



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Jason K. Allen, Ph.D.

The President's Summary Statement

Evangelism. Faithfulness. Stewardship. The Great Commission. Glorifying Jesus' Name. Praise and Thankfulness to God. Integrity. Character. These are all words, phrases, and actions that Southern Baptists should expect to resonate from their seminaries and, thus, from the students who train there. And, more than ever pastors, missionaries and ministry leaders alike need their theological training to focus on biblical ideals like the ones listed above, so they can prepare to meet the demands of 21st century ministry. In an effort to best serve Southern Baptists and the local church, Midwestern Seminary strives to instill such ideals, not only in the classroom but by modeling it through personal mentorship and discipleship opportunities between our faculty and students. Students can then, in turn, replicate the process when serving in their ministry environments.

Over the past six years, Midwestern Seminary has not strayed from its vision—For the Church, nor will we. This philosophy entails the equipping of pastors, ministers, and missionaries for service in North American and international churches. This vision touches on every aspect of seminary life: the curriculum we teach; the programs we offer; the events we host; the personnel we hire; and the community and culture we cultivate. It brings great institutional joy to see this vision being adopted locally, regionally, and across the Southern Baptist Convention.

Ultimately, we desire that Southern Baptist churches will trust Midwestern Seminary with the training of those called by God to ministry. In turn, once they graduate, these students will be solidly-trained preachers of God's Word. In a culture where all things biblical and sacred are being cast aside at an alarming rate, a seminary's top priority must be to strengthen the preaching and teaching capabilities of its students.

This very reason is why our top priority in academic training is to emphasize the residential Master of Divinity program. There is simply no better degree for preparing a student for ministry and teaching God's Word than the M.Div. This is the gold-standard for ministry preparation and, frankly, our churches must expect pastors to be best prepared for their primary responsibility – proclaiming and teaching the Word of God. We, at Midwestern Seminary, are grateful to our denomination and local churches for their continued confidence in this institution—entrusting us to further the theological education and training of the students they send to Kansas City.

This past year has been incredible in the life of our institution and for me personally. Looking back on 2018, the word that comes to mind over and over is thankfulness. It is abundantly clear to see the hand of God upon this place. From the dedication of the Mathena Student Center and remodeling of our Trustee Building to our continued, unprecedented enrollment growth, it has been amazing to witness God's kind, unmerited providence. For this, the only expression can be thankfulness, praise, and giving glory to God.

We are thrilled with the amazing things we witness on a regular basis at Midwestern Seminary, and God is granting us wisdom and grace in evaluating, strengthening, and improving every aspect of the organization. Please pray for his continued guidance toward these ends.

Among the many exciting happenings this past year, three in particular stand out: the dedication of the Mathena Student Center, completion of a remodel of our Trustee Building, and reinventing of our college.

First, on Oct. 16, Trustees, faculty, staff, students, and friends from across the SBC joined in a grand celebration as we dedicated the 39,000-square foot student center which sits in the heart of Midwestern Seminary's campus. This dedication was the culmination of more than two years of planning, meetings, and construction; but even more than that, it was the realization of a dream that has existed since the seminary's inception. Mr. Harold Mathena, who so generously provided a \$7 million lead gift to get the project underway in earnest, preached an encouraging message in chapel that morning, and then he and his family, amongst the seminary community, cut the ribbon to officially open the facility. Only minutes later did the first pick-up basketball game begin. Since that time, I am continually amazed at how the student center is transforming our seminary community. Upon the frequent visits I make to the building, it is alive with activity—from students using the gym and workout room to quietly studying or sharing a meal together, this facility has become a hub for fellowship and community. Again, thanks and glory be to God for his faithfulness and providence.

Second, as the summer turned to fall, Midwestern Seminary's Trustee Classroom Building's remodel wrapped up, and our faculty, staff, and students began to enjoy this significant upgrade. Faculty offices are now situated in one central location in the heart of campus, and all student services offices are now consolidated into one convenient location for student access. Included in this area are the financial services office, admissions, information technology, registrar's office, housing office, and church partnership office. We are grateful to God for this improvement of existing campus facilities and opportunity to make our campus more efficient and effective for students.

Third, in April, our trustees elected to rename Midwestern College as Spurgeon College. The mission of Spurgeon College will be to educate the next generation of leaders to impact the world in the workforce. Through our college, we will maintain a Bible-based, ministry-focused curriculum, but also alongside of that will be degree options for those who are not only called to serve the local church, but to also be prepared to make 1,000 different touch-points of light for the cause of Christ stateside and around the world. Just like Midwestern Seminary is known emphatically as being *for the Church*, Spurgeon College will be known emphatically as, *for the Kingdom*. It speaks to the breadth of the ministry, and it also speaks to our hopefulness that from this place, indeed, the Kingdom will be shaped and expanded.

Midwestern Seminary is divided into three divisions: an academic division, an administrative division, and an institutional relations division. On the academic front, we are pleased to announce the largest fall enrollment in the seminary's history. In fact, over the past six years, the Lord has seen fit to more than triple the enrollment here. In 2010-11 total student enrollment stood at 1,107. As of fall 2018 that number surpassed 3,500. We continue to praise God for the great work he is doing at Midwestern Seminary, and we do not take for granted one of these students that God has provided for us to steward and that the local churches have sent for us to train in becoming the next generation of pastors, missionaries, and ministry leaders for the church.

Additionally, we added two scholars to our faculty. In April, our trustees elected Andreas Köstenberger as research professor of New Testament and Biblical Theology. Dr. Köstenberger is among the most accomplished New Testament scholars in the greater evangelical world today. In addition to bolstering our already-robust biblical studies department through his research, teaching and writing expertise, Dr. Köstenberger will provide mentorship to our younger faculty members as well. Then, in October, our Trustees elected Dr. Dale Johnson to the faculty. Dr. Johnson will serve as associate professor of biblical counseling. As we evaluated the direction of our counseling program, we could think of no one more qualified than Dr. Johnson. He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in the field, and we know he will develop the skills of our counseling students in a way that glorifies God and best serves the local church. We look forward to his leadership in the years ahead.

Our doctoral program continues to expand at a robust rate with its modular format appealing to students from across the nation, and this academic year saw the second class of our residential aspect of the Ph.D. program, called "The Residency." Under the leadership of Dr. Owen Strachan, we have seen this program prosper and grow significantly in the past year. The Accelerate program, which enables students to earn

bachelor's and M.Div. degrees in five years continues to flourish as well. The Kern Foundation, which has provided significant grants toward this program, named Accelerate as one of their most successful programs.

Our M.Div. program, particularly at the residential level, continues to expand, and Midwestern Seminary and Spurgeon College's online presence also continues to increase at a rapid pace, enabling students across the globe access to a state-of-the-art educational platform and the highest quality theological education. In addition, through our Online Connect program, all our online courses provide students with personalized access to mentors in the field and also meets their individual ministry education and training needs.

Within our Institutional Administration division, the Lord has allowed us a continued strengthening of our financial health. Stewarding and maximizing the resources provided to us via the generosity of Southern Baptists through the Cooperative Program is of utmost importance. The CP truly separates Southern Baptists from other denominations and is vital to our success in training students for gospel ministry. We pray that Southern Baptists will continue to faithfully channel these funds to their seminaries, and that God will continue to bless the efforts of his people through an ever-growing Cooperative Program. May the people of the Southern Baptist Convention understand Midwestern Seminary's deepest gratitude for all they have done, and continue to do, to support the Lord's work here *For the Church*.

Our third division, Institutional Relations, efforts in the fields of recruiting, admissions, marketing, retention and advancement have continued to be blessed by the Lord and have been extremely fruitful. Our very best energies are spent expanding the mission and ministry footprint of the school through this department. Such efforts have resulted in the record enrollment and seminary growth over the past six years. The ultimate focus of this division is that more pastors, evangelists, missionaries, and ministers will be thrust into Kingdom service both in the present and well into the future.

Lastly, but certainly not least, is the incredible financial blessing the Lord has provided through the work of our Advancement team. This past fall, Midwestern Seminary received substantial gifts from an ever-growing support base. These kind seminary friends have also substantially supported the school's Legacy Fund, which directly impacts every student by keeping tuition and fee costs low and allowing them to be deployed into ministry without crippling debt.

As this has been a year of thanksgiving, we gratefully acknowledge that God has blessed Midwestern Seminary beyond measure. We are resolute to never changing our prime focus of existing *For the Church*. As an institution, we will seek to intentionally carry out the Great Commission, to bring praise and glory to God, to evangelize, and to appropriately steward our gains. We will strive to project forward and outward in our mission and ministry, and we will continually assess how our commitment to exist *For the Church* will direct us into the future. May we never cease to be thankful to God for the victories he has given us these past six years, and may we never cease to serve Him in such a way that He is pleased to give us such victories going forward.

Sincerely,



Jason K. Allen, Ph.D.

President

Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary