

the messenger

Mid-America Reformed Seminary

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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

“MID-AMERICA LAUNCHES PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH”



At its May meeting, the Board of Trustees of Mid-America approved a press release that announces the commencement of a Presidential Search. The Board also approved a Search Prospectus that will be provided to anyone who may wish to be considered for the position of president at the Seminary.

Since I have served Mid-America as its first president for the last twenty-one years, you will not be surprised that I am keenly interested in the Board's search for a new president. That would be an understatement! I have immensely enjoyed the many years that I have had the privilege of teaching at Mid-America and serving as its president. I love this school for its biblical and confessional commitments, for its singular focus upon training students for the pastoral ministry, and for its combination of academic learning and pastoral formation through the Ministerial Apprenticeship Program. I am also grateful for all of my colleagues, staff members, and faculty, as well as the students who aspire to serve the Lord and the work of the gospel ministry.

During the early stages of its work, the Presidential Search Committee asked me to provide them with my “Reflections on the Position by the Current President.” In what follows, I want to share with you my reflections on the kind of president that Mid-America needs at this important moment in its history:

“In the first place, Mid-America needs a president who is acquainted with its unique identity, as well as its biblical and confessional commitments. In order for Mid-America to enjoy the continued support and loyalty of its supporting constituency, the new president needs to be enthusiastically and wholeheartedly committed to the core values of the institution: a high view of the authority and infallibility of the Bible, the conviction that the historic creeds and confessions of the Reformed churches constitute a subordinate standard for the Seminary's classroom instruction and teaching, and a resolve to serve the churches by providing the students with a classic theological curriculum that furnishes them for the office of the ministry of the Word and the sacraments. The Board of Trustees and the Seminary's constituency desire a President who enjoys their confidence in these respects and is an articulate and trustworthy proponent of the institution's core commitments.

In the second place, Mid-America needs a president who enjoys the respect of his faculty colleagues, and who is competent to teach within the framework of the Seminary's long-standing commitment to an integration of classroom instruction and pastoral formation through the Ministerial Apprenticeship Program. The president must be a competent administrator who works collaboratively with the faculty and staff. But even more importantly, he must be a pastor-theologian who can competently contribute to the Seminary's aim to furnish its students with a rigorous theological curriculum and an equally thorough preparation for the ministerial dimensions of pastoral ministry in the churches.

And in the third place, Mid-America needs a president who can lead the institution at a particularly important moment in its history. In recent years, Mid-America has experienced an increase in student enrollment, launched a Center for Missions and Evangelism (CME), and embarked upon a program of expanding the Seminary's facilities to meet a number of anticipated needs. The expansion of the Seminary's facilities includes a significant expansion of the Seminary's library, the addition of a new class-room auditorium, the provision of additional office and conference space, and possibly the building of on-site student housing. In order for these initiatives to be successful, the new president will be required to work collaboratively with the office of advancement in soliciting the monies required to achieve these goals. In particular, the new president will need to be an enthusiastic proponent of the CME, assisting the Director in representing it to the Seminary's constituents and securing their partnership in realizing its goals.

Although the profile of what Mid-America needs in a new president at this moment in its history may seem daunting, I would like to emphasize how these needs represent a unique opportunity for enlarging and enriching the Seminary's service to the churches. I cannot remember a time in my thirty-plus years of service at Mid-America that was as encouraging for the Seminary's future as the present moment. The next president of Mid-America will not embark upon his service to the school in a period of decline, but in a time of expansion and growth. What the school desires to find in a new president is a servant-leader who comes to the institution, not to be an agent of radical change and re-ordering of priorities, but to be a visionary proponent of the Seminary's longstanding commitment to a combination of classical theological formation in the basics of biblical and Reformed theology and ministerial formation for fruitful service in the ministry of the gospel in the church.”

The search for and appointment of a new president at Mid-America is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees. Please remember the Board and its committee in your prayers, that the Lord will grant the committee members wisdom in their search for a new president.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cornelis P. Venema".

Dr. Cornelis P. Venema
President of Mid-America Reformed Seminary

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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Let's go ahead and call this issue *The Advancement Issue*. We're talking about finances. We're talking about commencement. We're talking about the Board meeting, the future of the Seminary, and new hires.

This issue gives you an up-close look at the direction the Seminary is heading in. These are exciting times, and we're thankful for your interest and support. There is no one else with whom we'd rather share these exciting updates.

I know we usually print general interest feature articles, and I know we have already been working hard to keep you informed. I also know that since you're reading this publication, you care a lot about Mid-America, and as faithful partners in this work, you want to know what's going on. It's our privilege to share these things with you, because without you, there would be nothing to talk about.

Thanks for reading – turn the page and enjoy!



Michael B. Deckinga
Vice-President of Advancement



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Our Mission

Mid-America Reformed Seminary seeks to serve Christ and His church by assisting in the formation and preparation of servants for the Kingdom of God. Our primary purpose is to train men for the gospel ministry of Jesus Christ. Guided by this focus, we are also committed to providing solid theological training for others among God's people whose life calling may be enhanced by theological education.

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DEVELOPMENT REPORT: “EXTRA LEG ROOM 2.0”

I recently had a conversation with a gentleman who referenced my most recent financial appeal letter. He mentioned he liked it, particularly because of how he perceived the letter to read: “Thanks for your support. We’re doing quite well financially and are not currently in need of any financial contributions. Won’t you consider contributing financially to our work?”

To be clear, this fellow is a dear friend, ardent supporter of the school, and delivered his comments with grace and humor. Frankly though, he wasn’t too far off. That’s essentially the way the letter read, wasn’t it? Yes, we are in the best financial position we have ever been in as an institution. We haven’t realized general fund contributions this robust in all of our 40 years of service. My development report in our March issue of *The Messenger* spoke to the “extra legroom” in our budget, as well as some of the advantages that affords us as an institution. You could say this article is “Extra Legroom 2.0” as our financial position has only improved since our last publication. As you can clearly see in the top graph, the Lord has been pleased to bless us with the resources necessary to continue our ahead-of-budget pace for this fiscal year.

The figures you see are a combination of both US and Canadian giving. Mid-America Reformed Seminary maintains a foundation in Wynona, Ontario, Canada, for the purpose of receiving and receipting gifts in Canada, allowing for our Canadian donors to take advantage of tax incentives when giving, if they choose to do so. Now, Mid-America is officially

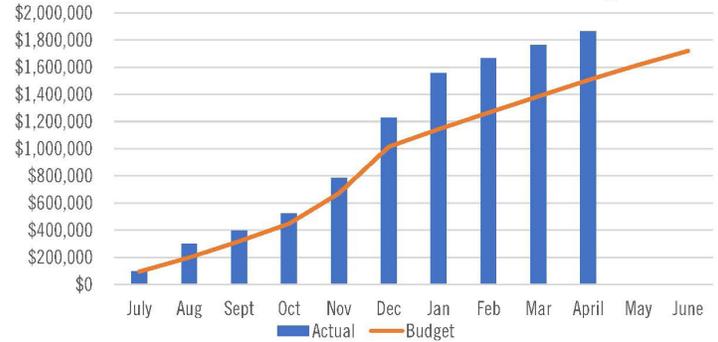
approved by the Canadian Parliament as a “prescribed university outside of Canada,” so we could receive donations directly, but the currency exchange fees imposed by our bank keep the Foundation is the best way to go when making contributions to our work in the Great White North. Our budget requires \$44,000 to be transferred from the Foundation to the Seminary each month. Take a look at the bottom graph and celebrate with me that we are 100% toward our Canadian Foundation transfer budget.

It’s important to note once again that the first chart encompasses both US and Canadian contributions. To say this another way, the first chart already takes into account the Canadian Cost Share.

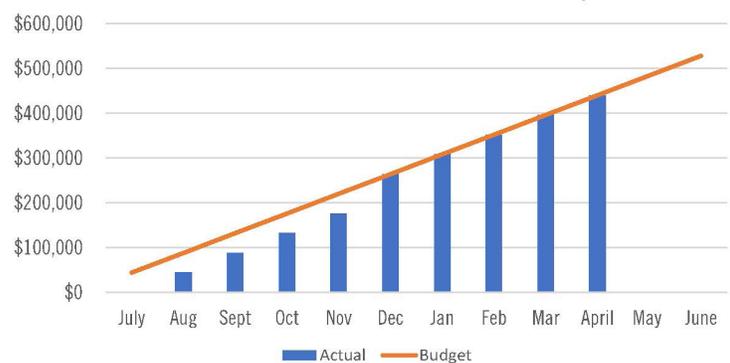
I have been working as Vice-President of Advancement for six years now – admittedly, not that long, but long enough to observe trends. This is the first time in my tenure with the Seminary that the Foundation has been able to meet its budget at 100%. To our friends north of the border: thank you!

On trends, we have been seeing a steady increase in support over the last number of years, with budget being obtained the last three. We’re praying this trend will continue as next year’s budget increases sharply due to cost of living adjustments, program enhancements, and a growing Center for Missions and Evangelism. I

2021-22 General Fund Contributions Actual vs. Budget



2021-22 Canadian Cost Share Actual vs. Budget



am confident the increased contributions this year will help propel us through this summer (a traditionally lean period for donations), but I ask that you prayerfully consider increasing your partnership with us in the coming year. In our September issue, I’ll have more information for you on our capital campaign. We’ll be needing your assistance towards reaching our goal of \$4,500,000.

I close this fiscal year with a word of thanks. Please know, we value our partnership very much, and we look forward to what the Lord has in store for our future as he continues to use you to help train the next generation of pastors.

Michael B. Deckinga
Vice-President of Advancement

To make or plan for a gift today, contact Michael Deckinga, VP of Advancement, at mdeckinga@midamerica.edu

COMMENCEMENT

On the evening of Thursday, May 12, 2022, the Seminary community, along with friends and families, gathered at Redeemer United Reformed Church in Saint John, IN, for the Seminary's 37th commencement ceremony.

The faculty, graduates, and members of the board of trustees processed to the stately strains of Gustav Holst's "Thaxted," a hymn-tune known to many as "O God Beyond All Praising," made famous from the Jupiter movement of his symphonic suite, *The Planets*. This proceeded unannounced into the opening hymn, sung with great ardor by those in attendance, "God is Our Refuge and Our strength," a setting of Psalm 46 from the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*.

Next, Dr. Cornelis P. Venema, President of Mid-America Reformed Seminary and Professor of Doctrinal Studies, offered words of welcome and an opening prayer before introducing the commencement speaker, Prof. Mark D. Vander Hart, Associate Professor of Old Testament Studies and Director of the Ministerial Apprenticeship Program, now in his 39th year at Mid-America Reformed Seminary. While a guest speaker is usually chosen to deliver the commencement address, this year's graduating class made a unanimous request to hear from one of their own teachers. The faculty was delighted to invite a colleague to serve in this honored role and Prof. Vander Hart's gracious acceptance of the invitation made our Seminary community especially excited for this year's commencement ceremony!

The commencement address, titled "Jeremiah *Contra Mundum*," alluded to the church father Athanasius, and was drawn from Jeremiah 15:15-20. Jeremiah, like Athanasius, was opposed by the government, church,

and popular opinion, yet both held tenaciously to the truth of the gospel and would not compromise. Prof. Vander Hart made a compelling and edifying comparison between these two historical figures, fitting for these parting words of advice and perspective.

He encouraged our graduates, all of whom are pursuing the ministry of Word and sacrament, by reminding them that the same God that upheld Jeremiah in his difficult ministry also upholds Christian pastors today, citing Jesus's words in John 16:33, "In the world you will have tribulation, but take heart, I have overcome the world."

Combining the traditional charge to the graduates with his address, Prof. Vander Hart made several pointed, yet crucial admonitions: "In all your preaching—both law and gospel—you must always preach Christ crucified. Do not let a sermon go by where you have not 'billboarded' the Lord Jesus Christ before your congregation." Followed by this: "Let your confidence always be this: the Word will do its work through the power of the Spirit. You don't have to manipulate anyone—no gimmicks."

Those in attendance responded to the address by rattling the rafters with the hymn "Lead On, O King Eternal," followed by a recognition of a large number of alumni present at the ceremony and a word of encouragement and thanks from Dr. Venema to the wives of the graduates who "shared" their husbands with our Seminary community over their years of study!

Rev. James Sawtelle—President of the Board of Trustees—conferred the degree of Master of Divinity (M.Div.) upon our six graduates, Caleb D. Castro (URCNA),



Joseph Kim (PCA), Jacob T.R. London (URCNA), Praveen Phinehas Muthusamy (URCNA), Luke J. Walkup (OPC), and Peter Yoo (PCA). After receiving their diploma, the graduates were "hooded" (i.e., draped with the academic hood indicating the degree of Master of Divinity) by Drs. J. Mark Beach and Marcus A. Mininger. Applause and celebration followed each conferral, a fitting response to each student's hard work and diligence in completing their course of seminary study!

Prof. R. Andrew Compton led those gathered in a litany, followed by a closing prayer by Dr. Beach. The faculty, graduates (and their wives), and board members recessed during the final hymn, "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah." For the postlude, G.F. Handel's "Jubilation" was played on the organ by Mrs. Nancy Venema, and those in attendance made their way to the narthex where they had a chance to congratulate the graduates and enjoy some coffee and treats.

Rev. R. Andrew Compton
Associate Professor of Old Testament Studies, M.T.S. Program Director

SUMMER ASSIGNMENTS

Once again, a good number of our students will be away, serving congregations in summer internships. These internships usually run for about 10 weeks. Depending on the congregation, a Mid-America seminarian will be exhorting (or assisting in leading worship), be engaged in pastoral visitation, be attending leadership meetings, and, in general will be exposed to the wide spectrum of the ministry. Here are the students and the places where they will be serving in the summer of 2022.

Student

Johnathan Allen
 Brian Bowen
 Joshua Carpenter
 Andrew Chang
 Stephen Corbitt
 Eric Heida
 Jae Kim
 Israel Ledee
 David Myhren
 Daniel Rust
 Christian Ryan
 Luke Schmeltzer
 Jeremy Vander Lei
 Matthew van der Woerd
 Ben Verdonk
 David Voytek
 Ken Wojnarowski

Church

Westminster Orthodox Presbyterian Church
 Grace Fellowship (PCA)
 Borculo Christian Reformed Church
 Bethel Presbyterian Church (PCA)
 Beacon Light Christian Reformed Church
 River of Life Reformed Fellowship (URC)
 Lynwood United Reformed Church
 Ebenezer Reformed Church (RCUS)
 Hudson Valley United Reformed Church
 Covenant Orthodox Presbyterian Church
 First Orthodox Presbyterian Church
 One Seven Church
 Bethel United Reformed Church
 Cornerstone United Reformed Church
 Living Water Reformed Church (URC)
 Covenant Reformed Church (RCUS)
 First Church (PCA)

Community

Indian Head Park, Illinois
 Dyer, Indiana
 Zeeland, Michigan
 Palatine, Illinois
 Gary, Indiana
 Niagara Falls, Ontario
 Lynwood, Illinois
 Shafter, California
 New Hampton, New York
 Cedar Falls, Iowa
 South Holland, Illinois
 Bourbonnais, Illinois
 Calgary, Alberta
 Sanborn, Iowa
 Brantford, Ontario
 Sacramento, California
 Lansing, Illinois

As you can see, we will have students in California and New York, in Ontario and Alberta, Canada. A big “thanks” to all the churches—people and pastors—who provide such experiences for our students. It is invaluable! It is truly an investment in the future of the church when God’s people provide experiences and helpful critique. Please pray for these men as they exercise their gifts in the service of God and His church.

Mark Vander Hart

Associate Professor of Old Testament Studies,
 Ministerial Apprenticeship Program Director & Dean of Students

SPRING CONFERENCE

On March 17, the student body had the privilege of having Dr. Eric Watkins, the director of the new Center for Missions and Evangelism at MARS, deliver the spring lectures on staying healthy in the ministry. Dr. Watkins began the lectures by noting that instruction on healthy spiritual and physical habits should be required lessons for seminary students. This is not only close to Dr. Watkins’ heart because in a former life he was a physical fitness trainer but because the church is seeing more men ‘burning out’ or having unhealthy spiritual and physical habits that could be avoided if they were more proactive.

Our professor lectured on the subjects

of ‘A Healthy Private Life’ and ‘A Healthy Public Life’. He began with the most important subject for ministers, seminarians, and the laity alike, that God must be our supreme love. It is from this good root that good fruits are produced in our spiritual, physical, and relational lives. The lectures were full of practical wisdom for aspiring pastors, spiritually encouraging us to personal devotions, prayer, and to have favorite texts to lean on in hard times. Dr. Watkins also sought to motivate us physically in the pastorate saying, “exercise should be part of the job description!” Healthy meals, taking

days off, and ministerial retreats will actually benefit our ministries as it will help preserve us in our calling. Finally, we were encouraged to persevere in our relationships. To continue to pray with our spouses and families. Pastors should seek out “fathers” and “brothers,” mature men who can impart wisdom and friends who can be honest in their evaluation of our character.

It is the prayer of Dr. Watkins that God would preserve the students at MARS through these most necessary lessons.

Jacob London

2022 Mid-America Graduate

MORE SALT; MORE LIGHT

THE CHURCH IN AN AGE OF OPPORTUNITY

January 28-29, 2022, St. Augustine, Florida – The Center for Missions & Evangelism held its inaugural conference. Attendees were encouraged through the addresses of nine speakers over the day-and-a-half conference.

Dr. Eric Watkins, Director of the CME, opened the conference by welcoming guests and delivering the first lecture. He was followed by Mid-America's own Rev. Mark VanderHart, who laid out a biblical road map for missions and evangelism, beginning with Genesis 1. Dr. Terry Johnson, pastor of Independent Presbyterian Church in Savannah, GA, then spoke on Christian identity. He was followed by Dr. John Currie of Westminster Theological Seminary, who addressed Christian leadership before turning the microphone over to Mr.

Terrence Dickerson, a ruling elder at Covenant OPC of St. Augustine. Terrence spoke candidly of his faith journey, and how his story is unique among other African American testimonies. Dinner and a show awaited those in attendance on Friday evening as Timothy Brindle (Westminster Theological Seminary) rapped a couple of his original songs, followed by lectures on a related topic (a biblical theology of race). Saturday morning, Darby Strickland held everyone's attention captive as she spoke on the issue of domestic abuse and abuse in the church – how to recognize and address it. Mid-America Professor Dr. J. Mark Beach closed out the conference with a challenge for the church to effectively reach the marginalized.

Throughout the conference, there were opportunities for fellowship and questions and answers. Additionally, attendees were able to enjoy some of the amenities northeast Florida has to offer in January. The conference was co-hosted by Covenant OPC of St. Augustine, and the volunteer force that church assembled was one of the major reasons the conference ran so smoothly.

Lord willing, the CME will return to St. Augustine FL in January 2023 for its second national conference. Details are forthcoming – stay tuned!

Michael B. Deckinga
Vice-President of Advancement

SPRING BOARD REPORT

The Mid-America Board of Trustees conducted their annual spring meeting on May 12-13. For the first time in two years, the Board was pleased to be able to meet in-person and on campus. With much to accomplish, the Board was ably led by President Jim Sawtelle. The Board approved the names of Pete Hamstra and Paul Huizenga as nominees to fill the spot of retiring Board member Ben Sybesma. The Seminary Association (all friends of the Seminary) will vote to select one of these two men. The Board also reappointed John Boeckstyn, Jeff Huizenga, Todd Joling and Ed Marcusse to serve additional three-year term on the Board of Trustees.

The Board received an array of reports from various committees and employees of the seminary. Dr. Venema's report included a request that the Board approve Mr. Andrew Iversen, a doctoral student, to serve as adjunct instructor of Greek

101 and 102 this summer. The Board agreed to this appointment.

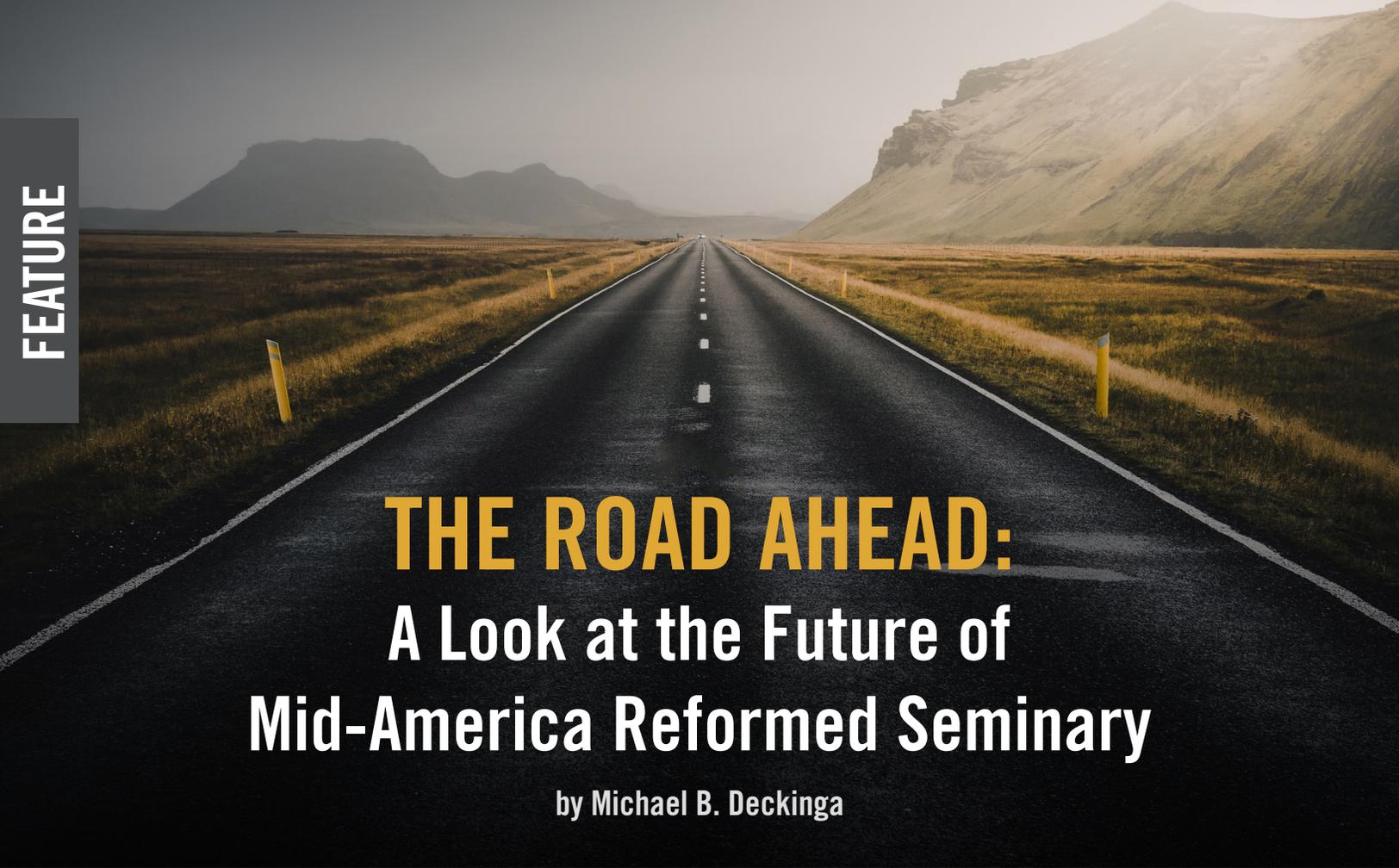
Two noteworthy items of business considered by the Board were the 2022-2023 academic year budget presented by the Finance Committee and a request from the Facilities Expansion Committee. The Board approved a budget of \$2,352,242 which included a 6% cost-of-living increase for Seminary employees. This year's budget also included costs for the Mid-America Center for Missions and Evangelism which resulted in a 16% increase over last year's budget. It also authorized the Seminary to begin a capital campaign



with the goal of raising \$4.5 million for campus expansion. Related to this, the Board approved an expenditure of up to \$405,000 for architectural fees and services.

The Board is scheduled to meet again in mid-October.

Keith LeMahieu
Vice-President of Operations



THE ROAD AHEAD: A Look at the Future of Mid-America Reformed Seminary

by Michael B. Deckinga

Change.

What thoughts race through your mind as you read that word? Does change scare you? Excite you? Maybe you're neutral towards it – in other words, “change is fine, but it's not for me. Given a choice, I'd let things be the way they are.” Perhaps the thought of change makes you cringe. Things are comfortable, predictable, nice, and cozy. “If it were such a good idea, we would have done it that way all along,” you think to yourself. You might be the type of person who tackles changes head on – even initiates changes – you're not the “rest on your laurels” type.

At a recent conference I attended on behalf of the Seminary, an attendee approached my table and we discussed seminaries – particularly their place in partnership with the church and the ability the institution has to shape the trajectory of the church. In other

words, how goes the seminary, so goes the church. Concern was expressed that seminary training may have run its course, and that the local church is where ministerial training should occur. The sentiment was that as seminaries age and implement changes, they become susceptible to liberalism. There is no question that a number of seminaries have lost sight of their mission, chasing rabbit trails inconsistent with their institutional identity and far from biblical orthodoxy – call them pet projects, theological hobbyhorses, or outright progressivism antithetical to Scripture. What happens when seminaries lose their way? They take churches with them. The local church suffers from starvation – the preacher does not preach the whole counsel of God! Whole denominations suffer, losing sight of their true unity in the Spirit as they seek to unify around contemporary political/social issues. Undoubtedly, the faithfulness of the church is influenced by the faithfulness of the institutions tasked with training

those responsible for the right treatment and proclamation of the Word. Maybe seminaries have run their course— haven't they done enough damage? A balanced perspective is important here. For every camp that embraces reckless change and every progressive action, there is an opposite reaction to pull back the reins – even so much that change is resisted on the principle that all innovation is bad and will lead to the ultimate demise of the institution, and then the church.

If you have been keeping up with the Seminary, you might notice Mid-America Reformed Seminary is in a season of change – a season of innovation. Mid-America Reformed Seminary is building off of a rich heritage of innovation. We are tapping into our core DNA as an institution, prayerfully hopeful in equipping and edifying the local church and further advancing Christ's Kingdom for His glory through effective pastoral training.

Mid-America Reformed Seminary exists *because* of innovation and

change. Over 40 years ago, amidst great denominational volatility, pastors concerned with the outlook of their beloved denomination met to form a new seminary. There existed a need for a seminary concerned with fidelity to the Word of God, deeply rooted in the Reformed tradition, and one that placed a high premium on supporting the local church through robust academic and practical training of her ministers. Mid-America Reformed Seminary was born, taking residence in Orange City IA. A number of years later, the Board sanctioned a move to Northwest Indiana, opening the students up to a wide variety of ministry opportunities, as well as increased social and vocational outlets in the greater Chicago area. The Seminary would innovate further and pursue accreditation through the Association of Theological Schools. In a world where higher education and student debt are synonymous, the Seminary's commitment to affordability – decreasing the financial burden placed on students and increasing the Seminary's reliance on our heavenly Father – is rare.

Mid-America has not ceased to be innovative. We are in some of the most exciting times in the life of this institution. Today, there exist several areas of change and innovation that ought not scare even the most strident critic but should encourage all who support our work and who will undoubtedly benefit.

The Center for Missions & Evangelism (CME)

The Center for Missions & Evangelism offers a new set of classes, conferences, cohorts, and internships focused on areas of evangelism, church planting, discipleship, and foreign missions. It is designed to help the church raise up the next generation of faithful church leaders to serve faithful churches and new plants both at home and abroad – better equipping students and pastors to plant and perpetuate Reformed, ordinary means of grace churches to carry out Christ's Great Commission.

The CME seeks to glorify and enjoy

God in Jesus Christ by: cultivating a genuine love for God and His church; helping raise up the next generation of faithful pastors, evangelists, and teachers with a high commitment to the Reformed Confessions and catechisms with a missional mindset; equipping and training students with the particular gifts and calling to plant evangelistically engaged churches; offering classes and lectures taught by proven church planters, missionaries, and lay workers with extensive experience in missions, evangelism and related practical areas in tandem with the current M.Div. program that focuses primarily on the mission of the church; offering continuing education courses, conferences, and lectures for pastors and missionaries on relevant subjects, cultivating a greater awareness of evangelistic opportunities at home and abroad, and assist students with internship placement; assisting churches in cultivating more outward facing cultures of evangelism while maintaining strong covenantal identities; encouraging lay members of local congregations as they seek to serve Christ faithfully, and by establishing cohorts in various locations, focusing on missional subjects and providing valuable resources to churches on subjects related to evangelism, outreach and discipleship, as well as church planting and missions.

While this is a new initiative, the spirit in which the Seminary undertakes this work is consistent with the way things have always been done in the life of this institution – in partnership with the local church. The involvement of the local church is essential to the CME. While the primary goal of the program is to help students develop their gifts and abilities for effective ministry, a secondary goal is to aid the church in growing missionally within their respective contexts. Thus, the CME seeks to both serve and cooperate with the local church in reaching the world for the sake of Christ. The benefit is twofold: first, to help those within Reformed churches to discern the importance of missions as part of being

a faithful Reformed church, and second, to help those with a great emphasis on missions to realize this calling with a wholehearted commitment to Reformed doctrine and worship.

Increased Enrollment

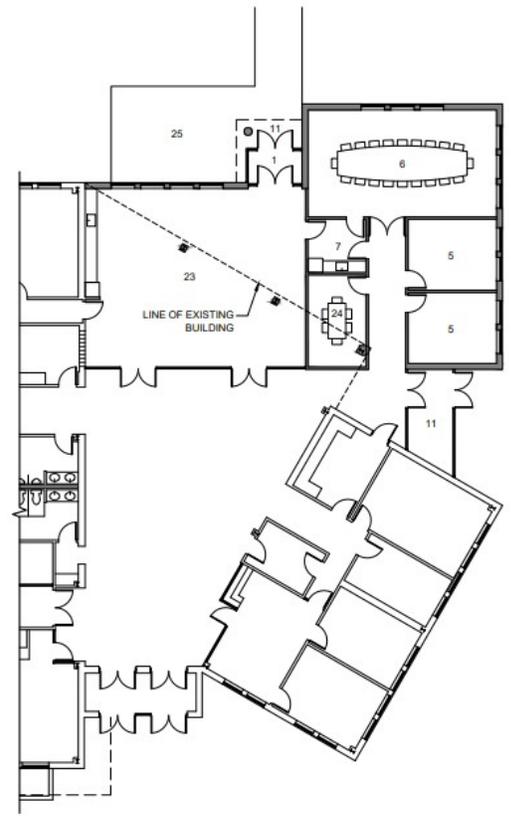
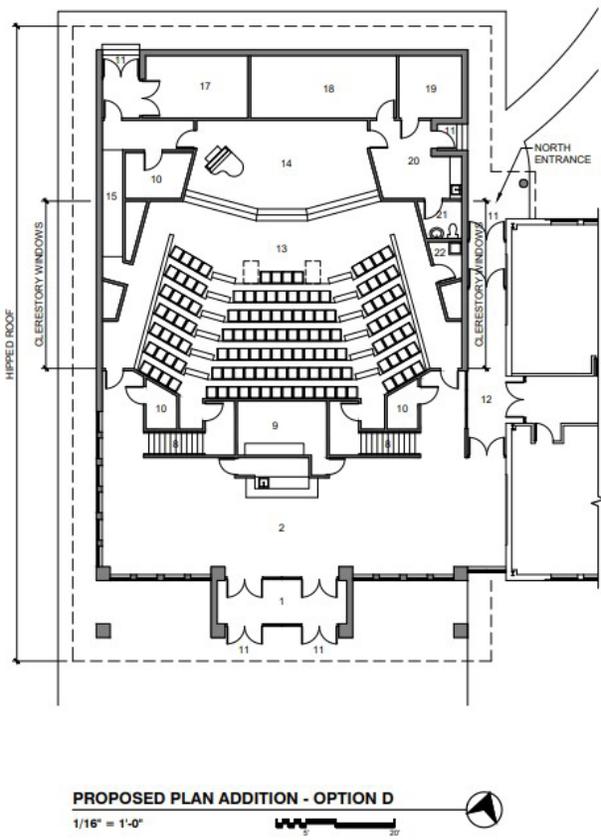
The Seminary is enjoying a renewed sense of awareness in the marketplace of institutions. With the development of "Round Table," a weekly podcast featuring the Seminary's Faculty discussing various theological topics with practical implications, many prospective students are being introduced to Mid-America for the first time. The Seminary also enjoys a prominent social media presence on a variety of channels, which allows Mid-America's work to be seen by many.

In addition to this, Mid-America is present at several national and regional conferences throughout the year. Conference attendees are often excited about all things theological and eager to talk about pursuing ministerial training. By attending these events and engaging with the attendees, the Seminary is able to capitalize on this excitement, and invite prospective students to campus for a visit. One last note on conferences is that the Seminary is mindful of its Reformed convictions, and only attends conferences with theological standards aligning to those of Mid-America.

A renewed effort to visit more traditional undergraduate feeder institutions has also been underway. The recent COVID-19 pandemic had stalled this effort, but visits to these institutions have resumed, and their effectiveness is greater than ever. Like conferences, visits to feeder schools allows the enrollment staff to invite would-be students to visit campus. When a prospective student visits campus, they get to see first-hand what Mid-America's

- LEGEND**
- 1 VESTIBULE
 - 2 LOBBY/PRE-FUNCTION
 - 3 CONCESSIONS /BOX OFFICE
 - 4 COATS
 - 5 OFFICE
 - 6 BOARD ROOM – 20 SEATS
 - 7 COFFEE
 - 8 STAIR TO ELEV. +6'-0"
 - 9 MECH/ELEC + LAPEYRE STAIR TO TECH BOOTH (ABOVE @ ELEV. +/- 9'-0")
 - 10 STORAGE
 - 11 EXIT
 - 12 EXIT + ACCESS TO SCHOOL
 - 13 CHAPEL/AUDITORIUM
 - 14 STAGE @ ELEV. + 1'-8"
 - 15 RAMP UP TO ELEV. + 1'-8"
 - 16 EXIT/DELIVERY
 - 17 SHOP
 - 18 MECHANICAL
 - 19 ELECTRICAL
 - 20 GREEN ROOM/TECH SUPPORT
 - 21 TOILET
 - 22 JANITOR
 - 23 CAFETERIA
 - 24 MEETING ROOM
 - 25 PATIO

FLOOR PLAN DATA
 SEATING CAPACITY: 129 SEATS + 2 WHEELCHAIRS
 SEAT WIDTH: 22" O/C, 2" ARMRESTS
 ROW DEPTH: 39.37"
 ROW RISER HEIGHT: 12"
 STAGE HEIGHT: 1'-8"
 AISLE WIDTH BETWEEN SEATS: 4'-0"



**Photo represents two separate additions to opposite wings of the Seminary.*

academically challenging, spiritually nurturing, and pastorally focused environment looks like. When they experience seminary for a day, they are very inclined to enroll.

Facility Expansion

A natural by-product of the last two initiatives listed leads to an issue that needs addressing – space. At the Seminary, Junior students take their classes together, and Middlers and Seniors are combined into one classroom, because their classes are offered every other year. There are only so many seats in a classroom. Two options exist to address this issue: build or hire. Build an addition to the existing facility, and the space issue is resolved. Hire additional faculty, and every class can be taught each year. Over time, the most stewardly solution is to build. In Phase I of the expansion project, the Seminary plans to build a new chapel/auditorium, as well as additional staff offices, an enlarged cafeteria, and a board/conference room. This will allow modifications to the current

classrooms as follows: remove the wall separating the current Junior and Middler/Senior classroom, thus creating a new, large classroom for the growing Junior class, and convert the Seminary’s existing chapel (essentially, a large classroom) into the Middler/Senior classroom.

Four years ago, the Board of Trustees, in consultation with a special study committee with staff and faculty, recommitted to our residential model of seminary education. Many institutions in the seminary marketplace offer their degrees fully online. Our conviction and response is that ministerial training is best done in a residential setting, where peers and pastor-scholars are accessible for spiritual development and mutual encouragement. Seminary families do well when they live among other seminary families. There are many institutions that lament their distance programs, since they lose that personal and pastoral touch. This conviction leads to the need to develop on-campus student housing. Phase II of the Seminary’s building campaign will focus on developing a residential community on campus, and while it is

being planned concurrently with Phase I, the project itself will come later.

The question remains, is all change bad for a theological institution? Admittedly, there are examples of once-faithful institutions dragging down once-faithful churches. Sadly, it is more common than not. By God’s grace, Mid-America Reformed Seminary has remained faithful to its mission, to its convictions, and to its supporting churches. Our partnership with our constituent churches is paramount to our work, and naturally leads to a healthy and necessary sense of transparency and accountability. The initiatives listed here as well as the corresponding results propel us forward, and yet they all harken us back to our first love – serving and supporting Christ’s church through the faithful training of her pastors, resulting in fruitful ministries for the glory of God. That commitment, my friends, will never change.

Michael B. Deckinga
 Vice-President of Advancement

STAFF PROFILE: DAN FLETCHER

In early March, Mid-America Reformed Seminary welcomed Dan Fletcher as the new Vice-President of Operations. Dan is taking over these responsibilities from Keith LeMahieu who is retiring June 30.

Dan is a native of Kalamazoo, MI. His parents were both teachers in the Christian school in Kalamazoo. Dan's mother taught in the elementary school while his father taught and served as the Athletic Director at the high school. Naturally, Dan attended Christian school in Kalamazoo before heading off to college where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science and Physics at Calvin University in 1989.

Dan began his professional career with Commonwealth Edison, the largest electric utility in Illinois, and the sole electric provider in Chicago and much of Northern Illinois. He was hired to lead an effort to integrate micro-computer systems and distributed computing technology into their mainframe computing culture. This included hiring and leading the implementation team for this initiative.

In 1996, ComEd outsourced their information technology services to IBM, and Dan began working for IBM in their Strategic Outsourcing team. Dan worked with customers of various sizes and all lines of business to design, implement, and deliver distributed computing services including Workplace Support, Service Desk, and Artificial Intelligence offerings. Dan says, "While I always enjoyed my work in the corporate sector and valued the variety of experiences that it afforded to me, I often thought about and desired an opportunity to use my skills and

experiences in ways that more directly served God and His Kingdom." When he learned of the opportunity for this position, he wondered whether this was an answer to the long-standing desire of his heart. In mid-January, that question was answered when Mid-America offered Dan the opportunity to serve as the next Vice-President of Operations.

In addition to the experience Dan has gained in his corporate career, Dan has also served in a variety of leadership positions (including as a ruling elder) at churches he has attended. Dan has served on advisory committees for public health institutions, and he has operated his own small I/T company supporting small and medium-sized businesses over the past 15+ years.

Dan recently commented, "Having experienced my first Board of Trustees meeting, I was humbled and moved emotionally as I witnessed these men working faithfully and trustworthily. I saw their dedication and commitment to the Lord and the truth of His Word. I see this same dedication and commitment in the faculty, staff, and student body, and I am awestruck that God has chosen me for this role. It is my desire to show that same dedication in support of Mid-America, which seeks to remain true



to His Word, and strives to prepare the next generation of pastors to bring these gospel truths to a world that desires less and less of it."

Dan lives in Munster, IN with his wife Lori. They have been married 27 years and have three children and six grandchildren. Three grandchildren live close by in Indiana, and three live in Alabama. The Fletchers enjoy spending time with their family, including frequent trips to Alabama.

In addition to spending time with family, Dan loves serving as an Elder at his church, using his computer skills to support the ministry of his church, and volunteering on the boards of various private associations. In his free time, Dan enjoys learning new skills, especially with technology of all kinds. Dan looks forward to spending quality time with his grandkids on the beach during the summer months. While no longer active, Dan is also a certified SCUBA instructor.

Keith LeMahieu
Vice-President of Operations



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Mid-America Reformed Seminary's

2022 GOLF OUTING

Saturday, August 27, 2022

9 AM shotgun start

Deer Creek Golf Course

25055 S Western Ave

University Park, IL

Watch for more information and registration to come!

