

2020 DONOR IMPACT REPORT



One of the most amazing ministry leadership passages in the New Testament is tucked away at the end of Acts 18. Apollos, a gifted and powerful teacher and preacher, was demonstrably effective in mission and ministry. Yet something was missing. Priscilla and her husband Aquila knew what it was. They came alongside him and “explained the way of God more adequately” (v 26).

What was the result? Apollos became a great help to new believers in Achaia, and he proved from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah. Eventually, he was even mentioned in the same breath as Paul and Peter in 1 Corinthians 1:12. All because someone came alongside him and helped equip him for life and ministry.

This is the heartbeat of MB Seminary! To educate and equip disciples of Jesus for the sake of God’s kingdom and mission.

Your generosity enables MB Seminary to shape leaders and change lives across the country and the world; thank you for financially supporting MB Seminary in 2020. Together, we make a difference as we navigate faith and life in a complex world that desperately needs a Saviour.

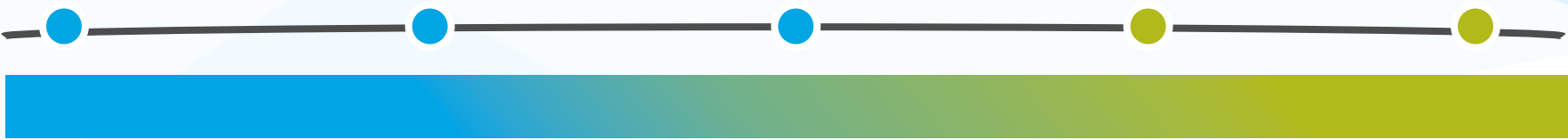
Thank you for being a part of the ministry of MB Seminary!



Mark Wessner, Ph.D. is President of MB Seminary and Associate Professor of Biblical Studies for Leadership. When asked what he has learned in the challenges of 2020, Mark replied, “The work of God continues regardless of any uncertainty in our lives, leadership, or the world around us. While the church’s methods change throughout time, God’s mission does not, and I have been inspired by the courage and creativity of many of our churches and leaders!”

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

As the MB Church of Canada's National Seminary, our mission is to educate and equip men and women to lead the church and reach the world. Yet, leadership is not only for those in or aiming for professional ministry. Regardless of where you are in your journey as a disciple of Jesus, MB Seminary has **something for everyone** to help equip you along the way. From our biannual devotional series to events on relevant topics and courses in graduate theological education, MB Seminary aims to shape leaders and change lives wherever they may be. Join us. We can make a difference as we, together, navigate faith and life in the complex world in which we live.



ENHANCING

Leaders never stop learning. Whether it is pursuing a degree or auditing a relevant course, MB Seminary can help enhance your ministry. For instance, Johnny is the pastor of Discipleship and Life Groups at Eastview Community Church in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and he is currently working toward his MA degree at MB Seminary. When asked how his seminary studies help him in his role, he responded, "I often find that what I am learning *inspires the ministry I am a part of at Eastview.*"



EDUCATING

Churches need leaders, and one of our core values is to help educate and shape leaders both formatively and theologically. Nolan is one such leader who has a clear call to ministry and is preparing by studying with MB Seminary. Unable to relocate to learn, our online courses make it possible for him to attain a seminary education. Nolan loves his studies, especially the ability to dive deeply into theological topics and wrestle with how they come together in "real life." He says his *"classes at MB Seminary have been some of the best he's ever taken."*



DISCERNING

Discerning God's call can be one of life's most profound experiences. Recently, April, a Therapeutic Recreation Specialist in Ontario, explored whether God is calling her to bi-vocational ministry. To help her, she enrolled in our Christian Leadership course online with MB Seminary. She says, "the course I took *gave me the in-depth teachings and tools I needed in order to deepen my understanding* of Christian leadership and how to apply my gifts both in my personal and professional life."



EQUIPPING

We've all asked the question about how our faith should shape our view on a given issue. Our new medium, *"Navigate: Faith and Life with MB Seminary,"* is designed to help answer those questions. Our first event in November equipped our MB family across the country to engage with the question of what our response should be to Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD). One participant said, "All three of the presenters had prepared very well and with the solid biblical and theological presentations of Doug and Brian, and the careful words of Gloria about the experience of working with people preparing to die, *anyone listening had a very rich experience.*"



UNFOLDING

Each year, as Christians celebrate Lent and Advent, MB Seminary produces our biannual devotional designed to help readers engage, reflect and be transformed by the Scriptures. Inspired by Psalm 119:130, where *"the unfolding of your word brings light,"* authors from across our MB family offer daily insight and encouragement to over a thousand readers, introducing them to Jesus, or strengthening them in their spiritual journey.



GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Graduate theological education is at the heart of what we do at MB Seminary. Whether it is at our campus in Langley, BC or in Winnipeg, MB, or online through the ACTS World Campus, our mission is to shape leaders theologically and formatively to lead Jesus' church.



One such leader is Johnny. Johnny is the pastor of Discipleship and Life Groups at Eastview Community Church in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and is working toward his Master of Arts in Christian Ministry at MB Seminary.

When asked how his seminary studies help him in his role, Johnny responded, "I often find that *what I am learning is directly applicable to the ministry I am involved in*. Whether it is learning new ways to engage with the Holy Spirit through prayer and scripture, understanding how to communicate complex theological ideas in simple terms, or diving deeper into biblical stories to unearth new meaning, *what I am learning inspires the ministry I am a part of at Eastview*."

IS THIS THE BEST GOD COULD DO?

"Because my brother and I grew up in a difficult family situation, I often asked why God could not help fix the difficult situation we were in. Without knowing it, I was expressing the classical formulation of the problem of evil: If God is good and all-powerful, why is there evil in the world?"

The most incisive indictment against Christianity resides in the notion of a God who created a world in which there is untold suffering and death. It raises the question "Is this the best God could do?"

In his latest book, ***God Never Meant For Us to Die***, faculty member Dr. Pierre Gilbert expresses his dissatisfaction with the usual responses from Christian theologians and philosophers. That dissatisfaction drove him into a careful investigation of the creation account, which would provide the key to this thorny question, namely that the injunction not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was, in fact, a curse and blessing formula.

This book, a result of a very personal journey, is a response to the problem of evil that unconditionally affirms the goodness and power of God. It is available at amazon.ca and other online retailers.



Pierre Gilbert, Ph.D. is Associate Professor of Bible and Theology at MB Seminary. For Pierre, joy comes because "the Seminary allows me to devote myself to studying the Bible and leading others into a greater understanding of it. As people get to know the Scriptures better, they also grow in their knowledge of our Lord and his love."



FAITH AND LIFE WITH MB SEMINARY

6 PRINCIPLES TO NAVIGATE REVELATION

with Dr. Darrell Johnson

FEBRUARY 9 | 1PM PST | LIVESTREAM



We are excited to partner with Dr. Darrell Johnson as he leads us through **6 Principles to Navigate Revelation**. Please join us February 9 for this live, interactive presentation that will strengthen your ability to read, understand, and teach through the Book of Revelation. See mbseminary.ca/navigate-revelation for info and registration.



MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

How can we uphold our theological position of “no” while engaging within a culture of people who are saying “yes”?

Our new medium for engaging in topics of faith and life relevant to our churches and community, **NAVIGATE** seeks to open dialogue on critical issues that intersect church and culture. One such critical issue is **Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD)**.

You might be surprised to learn that a recent poll suggested that 80 percent of Canadians believe it should be easier to make their own end-of-life decisions. The poll also reported that 33 percent describe themselves as “enthusiastic supporters,” while another 48 percent “cautiously support” the idea of ending life through medical assistance. These findings alert us to the reality that MAiD is being viewed in increasingly more positive ways. It is impacting people we know in our workplaces, neighbourhoods, and even our churches, and better preparation is needed for conversations with those exploring its possibilities.

As Mennonite Brethren, we affirm that all life is a gift from God and belongs to God (as expressed in Article 14 of the MB Confession of Faith). So how can we uphold our theological position of “no” while engaging within a culture of people who are saying “yes”?

As part of our Navigate series, MB Seminary recently hosted a live event featuring three faculty presentations and a panel discussion. Dr. Doug Heidebrecht and Dr. Brian Cooper offered thoughts on the biblical and theological implications of life, death, and suffering from an MB perspective. They were followed by Dr. Gloria Woodland’s presentation which bridged the gap between our theological conclusions and the reality of walking alongside those impacted by MAiD. These presentations, along with questions submitted by online participants, ***began a rich conversation of faith and life within our MB community.***



Our next NAVIGATE event is Tuesday, February 9, with Dr. Darrell Johnson, who will lead us through 6 Principles to Navigate Revelation. Please join us for this live, interactive presentation that will strengthen your ability to read, understand, and teach through the Book of Revelation. Details at mbseminary.ca

What is one significant take away you learned in 2020?



"Crises such as the pandemic reveal and amplify societal divides that were present all along. At the same time, the hope and wisdom we receive from God and the people of God are amplified in their necessity and significance." — **Andrew Dyck**



"Dwelling on the hard things is important, but it's also important to distract yourself with more pleasant things." — **Keith Reed**



"Flexibility - When Plan A, B, C don't work there are twenty-three other letters to build a plan on." — **Gloria Woodland**

What about your work at the seminary brings you joy?

"Theological conversations give me joy. By encouraging theological dialogue....I want to be the person no one necessarily remembers, but whose positive influence is felt into the future." — **Brian Cooper**



"I love being able to help individuals and groups take next steps. Teaching or mentoring students at MB Seminary often gives me a front row seat in seeing what God is doing in people's lives." — **Randy Wollf**



"Interaction with students, many of whom live in the lower mainland, but some who are in other parts of Canada. Hearing their stories, their joys and challenges. People are hungry for connection." — **Bruce Guenther**



BY THE NUMBERS

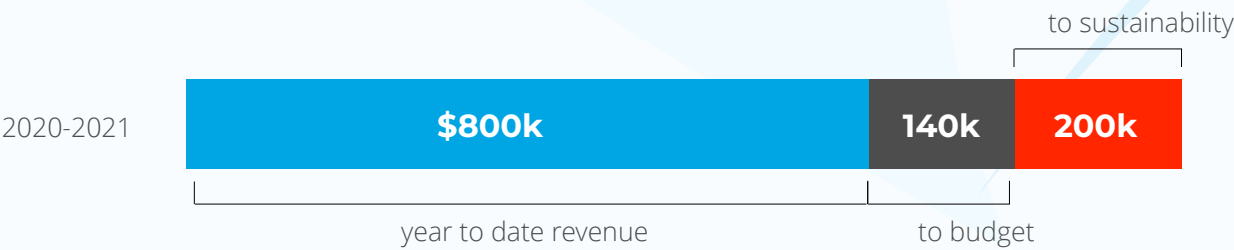
2020 brought many challenges, including the need to quickly innovate classrooms and community instruction. *But it also brought many blessings.* With the help of the ACTS World Campus, almost all of our graduate theological education pivoted online. NAVIGATE enriched our MB family through a virtual conversation on a relevant issue, and our online devotionals sent through email and social media encouraged many.



FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Your financial support makes our mission possible! Educating and equipping men and women who lead the church and share the good news of Jesus is only possible with your continued financial partnership. When we partner together, your support enables us to live out our mission of making the Seminary and its resources available to every interested pastor and individual in an MB church across Canada and around the world.

As we approach our fiscal year-end on May 31, 2021, we continue to work toward financial sustainability. Last spring, our Board of Directors initiated a 24-month Financial Restructuring Plan, requiring \$375,000 to be cut from the operating budget over two years, thereby aligning the Seminary's revenues with its expenditures. We are confident that this plan will lead to a sustainable and stable financial future.



We are grateful for the strong financial support received from across the country; thank you!

As of December 31, 2020, revenues have exceeded budget. Thank you for your generosity! However, we still require \$140,000 to meet our 2020/21 budget and an additional \$200,000 to meet our sustainability goals in the next 2 years. Your continued financial support is vital and necessary to make *shaping leaders and changing lives* possible.

YOUR GIFT MATTERS

Why give to MB Seminary? When you give to MB Seminary:

- **You make an impact for the Kingdom of God.** God's Kingdom advances through God's people, and your gift helps shape leaders and change lives in Jesus' name.
- **You help equip men and women to serve churches in Canada and beyond.** Effective mission requires effective preparation, and MB Seminary trains and equips women and men to lead the church and share the Good News of Jesus Christ. You can help us shape leaders and change lives across our country and world.
- **You make Christ-centered education and training more accessible and affordable.** Like all graduate education in Canada, tuition only covers a portion of the cost. At MB Seminary, that's about 27%; the rest comes from people like you who support the mission of training the next generation of leaders.

You can give in various ways, including by cheque, online, or by donating publicly-traded securities, registered accounts, life insurance proceeds, real estate, or other non-liquid assets. Many of these offer effective tax-planning and tax-reducing strategies that reduce your overall tax burden and maximize your gift's financial impact to the Seminary.

An Opportunity to Give



by scanning our
QR Code



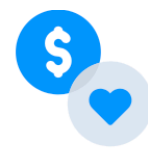
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by a secure
credit card
transaction at
mbseminary.ca



by gifting stocks or
other financial
instruments



by gifting real
estate, life
insurance
proceeds, or
other assets

LEAVING A LEGACY

Similarly, **legacy gifts** are another option to leave a powerful philanthropic legacy. As designated in your will, your legacy gift can both benefit your estate and continue your support of MB Seminary and our mission of training men and women to help lead the church in reaching Canada and beyond with the good news of Jesus Christ. All of us have a strong desire to make a positive difference with our lives, and a legacy gift is a lasting statement that will make a Kingdom impact for years to come.

As the diagram shows, **gifts to a charity can significantly offset income tax payable on an estate**. While this is generally true, we recognize that not all estates have the same tax implications, so talking with your financial advisor, accountant, or lawyer is vital to your planning strategy.

Your partnership makes a tremendous difference. Thank you! I would love to have a conversation if you would be open to exploring alternative ways to help the seminary live out its mission of educating and equipping men and women to lead the church and reach the world.

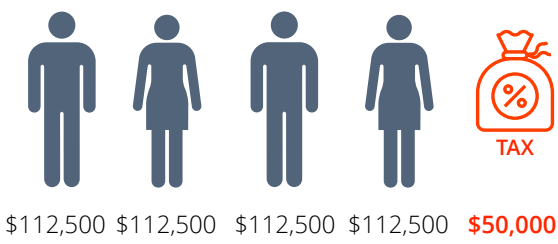
Thank you for making an everlasting impact!



Terry Kaethler, MCS, is Director of Advancement at MB Seminary. When asked how his work at the seminary brings him joy, Terry replied, “Working with a great team that is doing something significant, as well as getting to know our supporters, hearing their stories, and being able to pray with and for them.”

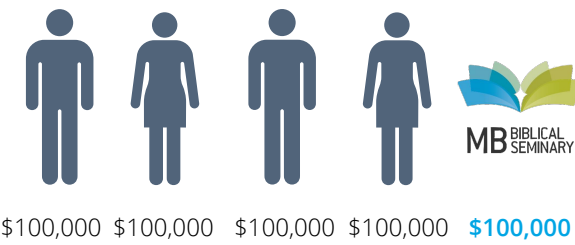
Impact of Legacy Giving

a) Your \$500,000 Estate to your children



vs.

b) Your \$500,000 Estate to your children including a Legacy Gift to **MB Seminary**



EASTER DEVOTIONAL

Featuring 47 daily devotions to guide you through the season of Lent (Feb 17-Apr 4), these reflections will lead you through the Book of Revelation by various writers from MB churches across the country. Sign up at mbseminary.ca/devotions-sign-up and follow us on social media as we celebrate the meaning of Easter together.