospel that God brings about transformation. The gospel changes everything.”

RICK MATT (MATS ’05) is Senior Writer and Editor for Covenant Theological Seminary.



ALUMNI
RESOURCES
for
CONTINUED
GROWTH

[trained + sustained]

1. Join leaders for a lecture series.

Each year Covenant Seminary hosts a number of leading speakers to talk about ministry. Just to name a few:

1. The Francis Schaeffer Institute Special Lecture Series – Fall
2. The Covenant Seminary Preaching Lectures – Fall
3. The Austin Harrington Counseling Lectures – Spring
4. Professional Counselor Training Series – Year-Round

2. Join fellow alumni for a meal.

We try to reconnect alumni with one another whenever we can. Check your monthly alumni email for news about regional dinners and alumni gatherings at larger conferences such as The Gospel Coalition and PCA General Assembly.

Not getting alumni emails? Send an email to alumni@covenantseminary.edu to get us your updated information.

3. Join experts for a course.

In our faculty's ten-year study of pastoral health, one of the key indicators towards flourishing in ministry was cultivating continual learning. Covenant Seminary offers DMin courses and cohorts year-round to equip you towards growth. These courses offer three benefits:

1. Expert Bible training beyond self-motivated study
2. Regularly connects you with other ministry leaders
3. Provides growth towards specific ministry problems you are facing

Check our website for current courses and cohorts.

www.covenantseminary.edu

Dear Alumni

As I have talked with many of you this past year, I find different stories of grace and trial amid ministry during a pandemic. Some church members clamor for greater freedom to worship without restrictions. Others say they wouldn't return to church until better restrictions were in place. It can be a hard time to be in ministry.

In the Psalms we find—not elusive solutions to all of life's problems—but a re-centering focus on this moment: food (23:5), the sleep of peace (4:8), rest (94:13), fulfillment (37:3–4), a perpetual dwelling place (90:1). Moses wrote Psalm 90, preparing a people for a leadership transition. Looking to the land he would not inhabit, he proclaimed, "You, Lord"—not the trouble left behind or the land yet to come, not his own legacy or that of the nation ahead—"You, Lord, have been our dwelling place in all generations."

We serve a God of all generations. That doesn't mean we get to neglect the present, but rather we come to it armed with the knowledge that the Lord has built his Church through plagues and persecution before. He is still doing it today.

Psalm 90 tells that something of the Lord's provision during hardship is found in the corporate communal experience. As you go about your ministry, please don't suffer in silence. Reach out to friends and co-laborers. Tell others of the work the Lord has done in your midst.

I would love to hear from you as well. If there is anything I can do for you: talk through a transition, post an opening, or recommend a future graduate, you can always reach me at alumni@covenantseminary.edu.



Joel Hathaway

Director of Alumni and Career Services
Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program



ALUMNI ORDINATIONS, INSTALLATIONS *and* TRANSITIONS

- **Jason Abbott (DMin '14)** from Pastor of Community Evangelical Free Church of Harrisburg, PA, to Pastor of First Evangelical Free Church of Chicago, IL. Jason is married to Natalie.
- **Ryan Anderson (MDiv '07)** from RUF at Texas Christian University, Ft. Worth, TX, to Assistant Pastor, Covenant Presbyterian Church, Nashville, TN. Ryan is married to **Laura Anderson (MAC '11)**.
- **Craig Barnard (MA '96)** from Pastor of Spout Springs Presbyterian Church, Ripley, MS, to Pastor of Houston Presbyterian Church, Houston, MS. Craig is married to Mary.
- **Dawson Bean (MDiv '10)** from RUF at the University of Tennessee at Martin, to cross-cultural ministry in London, UK, with Mission Training International. Dawson is married to Shanna.
- **Graham Behnke (MDiv '03)** to Director of Redemption Kids, Redemption Community

Church, Kirkwood, MO. Graham is married to Barry.

- **Loren Bell (MDiv '12)** from Associate Pastor to Senior Pastor at New Creation Presbyterian Church, Wentzville, MO. Loren is married to Tracy.
- **Chris Bennett (MDiv '16)** from Youth Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Macon, GA, to Assistant Pastor, Providence Presbyterian Church, Dallas, TX. His wife, **Amy Bennett (MAC '16)**, works remotely with an adoption agency in Georgia.
- **Brian Bish (MDiv '10)** from Pastor of St. Paul's Evangelical Free Church, Creve Coeur, MO, to Senior Pastor of Hope Fellowship Church (Evangelical Free Church), Lake Jackson, TX. Brian is married to Natalie.
- **Cody Brobst (MDiv/MAC '17)** from Assistant Pastor, Living Branch Church, Noblesville, IN, to military chaplaincy, US Navy. Cody is married to Courtney.
- **Laurie Bryson (MAC '04)** to private therapy practice, Washington, MO. Laurie is married to Caleb.
- **Timothy R. Butler (MDiv '10)** from Associate Pastor, Grace Presbyterian Church (PCA) Cottleville, MO, to church planting at Little Hills Church, St. Charles, MO.
- **Jeff Carr (MDiv '14)** to Preaching and Teaching Pastor of Flourish Church Rainer Valley, Seattle, WA. Jeff is married to Jonica.
- **Michael Coggin (MAC '00, MDiv '02)** from Associate Pastor and Director of Karis Counseling Services, Grace Blue Ridge Presbyterian Church, Hendersonville, NC, to Director of Care, Redeemer Community Church, Birmingham, AL. His wife, **Sherry Coggin (MAC '00)**, continues counseling.
- **Grant Clay (ThM '12)** from Pastor in Clay Center, KS, to Executive Director of Equipping Leaders for a Lifetime of Service, Salem, OR. Grant is married to Suzanne.
- **Shawn Dean (MDiv '17)** from Youth Director, Church of the Saviour, Philadelphia, PA, to Student Pastor, Pinewoods Church (PCA), Pensacola, FL. Shawn is married to LeeAnn.

- **Josh Desch (MDiv '11)** from Assistant Pastor to Senior Pastor of Northeast Presbyterian Church (PCA), Columbia, SC. Josh is married to Betsy.
- **Sean Duncan (MDiv '15)** to Assistant Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Shreveport, LA. Sean is married to Amber.
- **Chrishon Ducker (MDiv '00)** from Pastor of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Kirk (EPC), Nassau, Bahamas, to Assistant Pastor, Hope Evangelical (EPC), Fredericksburg, VA. Chrishon is married to **Danielle (MATS '00)**.
- **Frank Ellis (MDiv '10)** from Pastor of Ozark Presbyterian Church, Ozark, AL, to Pastor of New Life Church, Vicenza, Italy. Frank is married to Joan.
- **David Ely (MDiv '12)** from RUF at Furman University to Bible Teacher and Football Coach, Briarwood Christian School, Birmingham, AL. David is married to Mary Beth.
- **Justin Garrett (MDiv '09)** from Pastor of Student Ministries at The Crossing (EPC), Columbia, MO, to church planting at Athens Church, Kansas City, MO.
- **Susan George (MDiv '06)** from practicing law in New York to Director of the Centre for Training Excellence, South Asia.
- **Josiah Green (MDiv '16)** from Pastor of Worship and Arts, Chesterfield Presbyterian Church (PCA), Chesterfield, MO, to Senior Pastor, Crossroads Presbyterian Fellowship (PCA), Maplewood, MO. His wife, **Jamie-Lee Green (MAC '15)**, continues her work as a therapist at St. Louis Counseling Center.
- **Bobby Griffith (MDiv '07)** from helping church plant in Oklahoma City, OK, to Senior Pastor, Westfield Presbyterian Church (ECO), New Castle, PA. Chuck Garriott (MDiv '79) gave the charge. Bobby is married to Jennifer.
- **Tom Hart (MDiv '14)** from RUF at East Carolina University to RUF Campus Minister at Furman University, Greenville, SC. Tom is married to Chanè.
- **Rob Herron (MDiv '14)** from Associate Pastor

- of Redeemer Presbyterian Church, Athens, GA, to RUF Campus Minister at Appalachian State University, Boone, NC. Rob is married to Mary Lee.
- **Joshua Jarvis (MDiv '17)** was ordained and installed as Associate Pastor of Faith Presbyterian Church (PCA), LaVale, MD. Joshua is married to **Samantha Jarvis (MAC '18)**.
- **Charles Johnson (MDiv'13)** from Assistant Pastor at Christ Community Church in Nashville, TN, to Senior Pastor, Red Mountain Church (PCA), Birmingham, AL.
- **Scott Lawry (MDiv '00)** from pastor and chaplain ministry in the EPC to Turn Around Marriage, Cleveland, TN. Scott is married to Rachel.
- **Andy Lee (ThM '97)** to Associate Pastor of First Presbyterian Church (PCA), Augusta, GA. Andy is married to Alli.
- **Jason Leist (MDiv '14)** transitioned from Associate Pastor to Senior Pastor of Murrysville Community Church (PCA) in Pittsburgh, PA.
- **Jon Medlock (MDiv '05)** from Senior Pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church, San Luis Obispo, CA, to Director of Ministerial Relief, Retirement Benefits and Insurance (RBI) of the PCA, Atlanta, GA. Jon is married to Laurabeth.
- **H. Curtis McDaniel Jr. (MDiv '84)** from various ministry positions to Professor of Homiletics, Columbia Bible Seminary, Columbia, SC.
- **Jason (MDiv '07) and Tiffany Moore (MAC '04)** from Senior Pastor and wife at New Creation Presbyterian Church, Wentzville, MO, to Certified Peer Specialists, Renewed Hope Counseling.
- **James Nichols (MDiv '11)** from Assistant Pastor in Muncie, IN, to Senior Pastor of GracePoint Church (PCA), Cumming, GA. James is married to Melissa.
- **Dane Ortlund (MDiv '05, ThM '07)** from Crossway Publishing to Senior Pastor, Naperville Presbyterian Church (PCA), Naperville, IL. Dane is married to Stacey.
- **Paul Ranheim (MDiv '11)** from Assistant Pastor at West End Community Church in Nashville, TN, to Pastoral Staff, Redeemer Longmont in Longmont, CO.

- **Philip Ryan (MAET '14)** ordained as Pastor of Marion Presbyterian Church (PCA), Marion, AL, November 15, 2020. Chris Amen (MDiv '10) preached and Richard Vise (MDiv '01) presented the questions for ordination. Philip is married to **Amanda Ryan (MAC '14)**.
- **Jeffrey Rickett (MDiv '97)** to Senior Pastor, Neelsville Presbyterian Church (ECO), Germantown, MD. Jeff is married to Valerie
- **Jeff Roth (MDiv '10)** from Associate Pastor of Emmanuel Evangelical Free Church, Hermann, MO, to Senior Pastor, Eagle Valley Evangelical Free Church), Colfax, ND. Jeff is married to Allison.
- **Israel Ruiz (MDiv '13)** from Assistant Pastor of Emmanuel Presbyterian Church, Arlington, VA, to Assistant Pastor, City Church, Wilmington, DE, serving with Jason Sica (MDiv '05) and Mike Tolliver (MDiv '10, ThM '13). Israel is married to Marietta.
- **Brian Shelton (MDiv '97)** from Provost and Professor, Toccoa Falls College, GA, to Professor of Theology and Chair of the Christian Studies and Philosophy Department, Asbury University, Wilmore, KY. Brian is married to Sally.
- **Jeff Simpson (MDiv '17)** from Cru Campus Minister, University of Maryland, to Cru Campus Director, University of Virginia.
- **Shaun Spencer (MDiv '07)** from Pastor, Lake Trails Presbyterian Church (PCA), Madison, WI, to Pastor, Living Waters Evangelical Church (ECO), Wendell, ID. Shaun is married to Danielle.
- **Rick Whitlock (MDiv '11, MAC '12)** from Coalition for Christian Outreach (CCO) Campus Minister, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, to Assistant Pastor, Midtown Church (PCA), Indianapolis, IN.
- **Luke Wolfe (MDiv '15)** from Assistant Pastor, Trinity Presbyterian Church (PCA), Lakeland, FL to Pastor, Colfax Center Presbyterian Church (PCA), Holland, IA. Luke is married to Aimee.
- **Andy Wood (MDiv '11)** to Staff Chaplain, St. Anthony North Health, Westminster, CO. Andy is married to Barb.
- **Rob Wootton (MDiv '08)** from ministry in

Hopewell, VA, to Pastor of Rocky Mountain Community Church (PCA), Billings, MT. Rob is married to Robin.

- **David Robert Wright (MDiv '14)** to Men's Director at the Courtyard, a co-ed house and ministry for Christian students, at Oregon State University.
- **Lee Wright (MDiv/MAC '12)** from RUF Campus Minister, University of Central Florida, Orlando, to RUF Campus Minister, University of Texas, San Antonio. Lee is married to **Sarah Wright (MDiv/MAC'12)**

ALUMNI FAMILY UPDATES

- **Hope and Eric Burch (MDiv '11)** of Anderson, SC, welcomed Elias Judah on May 9, 2020. Elias joins siblings Chloe Bekah (9) and Noah (7).
- **Timothy Chapman (MDiv '15)** of Grand Island, NE, married Whitney Wedel on September 13, 2019
- **Kyle Dillon (MDiv '13)** married Leah Gross on July 18, 2020, in Memphis, TN. Groomsman included Bo Collins (MDiv '12) and K. J. Drake (MDiv '12).
- **David (MDiv '13) and Gloria Doty (GC '13)** of Stow, OH, welcomed Abigail Jane on May 8, 2020. She joins sister Elianna and brothers Timothy and William.
- **Hannah and Weston Duke (MDiv '19)** of Murfreesboro, TN, welcomed Emma Margaret on October 30, 2020.
- **Allison and David Ehmke (MDiv '18)** of Appleton, WI, welcomed Lucy Kathleen on July 23, 2020.

- **Chris and Amy Petery Grethey (MDiv '12)** of Washington, IL, welcomed Ashley Carla on January 26, 2020. Big sister AvaMarie welcomed her home.
- **Adam and Kelly Maxwell Haer (MAC '08)** of West Los Angeles, CA, welcomed Nathaniel Henry Haer on August 2, 2019.
- **Matthew Haslam (MATS '03) and Sherry Bartow Haslam (MAC '01)** of Wichita, KS, announced the adoption of Amara Hope on April 29, 2019. Amara joins siblings Clara, Ephraim, Anthony, and Dylan.
- **Katie and Ben Hoemann (MDiv '18)** of El Paso, TX, welcomed Abigail Rebekah on November 21, 2020.
- **Caroline and Tony Howard (MDiv '12)** of St. Louis, MO, welcomed Branch Andrew Howard on October 17, 2019. Branch joins older brother Carter (6) and sister Harper (2).
- **Milan (MDiv '18) and Samantha Johnson (MAC '18)** of St. Peters, MO, welcomed Beaumont Hayes on October 15, 2020.
- **Sarah and Jason Leist (MDiv '14)** of Pittsburgh, PA, welcomed Graham Samuel on August 13, 2018.
- **Tanya n e Mark (MAC '10) and Chris Lemmon (MDiv '16)** of Little Rock, IA, welcomed Abigail Aletheia Opal on September 9, 2019. Abigail joins brothers Christopher, John, and Joshua.
- **Laura and Nathan Markley (MDiv '14)** of Hannibal, MO, welcomed Arcadia Grace Markley on April 30, 2019. She joins sister Eliza.
- **Bryan (MARC '11) and Rebe McReynolds (MAEM '12)** of McKinney, TX, welcomed Ivy Gray on June 17, 2020.
- **Scott (MDiv '16) and Helen Morris (MAWM '16)** of Norman, OK, welcomed Marian Elizabeth on October 26, 2020.
- **Jenna and Brady Nelson (MDiv '09)** of Chesterfield, MO, welcomed Abigail Elizabeth on July 16, 2020.
- **Paul (MDiv '13) and Elizabeth Reynolds (MAC**

- '16)** of St. Louis, MO, welcomed Olive Mae on September 1, 2020.
- **Zach Schwartzbeck (MDiv '17)** married G zde Tokg n l on November 16, 2019, in Istanbul, Turkey.
- **Annalisa (current student) and Cary Smith (ThM '19)** of St. Louis, MO, welcomed Charissa Rose on October 25, 2019.
- **Nathan Snyder (MDiv '11)** of Berlin, NH, married Genie Page on January 26, 2019.
- **John (MDiv '15) and Alex van Rij (MATS '13)** of Invercargill, New Zealand, welcomed Benjamin George on September 8, 2020.
- **Ben and Shauna Weaver (MAC '20)** of St. Louis, MO, welcomed Mabel Sage on September 23, 2020.
- **Rebekah n e Baxter (MAC '09) and Chris Weinrich (MDiv '08)** welcomed William Christopher Weinrich on September 8, 2019. Chris and Rebekah serve as US Army chaplains in Fort Bragg, NC.
- **Callie and Wilson West (MDiv '18)** of New Orleans, LA, welcomed Henry James "Harry" on September 20, 2019.
- **Joel Wilkes (MDiv '15)** of Anderson, SC, married Rebecca Roth on June 19, 2020.
- **James (MDiv '14) and Sarah Ahn Yeo (MA/MAC '19)** of St. Louis, MO, welcomed Emma Suna on September 23, 2019.

ALUMNI CELEBRATIONS

- **Johan Baik (MDiv '98, ThM '00)** was promoted to Commander, United States Navy Reserves.
- **Cal Boroughs (MDiv '78)** retired August 31, 2020, after 42 years of ministry in the RPCES and the PCA. Cal attended both Covenant College

- and Covenant Seminary and served St. Elmo Presbyterian Church in Chattanooga as pastor for 30 years. Cal and his wife, Susan (married for 45 years), have 2 daughters and several grandchildren.
- **Billy Boyce (MDiv '11)** received his Doctor of Ministry degree from Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, PA. His dissertation is entitled "Outsiders on the Inside: Racial Fatigue and Resilience Among Black Pastors in the PCA." Billy is married to **Melynda (MDiv '11)**.
- **Jack Carmody (MDiv '10)**, Chaplain, SC, recently completed his MA in Counseling at Liberty University. He transitioned from the Navy Reserves to the North Carolina Air National Guard. Jack is married to **Carrie (MATS '10)**.
- **Clarence Hines (MATS '12)** was awarded Emerson's Excellence in Education Award for his dedication to classroom excellence, and the Special School District's 2019 Teacher of the Year award. Clarence and his wife, Julia, live in Florissant, MO.
- **Brian Main (MDiv '05)** received his PhD in biblical studies from the Catholic University of America, writing on the significance of Jesus's resurrection in light of the literary context developed by Matthew's prologue (1:1-4:11). Brian, Beth, and their family live in Lynchburg, VA.
- **Chaplain (LTC) John Rhodes (MABS '80, MDiv '86)** was named Squadron Chaplain of the Year, Mississippi Wing United States Air Force (Aux) Civil Air Patrol, 2019.
- **Billy Spink (MDiv '78)** honorably retired after 40 years at Riveroaks Reformed Presbyterian Church (PCA), Germantown, TN. Billy is married to Marcia (MAC '78).
- **Russell St. John (MDiv '99)** received his PhD in homiletics from the London School of Theology, Middlesex University, writing on "Empty Admiration: Robert Lewis Dabney's Expository Homiletic." Russ, Amy, and their children live in St. Louis, MO, where Russ pastors Twin Oaks Presbyterian Church (PCA).

ALUMNI CONDOLENCES

- **Matthew Bennett (MDiv '12)** was promoted to glory on October 20, 2019.
- **Esther Alexander Clements (MRE '74)** was promoted to glory on December 12, 2020. She is survived by her husband, Don Keith Clements (MDiv '74).
- **Charles "Chuck" Fell (GC '85)** was promoted to glory on June 5, 2020. He is survived by his wife, Jeanne, and their children.
- **LaRoy "Mickey" Roper (MAC '95)** was promoted to glory on August 24, 2020. He is survived by his wife Susan (MAC '95) and their children.
- **Walter Kent Seldal (MDiv '82)** was promoted to glory on September 25, 2020. He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Mary Beth, their son, and grandchildren.
- **Jesse Thomas (MA '80)** was promoted to glory on July 3, 2020. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Betty McCoy Thomas, and their three children.
- **Eric Tonjes (MDiv '12)**, of Stillman Valley, IL, on the loss of his wife, Elizabeth, October 31, 2020.
- **Craig Ralph Vick (MDiv '81)** was promoted to glory on September 26, 2020. Craig is survived by his wife, Kelly; his brother, Barton Vick; and his children, Nate Vick and Michelle Birch.
- **Robert "Bob" Wermuth (MA '85)** was promoted to glory on July 3, 2020. He is survived by his second wife, Gloria.





“The stresses of ministry today are such that those of us who lead often find ourselves called to impossible tasks. Yet, we’re expected to succeed at those tasks.... It’s crucial that we get down low enough every day and face the Chief Shepherd of the Church to receive afresh from him the grace that he pours out upon us as leaders.”

– DR. MARK DALBEY



COVENANT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
12330 CONWAY ROAD • ST. LOUIS, MO • 63141

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ST. LOUIS, MO
PERMIT NO. 1485

THE PURPOSE OF
COVENANT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

is to

GLORIFY THE TRIUNE GOD

by

TRAINING HIS SERVANTS

to

WALK IN GOD'S GRACE,

MINISTER GOD'S WORD,

and

EQUIP GOD'S PEOPLE

—ALL FOR GOD'S MISSION.