



Covenant Baptist  
Theological Seminary

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Class *of*  
2026

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May 22nd, 2026  
Grace Reformed Baptist Church  
Owensboro, Kentucky



Dear Friends of CBTS,

The Lord continues to answer our prayer to raise up faithful men for effective and enduring gospel ministry. Today, twenty-two men will receive degrees upon the completion of their program of study at CBTS.

Two men are graduating with our flagship Master of Divinity degree. Nine men are receiving the Master of Arts in Theological Studies (MATS), four are receiving the Master of Arts in Biblical Studies (MABS), three of them the Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies (MAPS), one of them the Master of Arts in Reformed Baptist Studies (MARBS), and three are receiving diplomas.

All of these men are actively serving in ministry of some kind. Nine of them are serving in pastoral ministry, while six more aspire to the pastoral ministry. One aspires to plant a church in an inner-city outside of Atlanta, and another to serve as a missionary to Japan. Three of the men serve as deacons. Two serve in music ministry and several others serve in Sunday School, evangelism, or other discipleship ministries.

Please join us in commending these men for their diligent labors in completing a rigorous academic program. Let us also give thanks to the Lord for sustaining and helping them through it. We now prayerfully commit these men to the Lord, that he would solidify their usefulness and effectiveness in serving the church of Jesus Christ.

You can read some of the testimony of these men in this booklet. As many of them share, this level of theological training would not have been possible without the prayers and financial support of our ministry partners. Because of your generosity, these men paid 2-3x less than what their program would otherwise cost. Rejoice in the fruit of your generous gifts to the kingdom!

***Dr. Sam Waldron***

*President, Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary*

## *Order of Ceremony*

Welcome & Invocation *Pastor Ben Carlson*

Hymn 89 *Come Thou Almighty King*

A Word from the Vice President *John Miller*

A Word from the President *Dr. Sam Waldron*

Graduate Testimony *Seth Beyersdorf*

Commencement Address *Dr. Timothy Decker*

Conferral of Degrees *Dr. Jon English Lee*

Hymn 379 *Send Thou, O Lord, To Ev'ry Place*

Prayer of Dedication *Dr. Chris Holmes*

## *Commencement Speaker*



Dr. Timothy Decker serves as Professor of Biblical Languages and ThM Director at CBTS. He also serves as Pastor of Trinity Reformed Baptist Church in Boone's Mill, Virginia. In 2025, by God's grace, he received a successful heart transplant—to the great joy of his church, students, fellow laborers, and many praying saints around the world.

#89

*Come Thou  
Almighty King*

Come, thou Almighty King,  
Help us thy name to sing,  
Help us to praise:  
Father, all glorious,  
O'er all victorious,  
Come, and reign over us,  
Ancient of days.

Come, thou Incarnate Word,  
Gird on thy mighty sword,  
Our prayer attend:  
Come and thy people bless,  
And give thy Word success;  
Spirit of holiness,  
On us descend.

Come, Holy Comforter,  
Thy sacred witness bear  
In this glad hour:  
Thou who almighty art,  
Now rule in every heart,  
And ne'er from us depart,  
Spirit of power.

To the great One in Three  
Eternal praises be,  
Hence evermore.  
His sovereign majesty  
May we in glory see,  
And to eternity  
Love and adore.

#379

*Send Thou, O Lord,  
to Ev'ry Place*

Send thou, O Lord, to ev'ry place  
Swift messengers before thy face,  
The heralds of thy wondrous grace,  
Where thou thyself wilt come.

Send men whose eyes have seen the King,  
Men in whose ears his sweet words ring;  
Send such thy lost ones home to bring;  
Send them where thou wilt come.

To bring good news to souls in sin;  
The bruised and broken hearts to win;  
In ev'ry place to bring them in  
Where thou thyself wilt come.

Gird each one with the Spirit's sword,  
The sword of thine own deathless Word;  
And make them conqu'rors, conqu'ring Lord  
Where thou thyself wilt come.

Raise up, O Lord the Holy Ghost,  
From this broad land a mighty host,  
Their war cry, "We will seek the lost  
Where thou, O Christ, wilt come."



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# Graduate Profiles



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*MA in Reformed Baptist Studies (MARBS)*

## *Jonathan Brown*

*Deacon, Berean Baptist Church  
Livonia, MI*

I serve as a deacon at Berean Baptist Church of Livonia. I chair the deacon board, serve on our men's ministry leadership team, and frequently teach in our adult Sunday school classes. My education at CBTS has deepened, sharpened, and enhanced my ability to teach and explain Scripture to those in my congregation. In particular, the study of Reformed Baptist covenant theology has been opened to me in a way that is both clear and teachable. Questions I once felt inadequate to answer, I can now address with both Scriptural support and a historically grounded Baptist understanding.

I am deeply grateful for the generosity of donors and for the opportunity provided through the church partnership program to study at CBTS. Without this support, I would not have been able to pursue this degree. Finally, I would like to thank my older brother, Gregory Brown (CBTS Class of 2025), whose zeal for evangelism continues to inspire me. He first introduced CBTS to our church and did the foundational work of opening the door for others. Because of his efforts, five men from our church have taken courses toward degrees at the seminary over the past five years.



Class of  
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*Diploma in Pastoral Studies (DPS)*

## *Geoffrey Breeden*

*Pastor, Eldred Baptist Church  
Carrollton, IL*

I am a husband and father of 4, residing in Carrollton, Illinois. I serve full-time as the Assistant Pastor at Eldred Baptist Church and primarily oversee the discipleship and care for the young adults and families of the church. My responsibilities include regular teaching and preaching. CBTS has benefitted me greatly as I have prepared for pastoral ministry, providing the educational tools and readiness necessary to shepherd the flock of God. My seminary courses have helped me to sharpen and shape my theology while developing perseverance and humility. For all of those who contribute to CBTS, I have immense gratitude. Having worked as a public servant for over 20 years, the nature of the vocation has not provided my family with financial excess. This would have made the pursuit of seminary education with most institutions impossible. With the help of donors, pursuing seminary training was made possible, and I am truly humbled and grateful to God for the opportunity.



Class of  
—2026—

*MA in Pastoral Studies (MAPS)*

**Isaiah Claytor**

*Member, Grace Bible Fellowship  
Harrisburg, PA*

My wife Lizzie and I are in our fourteenth year of marital bliss. We have eight children, ages 13 to 1. I live in Harrisburg, PA, and I work at the Advanced Wastewater Treatment Facility. My family has been at Grace Bible Fellowship Church of Harrisburg for nearly five years. This year, we have been engaged in ministry at Valley Baptist Church of Middletown. The pastor of Valley Baptist has been a friend for several years, and he has brought me in to play and lead music every Sunday. His plan is to bring me into pastoral leadership. I choose and lead the songs every Sunday, and I preach whenever the pastor is out.

My time at CBTS has equipped me with better knowledge in God's Word and with higher sensitivity toward others. I am very grateful for the kindheartedness of all the staff and the commitment to the Word of God. I am also thankful for the affordability of this school. Typical seminary prices would far exceed my capabilities, but CBTS has continued to be very accessible and reasonable in cost.



Class of  
—2026—

*MA in Pastoral Studies (MAPS)*

**Anthony Thomas**

*Pastor, South Peoria Baptist Church  
Goodyear, AZ*

I live in Goodyear, Arizona, with my wife, Shawna, and our children, Cayden (20) and Alia (2). One of the greatest blessings our family has experienced recently was adopting our daughter Alia out of foster care a year ago. I serve as an Elder at South Peoria Baptist Church, the church I began attending when I was 15. After completing a twenty-year career in the United States Air Force in Medical Services—specializing in Aeromedical Evacuation—I returned home to Arizona and to the church family that helped shape my early faith.

Much of my ministry is focused on street and community evangelism. Street ministry thrusts the gospel into the public square. You are meeting people where they live their lives. My time at CBTS has been a tremendous blessing in preparing me for that work. The seminary has strengthened my theological foundation and sharpened my understanding of Scripture and doctrine. More than simply increasing knowledge, my studies have helped cultivate wisdom, patience, and discipline in my approach to preaching, apologetics, and pastoral care.

# Will You Help us Train the Next Generation of Gospel Ministers?

*Make a Gift Today to:*

- ✓ Keep Tuition Low for our Students
- ✓ Support our Faculty, Staff, and essential operations



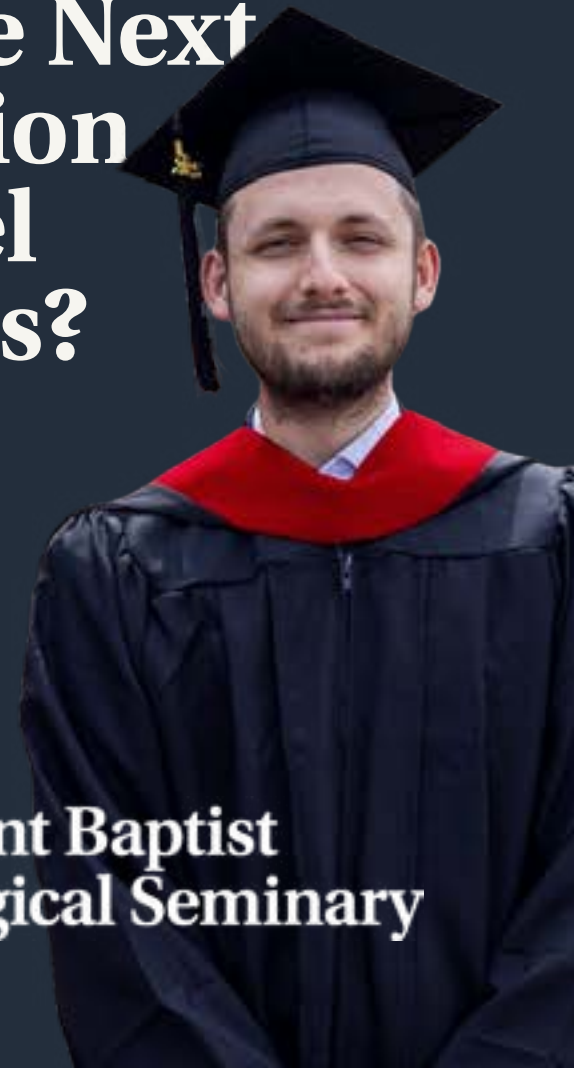
**Covenant Baptist  
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**Andrew Graham**

*Class of 2025*

(270) 925-6992 - give@cbtseminary.org  
800 Chuck Gray Ct, Owensboro, KY 42303  
www.CBTSeminary.org





Class of  
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*MA in Theological Studies (MATS)*

## Clyde Evans

*Member, Sovereign Grace Baptist Church  
Jacksonville, FL*

My name is Clyde Evans. I reside in Jacksonville, Florida, with my lovely wife of twelve years, Des'meonna, and my three children: Nyah, CJ, and Natalie. Lord willing, we will be moving to Macon, Georgia, and becoming members of Redeemer Baptist Church with the goal of planting a church in the inner city of Macon under the mentorship of John Miller. My time at CBTS has been immensely helpful and edifying. The lectures and coursework were not merely academic, but they were deeply pastoral as well. Having professors who are pastors in local churches helps bring application to the doctrine that we learn. I have been challenged to think both biblically and pastorally through much of my coursework here. I would highly recommend CBTS to anyone who wants to study at the seminary level. Being able to receive a robust education without having to uproot your family and leave your church is indeed a great blessing! I am thankful for my time and CBTS! The Lord is using them mightily!



Class of  
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*MA in Theological Studies (MATS)*

## Matthew Hawkins

*Deacon, Cape Bible Chapel  
Cape Girardeau, MO*

I married my wife Leslie in 2018, and we have since added 3 delightful little girls to our family. We are members of Cape Bible Chapel, where I serve as a deacon, in high-school ministry, as an adult small group leader, and Sunday school teacher.

CBTS has been a formative part of my growth as a follower of Christ, a husband, a father, and a church member. It has been an aid to every priority in my life, including my pursuit of Christ in my personal devotions, leading my family in worship, and building up the body of Christ towards obedience for His glory.

I would like to give a deep, heartfelt thanks to the Lord for the donors who have made my Seminary education affordable. If not for the affordability of CBTS, my seminary journey likely would have never begun. I am incredibly blessed to have been led into this opportunity, and I pray the Lord will help me to glorify him through my service to His people.



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*MA in Theological Studies (MATS)*

## Wilson Marsh

*Pastor, Covenant Baptist Church  
Wichita Falls, TX*

I serve as the pastor of Covenant Baptist Church of Wichita Falls, TX. I have been married to my wife, Kayla Marsh, for 15 years. We have 4 wonderful children. Our church was constituted in April of 2024. One of the greatest blessings I've found while attending CBTS is the pastoral heart for their students. More than once while being a student, I've faced difficult afflictions in the church that not only challenged my ministry, but they by consequence also affected my studies. Through wise counsel, prayer, and guidance in my classes, the faculty displayed hearts of shepherds and walked me through those trials. I'm grateful these men are not merely wise and knowledgeable in doctrine, but also have the wisdom and love of people that mark elders of the church. Their desire isn't merely to see graduates, but to sharpen and equip men for the ministry. During the first few years of my studies, I was pastoring a small, rural church in an impoverished area. With little income, the financial assistance made possible by the financial donors allowed me to progress in my studies without delay. For that, I'm immensely grateful.



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*MA in Theological Studies (MATS)*

## Samuel Wente

*Pastor, Grace Bible Church  
La Grande, OR*

My wife, Cortney, and I, along with our 2 daughters, live in La Grande, OR, where I serve as the Pastor of Grace Bible Church, a small confessional Baptist Church in Eastern Oregon. My studies at CBTS have been a great benefit to my local church ministry. It has not only equipped me with a thorough theological education but has also helped me apply it practically to the shepherding of sheep in the local church itself. I could not recommend CBTS enough to those considering a seminary education, as it offers not only a thorough, rigorous, and confessional education, but does so in a manner that enables continued and strengthened ministry in the local church, without being too financially burdensome on the families or congregations of the student. Thank you to all those who enable CBTS to offer this wonderful education so affordably to students. And thank you to the many families and individuals who pray for CBTS and their students. It is only by the sovereign help of our Lord who loves His Church that this has been a possibility for us!



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*MA in Biblical Studies (MABS)*

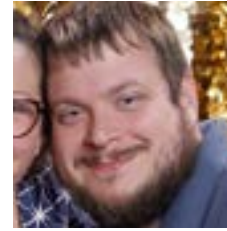
## Sean Cheetham

*Deacon, Covenant Reformed Baptist Church  
Warrenton, VA*

My name is Sean Cheetham. I serve as a Deacon and regularly teach and evangelize.

The classes at CBTS have helped with all the areas of my service to the Lord. They have given me a repository of knowledge to call on in answering people's questions when I teach or evangelize. CBTS has also helped me walk with the Lord personally, both in the theological knowledge I gained and in the example and practical wisdom given by the professors at CBTS.

I'd recommend CBTS to those who want a solid theological education while simultaneously desiring to remain in their own local church. The self-paced nature of many of the classes at CBTS also allows students to be able to fit their education into an otherwise busy life. Thank you to the ministry partners who made this possible. One of the reasons I chose CBTS was because of its affordability, and you made this a reality for me.



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*MA in Biblical Studies (MABS)*

## Lee Keitel

*Member, Agape Family Ministries  
Mount Vernon, IN*

By the grace of God, I came to faith in Jesus at the tender age of 10. Through the years, I've always tried to be involved in my local church. In 2023, I married my wife, Jamie, and in 2024, we welcomed our first daughter, Ada, to the world. We live in Mount Vernon, Indiana. I've been attending Agape Family Ministries since 2011. My current ministry involves several areas. At Agape, I help with A/V, fill in teaching when needed, and play drums. My wife and I minister at a local nursing home where we have prayer, singing, and a short devotional. I also enjoy writing.

CBTS has helped me to solidify my theological foundations and helped me to better understand the overarching story of the Bible. I would recommend CBTS to anyone seeking an affordable yet theologically rich seminary education. The instructors were all pastoral in their attitudes and execution of their classes. It's not education for the sake of education, but to be a service to the wider body of believers.



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*MA in Biblical Studies (MABS)*

## Matthew Jollie

*Pastor, New Hope Baptist Church  
St. Mary's, GA*

My name is Matthew Jollie, and I am married and a father of three children. I labor as a pastor at New Hope Baptist Church in St. Mary's, Georgia.

My education at CBTS has been extremely helpful in my preparation for pastoral ministry. The most beneficial classes for me were the Greek and Hebrew language courses, as well as the introduction to writing course.

I would recommend CBTS for its emphasis upon biblical mentoring in the local church that runs in parallel with its coursework. I am thankful for everyone who has given and labored for this seminary, which is both affordable and excellent in quality.



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*MA in Biblical Studies (MABS)*

## Nicholas Mansell

*Member, Momence OPC  
Kankakee, IL*

I am married to my lovely bride, Ashley. Together, we have a two-year-old daughter named Ruth and 3 more children we look forward to seeing in glory someday. I am thankful for the many opportunities I have to preach and to disciple students at the private Christian university. My theological studies at CBTS have greatly strengthened my preaching and discipleship skills. I have a strong desire to teach Bible and the biblical languages at either the High School or College level while also serving my church as an elder.

To the ministry partners who have made my and so many others' seminary education affordable, thank you! Your generosity enables the raising up of the next generation of gospel ministers. Without it, many students would be unable to pursue pastoral ministry, teaching, counseling, or learning to better support and serve their churches. The "return on investment" of your support is that many men and women are hearing the gospel preached and many souls are being won to Christ and His kingdom!



Class of  
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*Master of Divinity (MDiv)*

# Seth Beyersdorf

*Pastor, Oakridge Community Church  
Stillwater, MN*

My name is Seth Beyersdorf, and I am very thankful to God and to CBTS for graduating with a Master of Divinity.

My family and I have been members at Oakridge Community Church in Stillwater, MN, since 2013. I have served as a pastor in this church body since 2016, and as the main preaching and teaching pastor since 2019.

CBTS has been a vital part of training and preparing me to minister God's Word to His people. My time at CBTS has helped me not only learn to handle God's Word with carefulness and reverence, but also with pastoral concern. Whether from the pulpit or in personal counseling and visitation, my courses of study have helped refine my understanding of how to shepherd Christ's people with His Word.

I wholeheartedly recommend CBTS to anyone thinking about entering seminary studies, especially those who are already engaged in ministry in the local church. The study format allows for your classes to be integrated into your current schedule. And in my own experience, the level of theological preparation offered through CBTS has proven very helpful for doing faithful, pastoral ministry in our time.

As a pastor with a younger family, finances are always tight. Therefore, I am filled with thankfulness to the Lord for stirring up the hearts of His people to help provide such rich theological education at an affordable cost. Truly and affectionately, I would like to thank every person who has contributed financially to support CBTS. Your Christ-like generosity is what has made this beneficial experience of theological study and pastoral development possible for me, and for so many other students as well. I am confident that as the people of Christ continue to "sow bountifully" for the cause of His kingdom, we shall "reap bountifully" as well (2 Cor. 9:6). May the Lord cause the physical blessings you have sown into this seminary reap an abundance of spiritual blessings for the glory of His name, the advancement of His kingdom, and the well-being of His people.



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— 2026 —

*Master of Divinity (MDiv)*

# Brandon Ivy

*Member, First Christian Church  
Greeneville, TN*

My name is Brandon Ivy. My wife and I have three kids, and we reside in Greeneville, Tennessee, where we are members of First Christian Church of Greene County. Praise God, I'm completing my Master of Divinity degree, and I am so thankful for all that God has done in my life and ministry through this process. I am so grateful beyond words to my family and to all the mentors and faithful brothers who invested in me.

I have the tremendous privilege to regularly preach and teach at my church. I've experienced firsthand the significance of being faithful to Scripture and aiming my heart toward the glory of God and the well-being of his people.

My time at CBTS has strengthened my trust in the sufficiency of Scripture and increased my conviction regarding the crucial role that proper doctrine plays in the life of the church. The unity of Scripture, the coherence of doctrine, and the grandness of God's redemptive plan have been made clear to me. Not only has it enhanced my ability to think theologically, but I also have a greater sense of appreciation for the historical faith "once delivered unto the saints."

CBTS is a school I would highly recommend to anyone looking into seminary education. This is not a place where professors are just going through the motions or just passing on information. They are creating ministers, not just teachers. And they genuinely care for their students' souls. If you desire to be shaped spiritually and prepared for faithful ministry, then CBTS is your place. The perfect blend of biblical faithfulness, academic rigor, and pastoral care makes this school one-of-a-kind.

To the ministry partners who have made it financially possible for me to attend CBTS, I want to say, "thank you." Your generosity has not only supported my education but has also directly impacted my ministry and the churches I pastor. The fruit of your giving will be extended far beyond the walls of these classrooms into lives, families, and congregations for years to come. Thank you for investing in the training of men for the gospel!



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— 2026 —

## *Graduates in Absentia*

**Nathan Ashbrook**

*Diploma in Pastoral Studies*

*Member, Faith Baptist Church - Festus, MO*

**Clayton Brookins**

*MA in Theological Studies*

*Member, First Baptist Church - Panama City, FL*

**Joseph Chai**

*MA in Theological Studies*

*Pastor, Grace Bible Church Thornlands - Queensland, Australia*

**Chandler Girton**

*MA in Theological Studies*

*Member, Providence Baptist Church - Dawsonville, GA*

**Kevin Payne**

*MA in Theological Studies*

*Worship Leader, Fountain Church - Lagrange, GA*

**Clark Saltz**

*Diploma in Theological Studies*

*Member, Covenant Community Church - Greer, SC*

**Ryan Sickenger**

*MA in Pastoral Studies*

*Pastor, Providence Baptist Church - Junction City, KS*

**Brian Stoddard**

*MA in Pastoral Studies*

*Pastor, King's Cross Church - Kirkland, WA*



*CBTS Student Masautso Elias (Malawi)*

**CBTS Global Training Fund**   
**Equipping Indigenous Students and Seminaries**

**150+**  
*International students from  
49 countries enrolled*

**12+**  
*Global partners establishing  
self-sustaining seminaries*

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# FINDING JESUS IN GENESIS



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| March 11-12, 2027 | Williamstown, KY | [CovCon.org](http://CovCon.org)



# Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary

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