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THE MAGAZINE OF EVANGELICAL SEMINARY

THE ROAD TO Spiritual Formation

Forging a path to Christ-like
servant leadership



THE “X” FACTOR

In 2009, American Airlines pilot Chesley “Sully” Sullenberger landed a passenger jet on the Hudson River after the engines had been destroyed by an encounter with a flock of birds. In doing so, he saved the lives of all 155 people on board. Labeled by the media as “the miracle on the Hudson,” this astounding feat has recently been made into a movie by Clint Eastwood.

The story would have ended very differently were it not for the “X” factor — which had nothing to do with mechanical systems or birds. The “X” factor was Sully himself. His ability to remain focused and unruffled in the midst of a barrage of bad news, and then quickly choose an unlikely solution to an unprecedented problem, resulted in a happy ending to what would have otherwise been disastrous.

There is a similar “X” factor in ministry. A pastor can study the Bible, know its themes and structure, and exegete its multiple languages. He or she can learn how to preach, run board meetings, visit people in the hospital, and make an altar call. But unless such ministers are formed in the character of Christ, personally transformed by the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives, they will miss out on the joys of intimacy with Jesus and the opportunity to lead others into that same transforming delight.

Who would not want that? Here’s where the problem lies: Not only does such deep personal transformation come at the expense of long and often painful struggle, but it also results in a person who is out of touch with the dominant values of our society, and sometimes even the church.

We all know the beatitudes of Jesus, for instance, but how many in our culture truly believe that meekness is blessed? Who would want to be poor in spirit? Or persecuted? We know the fruit of the Spirit, but how often have you seen a “help wanted” ad for a leadership role that included adjectives like “patient,” “gentle,” and “peaceful”? We read at weddings the marvelous descriptions of love in 1 Corinthians 13, but how many truly want to “keep no record of wrongs”? In a world in which people walk away from personal commitments, who aspires to always protect, trust, hope, and persevere?

Our culture likes smart, savvy people, believing that “big” equals “good” and that if something “works,” it must be right. But it takes a person of strong character to lead, live, and love in the countercultural way of Jesus. It takes a person of deep commitment to take up a cross daily. It takes a person

of extraordinary compassion to help others on a journey that sometimes includes suffering. It takes a person formed in the character of Christ to help people “see in the dark.” And that is the challenge of ministry in this generation — to lead people out of the exhausting idolatry of success and into the restorative joy of surrender.

This is why Evangelical Seminary emphasizes the spiritual formation of our students. We always have. We have never believed that the mere acquisition of a master’s degree is sufficient for ministry. We know that we must not merely be taught; we must be changed. If “my old self has been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me” (Galatians 2:20).

We pursue ongoing transformation so that “Christ in me” becomes “Christ living through me.” Christ is not just the core of our teaching; the Spirit of Christ is the one who teaches through the professors. And that same Spirit of Christ is the one who, in the willing student, receives what is taught and uses it to renew and restore.

In the movie about Sully, he is surprised to encounter opposition from investigators who insist that his instrument panel should have led him to a different decision. They preferred he had trusted his data over the “X” factor of the wisdom he had gained over 40 years of flying. The same thing happened to Jesus. He was opposed to those who preferred a legalistic God over the loving Father whom Jesus knew so intimately.

In the end, Sully was proven right. In the end, so was Jesus. In the end, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord. And, in the end, anyone who dares to do ministry will admit that it is impossible without having been spiritually formed in the character of Christ. It is our mission and our privilege to support and encourage them in that most important of callings.



Dr. Tony Blair
Ph.D., D.Min., President

WHY EVANGELICAL DOES SPIRITUAL FORMATION



How Do People Experience God?

“Scripture is full of instructions to seek God, and He has provided us with spiritual practices — prayer, fasting, feasts, meditation, worship, caring for the poor, pilgrimage, Scripture reading, etc. — that put our hearts, minds, and bodies into an effective posture to know Him and to be formed by Him.”

— **Doreen Miller**, Coordinator of Spiritual Formation for the M.A. in Ministry and Master of Divinity Programs

What Do We Mean by “Spiritual Formation”?

“Often the term ‘spiritual formation’ is understood as a synonym for discipleship, and that understanding implies that it describes cognitive learning and spiritual ‘disciplines’ to which we seek to be faithful. I’m passionate about reminding believers that although these are important, purely human effort of learning and doing will fall short of shaping us in Christlikeness. We also need individual and corporate experiences of God’s love, grace, and truth to learn to be open and attentive to the sometimes ‘still, small voice’ of God.”

— **Laurie Mellinger**, Associate Professor of Spiritual Formation and Christian Theology

What Does God Want With Us?

“God desires relationship with human beings, and He designed us with the capacity to ‘sense’ Him and relate to Him in real, meaningful ways. This means that every person, whether they realize it or not, is equipped to experience God, and likely does sense God’s presence at times, whether he or she realizes it, or acknowledges it, or even believes it.”

— **Jo Ann Kunz**, Director of the M.A. in Spiritual Formation and Direction Program

Knowledge of

God and knowledge of Self

SHAPING THE LIFE OF GOD IN YOU

During my seminary days I often inhabited local coffee shops to saturate myself with enough caffeine and coffee aroma to keep my attention span at full volume. On one such occasion, I peered over the mountain of books on my table and noticed a man staring my direction. He was on a rest break from working construction outside with several of his crew, and failed to hide his curiosity in my work. While waiting in a small crowd for his drink, he meandered into my territory and sat down across from my book-fortress. After some initial questions about what I was studying and why, he went on to tell me that he was a Christian who had a continual struggle with a heroin addiction.

Interestingly enough, this revelation is not what stands out in my memory. Instead, it is what he said next. Even though he told me about his heroin addiction in a normal conversational voice — plenty loud to be heard by others — he decided his next statement needed a bit more privacy. He leaned in close as if he was worried someone might hear, and he quietly asked, “I’ve heard there are some people who study theology and it doesn’t change their lives. Is that true?” It was as though he were asking me about unicorns or being abducted by aliens. “Could something this absurd actually happen?”, asked the Christian man with the heroin addiction.

We see two very different Christian people in this story. Both people know God, to some degree, and yet both are so unaware of themselves that their own sin seemed innocuous. Both had become so used to certain sins that they were no longer potent and devastating. They each, in their own ways, failed to truly know themselves. I was interacting with someone addicted to heroin, which was, as far as I know, a first for me. If someone would have inquired just prior if I thought a Christian could be addicted to heroin, I would have had to think long and hard about it. My gut-inclination would have been no, because it is always easier to judge others’ sins as worse than your own (Matthew 7:1-5).

In an interesting reversal, this man asked about a sin that was as absurd to him as heroin was to me, but now I found myself on the other side. I have known and seen the reality of studying Scripture, theology, and ministry without having Christ at the center. I have experienced that absurdity. Here, therefore, we look at how knowledge of God and knowledge of ourselves are intertwined, and introduce another foundational spiritual posture of the Christian life: self-examination.



Dr. Kyle Strobel,
*Professor of Spiritual
Theology and Formation,
Talbot School of Theology*



KNOWING GOD DEMANDS KNOWING SELF

To know God we have to know ourselves, because knowing God entails coming into relationship with Him. If God were simply an object, we could know “it” without knowing ourselves. Knowing an object does not call us into relationship. But to know God, actually know Him personally rather than simply know about Him, we stand in a relationship of judgment and redemption. God is not truly known by those He is not in relationship with. Satan’s knowledge of God is true, we are told (James 2:19), but it is knowledge about God rather than a real, abiding knowledge of God. A real knowledge of God is knowledge abiding in love — an affectionate knowledge that God is beautiful and glorious. Everything we know about God, in other words, helps define who we are, because who we are is ultimately known in relation to who God is and what God has called us to.

IMITATION OF CHRIST

In the shadow of God’s glory we grasp our sinfulness, and in gazing upon His beauty we see the ugliness of our deformity. Jonathan Edwards states, “He that has much grace, apprehends much more than others, that great height to which his love ought to ascend; and he sees better than others, how little a way he has risen towards that height.” Grace leads to recognition of the infinite distance between God and us. In grace we grow more and more in awe of God’s saving work. God’s work does not seem less amazing; rather, it appears even more amazing and necessary as we grow in grace. Therefore, the knowledge of who we are in light of who God is leads to the virtue of humility. Humility, which builds on the interdependence of knowledge of God and self, depends on an imitation of Christ.

KNOWING OUR DEPRAVITY

The purpose of viewing our depravity is to grasp more fully onto Christ, who has overcome and conquered sin. It is not to equate yourself with sin, but is an attempt to take stock of how pervasive sin is in your life. All action, especially religious or spiritual actions, are tainted deeply with sin. Spiritual formation entails an honest and

open confession of ourselves before the God who searches and knows our hearts (Psalm 139:1). The only way this knowledge is possible is by a true apprehension of who God is. Everything that is done, achieved, lost, or depraved is now viewed in light of God and His glory.

MATURITY REIMAGINED

Understanding maturity in this manner is very different than what many assume. For many, the Christian life has been so oriented around themselves and fixing their problems, that “growth” necessarily entails seeing yourself as holy, good, and true. Edwards tells us a different story. There are two divergent emphases that drive Edwards’s understanding of the Christian life. First is the idea of true growth, which is greater dependence upon God. Second is the idea that as we grow we become more aware of our depravity, Edwards tells us, “It is affecting to me to think, how ignorant I was, when I was a young Christian, of the bottomless, infinite depths of wickedness, pride, hypocrisy and deceit left in my heart.” Edwards understands that even though there is a long road ahead, he has also journeyed far. He became aware of his own heart, and found a greater understanding of his own depravity in his maturity rather than in his immaturity.

The world in which we live is designed to thwart a deep knowledge of ourselves. Advertisers play on our temptations, death seems impossible, and we are constantly presented with infinite options at our disposal. Knowing the depths of our own hearts — our temptations, blindness, fear, anger, and fleshliness — allows us to be present to the reality that our life is hid with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3). It turns us away from ourselves and onto grace. Therefore, self-examination is a way to come to the cross and cry out for grace and mercy, trusting that the Holy Spirit too is crying out from within us with groaning too deep for words (Romans 8:26).

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The Road to Fo

This past spring, Evangelical Seminary celebrated the grand openings of the David A. Dorsey Museum of Biblical Archeology and the Pense Learning Center, which also houses the Rostad Library, the Evangelical Center for United Methodist Studies, the Evangelical Center for Anabaptist Studies, the Evangelical Journal, the Annals of Eastern Pennsylvania, the Journal of the Historical Society and the Commission on Archives and History of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church, and the Center for Online Learning. Also, the Pense Learning Center will be working in collaboration with the School of Lifelong Learning.

Today more than ever, the church needs thought leaders in the public square. This is one reason why the Pense Learning Center launched a fellowship program. Students who enter the program, like Cris Cramer (see page 7), are given small scholarships and in return assist with the editing and production of the previously mentioned publications. They also work on projects at the Dorsey Museum. Fellows receive hands-on academic experience conducting research, publishing, and presenting at academic conferences.

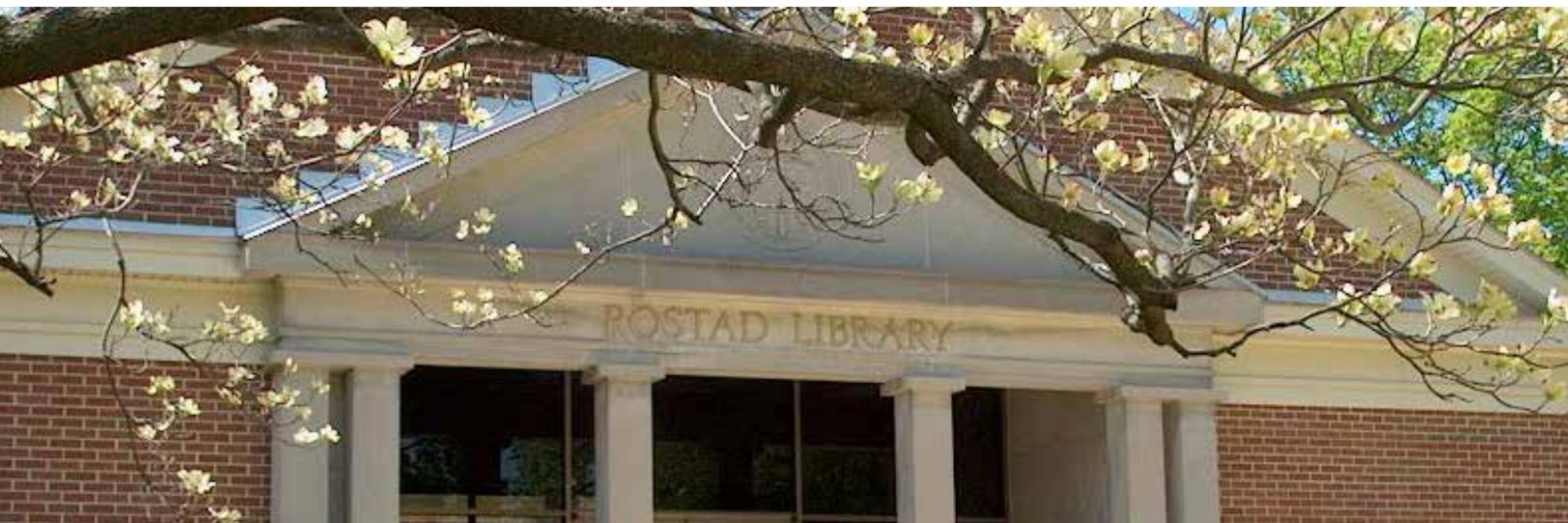
In addition to continuing to provide access to theological resources for Evangelical students, the Rostad Library will

6 **“Today more than ever, the church needs thought leaders in the public square. This is one reason why the Pense Learning Center launched a fellowship program.”**

Theological education and the church are facing new challenges in the 21st century, so seminaries must be prepared to assist the church in new, creative ways to effectively equip leaders. The Pense Learning Center will help Evangelical live out its mission first by augmenting classroom education through the resources of the Rostad Library, the Dorsey Museum, and the Center for Online Learning, and student fellowships that encourage scholarship. Secondly, the center is providing resources and access to theological education outside of the graduate classroom through various programs.

provide theological education for local pastors, community members, and students taking non-credit courses. The library will offer seminars in theological research targeted to the needs of pastors, Sunday school teachers, Bible study leaders, and lay people in the church.

The Pense Learning Center is working closely to further develop the Evangelical Centers for United Methodist Studies and Anabaptist Studies. These centers will encourage scholarship and research in the study of their traditions, as well as provide courses and seminars for local



Information

A FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM FOR LEADERS

congregations. Further, both centers will enable United Methodists and Anabaptists to speak into the larger evangelical world.

The School of Lifelong Learning has offered non-credit coursework for the Evangelical Congregational Church and lay pastors, as well as daylong seminars and programming. As part of the mission of the Pense Learning Center to expand access to theological education for those outside of the graduate-level classroom, the School of Lifelong Learning will work to expand non-credit theological education by offering additional courses. The goal is to make theological education available to those not able to take a formal course of study or who just wish to know more about their faith.

The last four months have been exciting as we have been putting all of these pieces together and developing a web presence for the Pense Learning Center. We are excited to see what God will do as we seek new, innovative ways to effectively equip God's people to lead, passionately carrying the transformational message of Christ into the world.



Mark Draper,
*Ph.D., Director of
Online Learning,
Director of Pense
Learning Center*

For Cris Cramer, the commute to the Evangelical campus in Myerstown takes a good hour and a half. Pursuing a Master of Arts in Religion degree she's on track to finish next spring, the resident of Millerstown, northwest of Harrisburg, is on a spiritual journey that has brought her to the seminary and to a fellowship in Evangelical's Pense Learning Center.

At the center, Cris works with Doug Buckwalter, Ph.D., Professor of New Testament, on the *Evangelical Journal*, the seminary's academic publication. "I'm getting actual experience not in writing yet," says the aspiring writer, "but in editing and in seeing how publishing works, with possibly the opportunity to write and publish in the journal or in other journals. It's a chance to extend my academic work into the real world, pushing it forward outside the classroom."

Cris' sense of calling outside the classroom extends to the unchurched or the "de-churched," if you will: "I want to help unfold the Scriptures for people, especially those who have left them behind. There are tons of people who think Scripture is irrelevant, full of old ideas about the world, but it isn't. I want to show people that the teaching of the Bible still matters; it just looks different than we're used to. Sometimes people will accept the New Testament because it has that 'Jesus guy' in it, sounding more like love, peace and happiness, while the Old Testament is about an angry old God, and lots of wars, chaos and fighting.

But they are not two separate books — I want to show people that there's as much grace in the older book as in the newer one."

Her Evangelical experience has opened up encounters with God's grace in her own life as she learns about spiritual formation. "Some of that spiritual formation comes by the examples of

my professors and of other people on campus, people who love God and want to serve Him," Cris notes. "That comes ahead of any academic pursuits; it's the foundation for everything else, and it's an inspiring challenge to live up to. One of my classes this semester is Christian Spiritual

Formation with Laurie Mellinger, (Ph.D., Associate Professor of Spiritual Formation and Christian Theology), and I can tell the shaping is happening as I explore spiritual disciplines I haven't before. God is using this time to work on my insides, carving away bad old patterns I've always had. But now I'm looking at them and seeing they're not healthy, not right, like putting too much importance on good grades or on what others think of me, for example."

Whether through her Pense Learning Center Fellowship or through her classes, "I am so thankful for the opportunity to be at Evangelical," Cris declares. "I'm excited to be in a place where I know God wants me to be." For Cris, the road to conformity to God's image leads through Evangelical, no matter how long that road may be.



Cris Cramer,
*Pense Learning Center
Fellowship Student*

Formation of a Collaboration

EVANGELICAL SEMINARY AND HUNTINGTON UNIVERSITY



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Evangelical Seminary has announced a yearlong collaboration with Huntington University in Indiana. The goal of the collaboration is to determine if the needs of both institutions can be better met by integrating the faculty, staff, and students of Evangelical into Huntington.

“As an alumnus of both institutions, and as a United Brethren minister, I cannot imagine a better alignment of academic ministries than that which is being forged between Huntington and Evangelical,” says Dr. Tony Blair, Evangelical president. “What excites me most, however, is imagining how we can together serve the church more fully and more creatively than either organization could do alone. I look forward to what God has in store for this collaboration.”

Founded in 1897 by the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, Huntington is located on a contemporary, lakeside campus in northeast Indiana near the city of Fort Wayne. Huntington has a historically strong relationship with Evangelical, with many United Brethren pastors having received advanced degrees from the seminary.

“Huntington is excited about the opportunity to intentionally engage in a year of collaborative conversations as to a more clearly defined shared future with Evangelical,” states Dr. Sherilyn Emberton, president of Huntington. “We are blessed to have had many graduates pursue advanced degrees there, as well as the honor of having three graduates serve as the seminary’s president,”

Evangelical was founded as the Evangelical Congregational School of Theology in 1953. While originally organized to prepare men for ministry, the seminary now welcomes both male and female faculty and students from many evangelical backgrounds and denominations. Over the years Evangelical has expanded programs and teaching sites beyond the Myerstown, PA, campus to encompass nearby Lancaster and Harrisburg.

Although the original courses only applied to pastoral ministry within a local congregational setting, the scope of programs now offered include pastoral ministry, leadership, marriage and family therapy, spiritual formation, and academic studies. The collaboration with Huntington arose from an intentional strategic planning process for the seminary initiated by its Board of Trustees in 2014.



JOIN US

LIVING AND SHARING THE GOSPEL

Thursday, December 1, 2016

Time: 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

Evangelical Seminary campus, Myerstown, PA

Evangelical and Religious & Theological Abstracts are co-sponsoring "An Invitation to Listen With Scot McKnight." Dr. McKnight, a renowned New Testament scholar and popular blogger, will present a series of lectures in Dech Chapel. For more information, visit www.evangelical.edu/scotmcknight.



FOUR CHAPLAINS RUN

February 4, 2017

Time: 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Evangelical Seminary campus, Myerstown, PA

At this four-mile run and 1.5-mile run/walk, help support the seminary while enjoying the small community feel as you cover the lightly traveled roads of Myerstown and Jackson Township. The course is mostly flat with rolling hills.

Register at:

evangelical.edu/4chap



SEEKING THE GOOD OF THE CITY

Monday Evening, February 17, 2017

Evangelical Seminary Campus, Myerstown, PA

The Pense Learning Center, in partnership with Hope International, will host "Seeking the Good of the City: A Forum on Alleviating Poverty." This conference will help equip local leaders with the tools necessary to recognize, evaluate, and build more effective efforts to address poverty within their communities. Each participant will receive a free copy of *When Helping Hurts* by Brian Fikkert and Steve Corbett. For more information, contact Ken Nafziger at knafziger@evangelical.edu.



SEXUAL IDENTITY AND THE CHURCH

Friday Evening, April 27, 2017

Evangelical Seminary campus, Myerstown, PA

Join the Evangelical community as we welcome Dr. Mark Yarhouse, a Professor of Psychology at Regent University and author, who will address "Sexual Identity and the Church: Navigating LGBT Issues in a Changing Culture." For more information, contact George Davis at gdavis@evangelical.edu.

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ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Time: 6:45 a.m.

Fairview Golf Course, Lebanon, PA

No matter your skill level, this round of golf will help transform lives with the gospel. Save the date for the 32nd annual Evangelical Seminary Golf Tournament, being held in scenic Lebanon County. Proceeds will benefit Evangelical's Fund for Transformational Leadership. For more information, contact Ken Nafziger at knafziger@evangelical.edu.

WALKING WITH GOD MURAL RETURNED

Evangelical Seminary recently returned to the Saint family a large mural painted by Lawrence Saint, father of Nate Saint, who was martyred in 1956 as he reached out to the Waodani people of Ecuador. The 477-square-foot mural, which depicts men and women who walked with God, was given to Evangelical in 1966 and displayed in Dech Chapel until removed during chapel renovations. Jaime Saint, a grandson of Nate Saint, received the mural on behalf of I-TEC, a mission agency that will house the mural from now on.



Transformational Giving

GIFTS FOR TODAY AND GIFTS FOR TOMORROW

I recently met with two Evangelical students who shared their stories of personal and spiritual transformation. Their testimonies inspire me, and I trust they will inspire you as well. Your partnership with our seminary helps us provide a high quality education that truly makes a difference in lives both now and in the future.

Faith Ware and her husband are enthusiastic church planters who already obtained seminary degrees. But when Faith heard about Evangelical's Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation and Direction, she and her husband eagerly moved near Myerstown so she could enroll in the program. Faith desired to be an asset to her husband's church planting ministry. She has a calling to guide those seeking spiritual direction and help them grow significantly in their relationship with the Lord. Faith knows this will result in more spiritually mature churches, as mature believers in Christ bring others to the Savior.

Lemuel James, a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army, is a student who is benefitting from our Four Chaplains Scholarship program. He received a degree from a Bible college but didn't feel completely prepared to be a military chaplain. Lemuel says his experience at Evangelical has transformed him in that he is studying alongside students from many different Christian denominations. Because of this he feels more prepared to minister more effectively across denominational lines. We know that God will transform lives through Lemuel's global reach as he encourages our service men and women and their families.

Transformational students like Faith and Lemuel are why your gifts to Evangelical are so significant in building the kingdom of God. We could not have started influential new programs like the Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation and Direction, and the Four Chaplains Scholarship, without people like you who faithfully invest in the seminary.

We are so grateful for those of you who have faithfully supported Evangelical for years. We invite you to continue partnering with us to ensure this kind of transformational education lasts well into the future by including Evangelical in your current giving and in legacy planning. When you do this, we not only receive the gifts we need for today, but also those we need for tomorrow.



Ann E. Steel
*Vice President
for Institutional
Advancement*





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MISSION STATEMENT

In partnership with the church, Evangelical Seminary develops servant leaders for transformational ministry in a broken and complex world by nurturing rigorous minds, passionate hearts, and Christ-centered actions.

FURTHER YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Evangelical offers a wide variety of degree programs for anyone at any age or any level of theological development. For more information, visit

www.evangelical.edu

Master of Divinity

Receive a foundation of practical tools and insights needed to make a real difference wherever you serve.

78 credits 3-4 years

Master of Arts in Religion

Receive a foundation of practical tools and insights needed to make a real difference wherever you serve.

48 credits 3-4 years

Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy

Help others build healthy relationships and strong families.

65 credits 2½-4 years

Master of Arts in Leadership Development

Receive a rare combination of spiritual formation and a graduate-level understanding of crucial leadership principles.

36 credits 2 years

Master of Arts in Ministry

Blend real-world experience, church history, theology, and biblical studies in an integrated format.

36 credits 2 years

Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation & Direction

Learn to grow spiritually and relationally, and help others grow as well.

48 credits 2-4 years

Certificate in Spiritual Direction

Obtain a certificate to enhance your direction in ministry.

12 credits 2 years