



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Jason K. Allen, Ph.D.

The President's Summary Statement

When submitting the yearly President's report, it always calls for a time to stop, reflect, and remember all that the Lord has done the previous year at Midwestern Seminary. It does not take long to recall God's incredible kindness in leading me to serve this great institution. I am constantly amazed to see what God is doing at MBTS, especially when I reflect upon our institution's history. I have learned much over the past 7 years, but one thing I know to be emphatically true today is that God alone is worthy of the glory and honor.

One constant from the past seven years is that Midwestern Seminary has not strayed from its vision—For the Church. This is, and continues to be, why we exist. We are striving with all our God-given might to equip pastors, ministers, and missionaries for service in North American and international churches. This vision impacts everything we do, from the curriculum we teach to the culture we seek to cultivate, and it has been incredibly encouraging to see this vision take hold and spread throughout the Southern Baptist Convention.

This past year has been particularly incredible in the life of our institution and for me personally. For the sake of clarity, I want to detail some of the significant happenings under the headings of how our institution is structured. Midwestern Seminary is comprised of three divisions: an academic division, an administrative division, and an institutional relations division.

Within academics, first, we praise God for another increase in student enrollment. Since 2010, the number of students has more than quadrupled—having over 4,000 students enrolled this fall—which is the largest number in the seminary's history. All glory be to Him for the growth at Midwestern Seminary over the past seven years. Pray that we will continue to steward these students well as we train them for service to our SBC churches, and ultimately, the kingdom of God.

Second, this year we welcomed three new faculty members to further equip us in providing the most effective training to our students. Dr. Jason DeRouchie of Bethlehem College and Seminary in Minneapolis was elected to Midwestern's faculty as research professor of Old Testament and Biblical Theology. In addition, Dr. Andrew King was elected the assistant dean of Spurgeon College and assistant professor of Biblical Studies. Finally, Dr. Thomas Kidd was hired as distinguished visiting professor of Church History.

Third, 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. This enables students from 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.

Fourth, in January we announced the addition of Fusion: North America to our current Fusion: International missions program at Spurgeon College. After a year of intentional preparation in evangelism and discipleship, students will spend their summer months serving in ministry alongside an IMB missionary or NAMB church planter. We are eager to see how expanding this program will positively impact our students, our partnership with IMB and NAMB, and our institution.

Fifth, in February, we announced the addition of two new Ph.D. emphases: biblical theology and biblical counseling. Student interest in the fields of biblical theology and biblical counseling has increasingly grown, and with the expertise of new faculty members, we are in a place to provide excellent scholarship that will prepare our students for a lifetime of serving well and faithfully for the church. Midwestern also launched the Masters of Arts in Biblical Counseling this year, shifting from an integrative approach to a biblical counseling approach that will better serve our institution's mission as we focus on training men and women for the local church.

Sixth, the third year of the Timothy-Track M.Div. launched with its largest group to date (25 students). This has been a strong group of students, and they have indicated overwhelmingly that their experiences are helpful, substantial, and enjoyable. A continuing trend is that students are often citing the Timothy Track as a primary reason why Midwestern is at or near the top of their list of seminary choices, if not *the* reason why they choose to attend here.

Seventh, at our Spring trustee meeting, MBTS adopted the Nashville Statement as an additional confessional requirement. Relating to human sexuality and gender roles, this statement of faith expresses support for the biblical definition of marriage, for chastity outside of marriage, and for a link between biological sex and self-conception as male and female.

Eighth, the 65th commencement service on May 3, 2019, marked Midwestern's largest graduating class, conferring 218 degrees – 33 undergraduates, 153 graduates, 31 doctoral degrees, and 1 post-graduate degree. In addition, two students were among the first to complete Midwestern's Korean-language Ph.D. degree. We are thrilled to launch these theologically trained gospel ministers into kingdom service.

Ninth, this past November at ETS, MBTS was represented by more than 40 faculty members and doctoral students as they presented scholarly papers, the most from any one institution. High-level scholarship is amongst our training goals, and an excellent place for this to be showcased is the ETS annual meeting.

Next, within our Institutional Administration division, it is with a thankful heart that I can share that the Lord has allowed us to increase our financial strength. We continue to pursue a sustainable business model that appropriately stewards and maximizes the resources provided to us via the generosity of Southern Baptists through the Cooperative Program. We are well-aware that Midwestern Seminary could not exist, and fulfill its purpose to train men and women for the church, without the faithful giving of our churches. 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 know of the immense gratitude Midwestern Seminary has for all they have done and are doing to support the Lord's work here!

Second, at our Fall meeting, the trustees approved a \$2.5 million renovation project for our main research library. The three-story library building at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary was constructed in 1958. Modifications to the library since then have been minor, and we desire our library to be modernized to facilitate a 21st century working and learning environment. The library project anticipates a total renovation of the existing facility and promises to create spaces for group and individual study, faculty offices, seminars, archives, and research centers. The project schedule targets completion during the summer of 2020 and restoration of full library operations in advance of the Fall 2020 semester. Our overarching desire in stewarding this resource is that the library would be a living instrument used to serve the church by equipping pastors and ministers of God's Word. We are grateful to God for this improvement of existing campus facilities and for the opportunity to make our campus more efficient and effective for students. The Trustees also reviewed plans for a forthcoming renovation and addition to the Vivion House.

Fourth, Spurgeon College launched its first intercollegiate sports team through the NCCAA. The Spurgeon Knights basketball team is currently competing in its inaugural season. It has been a thrill to

watch our students play under Coach Philip Parker's leadership, as the Midwestern community surrounds them in support and enthusiasm. In addition to men's basketball, we are overjoyed to announce that we will launch women's volleyball and men and women's soccer in the coming year.

Finally, within our third division, Institutional Relations, the first item of note is our flourishing in the fields of recruiting, admissions, marketing, retention and advancement—evidencing much fruit by the Lord's kindness. Our very best energies are spent expanding the mission and ministry footprint of the school through this department. Through this team's faithful efforts, we have reached record enrollment and seminary growth over the past seven 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.

Second, in June, during the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Birmingham, Alabama, we hosted FTC Birmingham. The theme for the event was "The Future of Southern Baptist Ministry and Mission," and the panel included myself, Jamie Dew, Paul Chitwood, H. B. Charles, Jr., Ronnie Floyd, and Kevin Ezell. Almost 1,000 people attended the event, which allowed us to speak into current issues within the SBC and use our influence to positively impact the convention.

Additionally, in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Convention, we hosted our annual Alumni and Friends luncheon. Typically, this event consists of institutional updates and a brief academic panel discussion. This year, we shifted our panel to encompass the idea of "Christianity and Culture" and used Dean Inserra's newest book as the fulcrum for our discussion. The panel discussed engaging nominal Christianity, and consisted of myself, Micah Fries, Dean Inserra, and Collin Hansen. Each year our Alumni and Friends luncheon awards a graduate with the Alumnus of the Year award, and this year, Dean Inserra was the honoree.

Third, on September 23-24, we held our national *For the Church Conference* in Kansas City. The conference sold out (1,100) and was a very edifying and encouraging time. Plenary speakers for the conference included myself, Crawford Loritts, Owen Strachan, Tony Merida, J. D. Greear, and Jared Wilson. Breakout speakers included Micah Fries, D. A. Horton, Christine Hoover, Dale Johnson, John Onwuchekwa, Dean Inserra, Dr. Andreas Köstenberger, Dr. Margaret Köstenberger, and many others.

Additionally, we were excited to launch our first-ever women's pre-conference to the annual *For the Church Conference*. While the main conference is geared toward pastors and ministry leaders (both men and women who serve in the local church), the pre-conference allows us to focus exclusively on women in ministry. Speakers included my wife, Karen Allen, as well as Abigail Dodds, Christine Hoover, and Trillia Newbell.

Fourth, our communications team helped design and launch the newest institutional resource website/podcast, which is hosted Dr. Andreas Köstenberger, called The Center for Biblical Studies. On this website, one will find hundreds of trusted resources concerning biblical studies. We are praying that this resource will grow and prove to be helpful to ministers as they seek to preach and teach God's Word to an ever-changing world.

Fifth, we have been blessed by many visiting scholars this year on Midwestern's campus. The Sizemore Lectures' guest this year was Dr. Peter Williams, principal of Tyndale House, who addressed the topic of inerrancy and infallibility of the Scriptures. Dr. Denny Burk, director of the Center for Gospel and Culture at Boyce College and Southern Seminary, presented the C.W. Scudder Lectures on March 7. In the lecture, Burk addressed issues of homosexuality and transgenderism. On October 22-23, with a focus on preaching narrative texts, Dr. Don Carson delivered Midwestern's seventh annual Spurgeon Lectures on Biblical Preaching. To sit under the teaching of these men, who are among the most respected biblical scholars, was an inspiration to our seminary community.

It is undeniable that we share an incredible stewardship on behalf of Southern Baptists to train the next generation of pastors and ministry leaders *for the Church*. It is without hesitation that this institution will be faithful to the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention and in fulfilling what they have charged us with by the way of ministry assignment and by the way of doctrinal convictions. 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 seven 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