

GREENVILLE PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY FOUNDATIONS



Pictured (clockwise from top-left): New President Dr. Jonathan L. Master began his tenure at the Seminary on July 1, 2020; a new plaque and "Pipa Hall" sign adorn the front of 200 E. Main St., where visitors to the Seminary enter the main building.

FALL 2020

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PO Box 690
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GREENVILLE
PRESBYTERIAN
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
EST. 1987



Welcome from Dr. Jonathan L. Master

As my family and I have settled into Greenville, I have continually thanked God for His sustaining grace in the midst of transition. He has been – and continues to be – faithful to my family as we acclimate to our new surroundings and community. He has likewise kept the Seminary in His care during a tumultuous year marked by a pandemic, political turmoil, and a transition in the Seminary’s own Office of the President.

King David’s words ring true here at Pipa Hall, “He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him” (Psalm 103:10-11). We are grateful for His grace, and we are grateful for the prayerful support of our many friends like you.

When people ask me how I like Greenville (the area and the Seminary community), I can say with a full heart that I love it here. Especially when the students arrived on campus for the fall semester, my sense of excitement came into its own. Christ directed His disciples to “beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest” (Matthew 9:38), and we at the Seminary get a front row seat as witnesses to God’s affirmative answer to that supplication.

However, there is another question which gets posed to me with greater frequency than any other inquiry. Repeatedly, friends of the Seminary have asked me what kinds of changes and developments I anticipate overseeing or even introducing here at the Seminary. This is a question I appreciate hearing because it serves as a constant reminder to me that all of us involved in the administration and instructional programs at the Seminary are but stewards of a precious trust which God has kept for Reformed and Presbyterian churches (and their ministerial candidates) for over 30 years. My answer will come as a surprise to anyone who might be anticipating some kind of sea change or reversal of what has been at the heart of the Seminary in the past.

There is always room for improvement, especially in operations and administration. Additionally, we are reaching a point where I will be working closely with the Board of Trustees and the Academic Dean to oversee hiring new faculty to augment our current line-up of instructors. But in all of this, one of my major responsibilities is to ensure that the big things do not change. Our commitment to personal godliness, confessional integrity, and biblical fidelity must not change, even as we seek to build on what the Lord has done and is doing here.

In speaking with heads of other seminaries, I have heard repeatedly of a “race to the bottom” in American seminary education. I want to make sure that we do not get involved in that sprint to mediocrity. Rather, we need to be faithful to those principles, values, and standards that make Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary stand out as committed to equipping men for the gospel ministry.

Thank you for taking the time to review this edition of our *Foundations* newsletter. Thank you especially for praying for us as we prepare for the coming year. If at any time you would like to reach my office to ask a question, share encouragement, or express a concern, please contact me at jmaster@gpts.edu or by phone at 864.322.2717. Ω



From Appalachian State & Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) to Greenville Seminary

In March 2018, the Seminary announced the creation of a new scholarship program for full-time in-residence Master of Divinity students with backgrounds in student ministry, our *RUF & Student Ministry Fellows Awards Program*. Since the launch of the program, students from a range of college ministries – including Cru, InterVarsity, and church-based outreaches – have benefited from the program. This fall, *M. Dale Hagwood* (pictured below) began his studies with us, having graduated from Appalachian State University in Boone, NC, where he was actively involved in the Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) chapter on campus.

Why did you choose Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary?

I chose Greenville Seminary because I appreciate the Seminary's stance on and commitment to the Westminster Standards. Not to disparage other seminaries I was considering, but Greenville Seminary stood out as an option because of its strong emphasis on historic Presbyterian and Reformed theology. This was important to me because I do not have a strong theological background and I wanted to study under a faculty committed to sound doctrine.

Have you been surprised by any aspect of your experience as a student so far?

I understood quite clearly from the beginning that seminary was going to be very difficult in many ways – it is a Master's program, after all. But one of the things that I have found most surprising was that though Greenville Seminary is known for its strong convictions to the Westminster Standards, I have found among the faculty and the student body some of the most winsome, kind-hearted, and gracious men I have ever known.

What kinds of opportunities have you had in the local church since arriving at Greenville Seminary?

Since I have come to Greenville Seminary, I have been blessed with a strong local church home in Roebuck Presbyterian Church (PCA), and I have been invited to serve as a ministerial intern under Dr. Richard Winston.

What has been your favorite feature of the Metro Greenville area since moving here?

The strongest feature that I have appreciated the most is the plethora of strong PCA churches committed to the inerrancy of the Scriptures, our Reformed faith, and obedience to the Great Commission.

For more information about the Seminary's scholarship programs, please visit gpts.edu/tuition-aid or contact the Seminary at info@gpts.edu. Ω



Profiles in Church Planting

Greenville Seminary students, faculty, and alumni have a strong track record of evangelistic church-planting ministry in a variety of settings, both foreign and domestic. For example, Dr. L. Anthony Curto (Professor of Missions & Apologetics) and Mrs. Kathleen Curto (Registrar) dedicated ten years to church-planting missions work in northern Uganda before coming to Greenville Seminary. At various times in the past, our faculty have been instrumental in serving on provisional sessions and in core groups for church plants in the Greenville area and elsewhere around the country. Presently, members of the Greenville Seminary community and alumni network are actively involved in mission works of several Reformed denominations.

Pastor William Castro (ThM '09) is the Organizing Pastor of *Emmanuel Upstate Presbyterian Church* (Iglesia Emmanuel), a mission work of Calvary Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) in Greenville, SC. Emmanuel Upstate is a multicultural church plant that conducts worship services in English and Spanish. A number of current students and their families are involved in the work, and the church enjoys enthusiastic support from Calvary Presbytery and local congregations in the Greenville area. For more information about Emmanuel Upstate, visit emmanuelupstate.org.

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Pastor Bradley Peppo (MA '14) serves as an Evangelist in the Presbytery of Ohio of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), and has been involved in a series of church plants in the Miami Valley of Ohio since 2013. In 2014-15, Pastor Peppo was instrumental in the planting of *Living Water Presbyterian Church* (OPC) in Springfield, OH while serving as interim pastor for *Covenant Presbyterian Church* (OPC) in Vandalia, OH. After Living Water particularized in 2017, Pastor Peppo began looking for new church-planting opportunities in the area surrounding Dayton, OH. A group initially formed in western Montgomery County, and ultimately became *First Street Reformed Fellowship* (OPC) in downtown Dayton. While this work was coalescing, Pastor Peppo labored to plant what is now *Wilmington Reformed Church* (OPC) in Wilmington, OH. For more information, visit pohopc.org, the website of the Presbytery of Ohio of the OPC.

Dr. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr. (President Emeritus & Professor of Systematic and Homiletical Theology) was recently called by Calvary Presbytery of the PCA to serve as Organizing Pastor of *Antioch Presbyterian Church* (PCA) in Woodruff, SC, not far from the Seminary. Zachary Groff (Class of 2021) is serving the mission work as Dr. Pipa's Ministerial Assistant, and Johann Xie (Class of 2022) is coordinating media production for the work. Antioch originally formed in 1843, was reorganized in the early twentieth century, and is experiencing its second reorganization beginning this year. The mission of the work as a parish church at the crossroads of Greenville and Spartanburg Counties is the gathering and perfecting of God's people through biblical worship, evangelism, and pastoral care. For more information, visit antiochpca.com.

Pastor John Blevins (MDiv '15), Associate Pastor of *Covenant Presbyterian Church* (PCA) in Oak Ridge, TN, is leading an effort to plant a new PCA congregation in the Powell area of Knoxville, TN. Currently in its earliest stages, the *Powell Area Church Plant* has established a support network centered on Covenant PCA in Oak Ridge, but emanating out across Tennessee Valley Presbytery of the PCA and beyond. Pastor Blevins maintains a prayer support group through social media and email. To get in touch with Pastor Blevins, visit covenant-pca.com.

Pastor Nathan John Hilton (MDiv '18) and Pastor Florian Weicken (MDiv '19) are actively involved in planting new congregations of the growing Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England and Wales (EPCEW) denomination. Pastor Hilton is planting *Sunderland Evangelical Presbyterian Church* (EPCEW), which currently meets at the Fulwell Community Library in downtown Sunderland. Pastor Weicken is planting *Zurich Presbyterian Church* (Zürich Presbyterianische Gemeinde) with a core group of 22 souls in the city of Zurich, Switzerland. Both Pastor Hilton and Pastor Weicken are originally from their respective church planting locales, and are remarkable in their zeal for Christ's glory as articulated in the Westminster Standards. More information about Sunderland Evangelical Presbyterian Church can be found at sunderlandpres.org.uk; more information about Zurich Presbyterian Church can be found at zuerichpres.ch.

There are other church plants and alumni which we could (and will) highlight as we celebrate God's answer to our prayers for an enduring Reformation among the nations. For more information, please contact the Seminary's advancement office at advancement@gpts.edu or by phone at 864.322.2717. Ω

Exodus Old and New: A Biblical Theology of Redemption by Dr. L. Michael Morales

InterVarsity Press Academic recently published *Exodus Old and New: A Biblical Theology of Redemption* by Dr. L. Michael Morales (Professor of Biblical Studies). The second volume in the recently launched *Essential Studies in Biblical Theology* series, *Exodus Old and New* presents the key elements of three major redemption movements in Scripture: the exodus out of Egypt, the second exodus foretold by the prophets, and the new exodus accomplished by Jesus Christ. Far from a commentary on the biblical book of Exodus, this new book is an accessible volume of biblical theology which will help readers to grasp one of the major motifs of the Bible.

To mark the release of the book, Dr. Morales sat down for an interview on the Seminary's podcast, *Confessing Our Hope*. The following interview excerpt is drawn from the episode, which is online at both sermonaudio.com/gpts and anchor.fm/gpts.

Why did you choose to unpack a biblical theology of redemption by focusing on the exodus out of Egypt, the second exodus foretold by the prophets, and the new exodus accomplished by Jesus Christ?

I was wanting to follow the movement of the canon itself. So broadly, from the Torah, through the Prophets, and then moving into the New Testament. One of the forms of unity is history itself; that's one of the main lines of unity in the canon. So, I was following those three major movements of history. There are other avenues I could have chosen. For example, one approach could have been to look at the exodus motif for every book in the Bible, which of course would have taken many volumes. The simplest way to offer a brief overview of the canon was to focus on those three historical movements you've mentioned. That being said, I did include some additional material, including a chapter on the exodus motif in the life of Abraham. In doing that, I tried to show that even before the Exodus event, we see these motifs – Abraham could be said to have lived an exodus-shaped life.

What are the major themes of the exodus out of Egypt that then find expression in both the second exodus in the prophets and then the new exodus in Christ? Specifically, what thematic or textual parallels do you find particularly compelling?

There is a large variety of different aspects to the exodus motif. When we think about the exodus movement comprehensively, it involves more than just the exodus out of Egypt, but the wilderness traditions, even the entry into the Land. So really, the

first exodus pattern is out of Egypt all the way to the Promised Land, and it culminates with Solomon's temple. But speaking of the Exodus proper – just the exit out of Egypt – the main glorious theme of the exodus out of Egypt is the knowledge of Yahweh. The way that He delivered His people brings glory to His Name. We see that coming up in the prophets. Ezekiel, for example, has very similar statements scattered throughout his prophecies that when God acts again in redemption anew that it will lead to greater knowledge of the Lord.

The deliverance out of exile is another theme. We know again that Israel wound up back in exile, and it was in God's wisdom that He orchestrated events for Israel to wind up down in Egypt and to deliver them from exile as the great pattern, and even His pattern of deliverance of the nations out of exile. Ultimately, the true exodus, the definitive exodus will lead us out of exile – as in, separation from God – and we see that reiterated in the New Testament as well.

Other motifs include the fact that the Lord uses a shepherd to bring His people out. Obviously, He used Moses. Interestingly, He encountered Moses while he was shepherding sheep. He eventually raised up David as the shepherd over His people. For the second exodus prophesied, we find out that the new Moses will be a new David. Again, this we find scattered throughout the prophets – Ezekiel is one of the obvious ones.

But another theme is seen in the fact that this deliverance is a redemption. Passover is a huge theme. Without the Passover, the deliverance out of Egypt would have been reduced to a political release. But through the Passover – through the shedding of blood – the whole theology becomes a ransoming from death. The fact that God refers to Israel as His firstborn in confronting Pharaoh through Moses leads us to look at the exodus out of Egypt as the redemption of God's firstborn son from death. That's an idea that of course culminates with the resurrection of God's true and eternal Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, from the dead. A lot of these motifs get reiterated by the prophets and then taken up by Christ in the New Testament.

What difference ought a close examination of the theme of redemption as expressed in these three exodus movements have on Christian living, and especially according to the Apostle Paul?

I refer to Paul as the Apostle of the Resurrection, and

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Financial Update

for fiscal year 2020-2021
(7/1/20 - 11/12/20)

INCOME	ACTUAL	BUDGET	VARIANCE
UNRESTRICTED DONATIONS			
Churches	\$ 82,750	\$ 123,335	\$ 40,585
Individuals	\$ 271,297	\$ 376,455	\$ 105,158
OTHER INCOME	\$ 130,451	\$ 161,390	\$ 30,939
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 484,498	\$ 661,180	\$ 176,682
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 492,170	\$ 589,463	\$ 97,293
NET INCOME	\$ 7,672		



Though the Board of Trustees passed a fiscally conservative budget for FY2020-21 at its spring meeting in May, the Seminary's operational expenses have remained well below budget. Part of the reason for this is the fact that the search for a new Professor of Biblical Studies is ongoing, and so payroll funds budgeted for that position have not been expended. Please pray for this search and for God's continuing provision of funds for additional faculty. July, August, and September yielded relatively high revenues from a variety of sources, October's revenue was low compared to recent years. The Seminary's administration is going into the final weeks of the year eagerly anticipating a strong end of year campaign to prepare for 2021. Year-end giving is crucially important for keeping up with expenses during the winter and spring months. These expenses include faculty and staff payroll, building utilities and maintenance, library acquisitions, and other improvements in our programs, communications, and facilities. Especially in light of the worldwide political turmoil and economic disruptions of 2020 (and prospectively, of 2021), thank you for your generous support of our faculty, staff, and students. Ω

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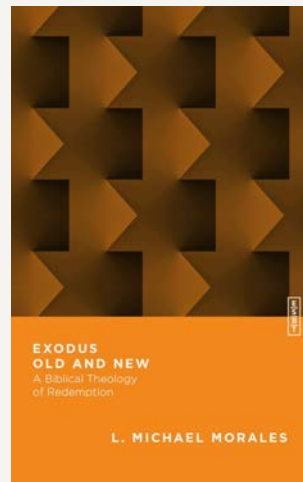
incorporating material from Paul's epistles was a great inspiration and delight to me. Again, it just ministered to my own soul in working through the material. It made me realize afresh how central to Paul's thinking the resurrection of Christ was. Of course, along the Road to Damascus he encountered the risen Christ and that changed everything for him. He himself tells the church in Corinth that "if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins" (1 Corinthians 15:17). But through the resurrection, because it is the reality, God's people have hope.

The resurrection is the great hope that Israel's ancestors had in the Old Covenant, and it is the great hope that we have now through the assurance that Christ indeed has been raised. It is a great comfort in the face of death. In fact, Paul says in his letter to the Philippians that "to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21b). Christ's death and resurrection relates to every aspect of Paul's theology. So in terms of sanctification, we are united to Christ and so we are raised up with Christ (Ephesians 2:6), and we are also called to die with Christ, to put to death more deeply our old sinful flesh, to mortify the flesh. Paul will even boast in the cross at the end of Galatians because he says that the cross is that mechanism by which the world is crucified to him and him to the world, and all of this is for the sake of bolstering his resurrection hope. Again, in his letter to the Philippians, he talks about himself being conformed to Christ's death if by any means he might attain to the resurrection of the dead. That really is the key. The resurrection of the dead is the remedy to all the problems that God's people face in this life. It is an important reminder that in this life we are to be crucified with Christ, to die to this world and our sinful desires and the flesh, and we have this unshakeable hope that through the power of the resurrection we

are enabled to put to death the deeds of the flesh. But it also reminds us that this life is full of suffering, and our ultimate hope is not for this age, but is to be raised up bodily with Christ and to enjoy everlasting life in a new creation. That is when we will really experience the true culminating exodus.

From beginning to end in Paul's theology – all of his admonitions to Christians to suffer well and to be willing to suffer with Christ so as to be raised up in glory – it really seems to be the north star of his pastoral counsel. Again, for me, these were important reminders for my own soul as well, and so I hope that it will be a blessing to God's people.

Exodus Old and New: A Biblical Theology of Redemption is available for purchase wherever books are sold, including at gpts.edu/shop. Ω



Memorial Giving to Greenville Seminary

"The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:56-57). These words and their context are frequently read in times of deep sadness and loss, and they have brought comfort to generations of believers. Certainly these verses have been near and dear to many of us this year as sorrow, confusion, isolation, and sickness have been visited upon local communities around the world.

On occasion, families contact the Seminary to arrange for memorial gifts to be made in honor of a deceased loved one. When such arrangements are made, the Seminary's Advancement Office notes any gifts made in response to the memorial announcement, and a Seminary staff member contacts the family.

Memorial gifts are a significant part of the Seminary's operations for several reasons. First, the funds are

immediately applied to the work of the Seminary. Second, memorials frequently introduce the Seminary to people who otherwise would not know about the school. Third, memorial gifts align closely with the Seminary's vision *for our enduring Reformation* in that they perpetuate the ministry of the school beyond the lifetime of those in whose honor such gifts are made.

Martin Luther (1483-1546) is reputed to have said, "Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree." This saying instructs us that present labors and efforts are best executed in the spirit of faithfulness, and not strictly in hopes of reaping immediate benefits. *Our enduring Reformation* is dependent on the present faithfulness and generosity of Seminary friends and donors, regardless of what an uncertain future may hold. Thank you for your support. Ω

Who is GOD

The Trinity, the Gospel, and the Christian Life

2021 Spring Theology Conference

March 9-11, 2021

The gospel is about knowing the right God in the right way. We must come to the Father, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit. The 2021 Spring Theology Conference aims to show how and why the doctrine of the Trinity is central to both the gospel and the Christian life.



Bolyard | Curto | Fesko | Hamilton | Master | McGraw | Pipa | Sanders

for more information and to register, visit gpts.edu/conference