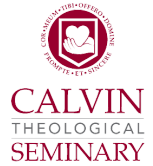


# Calvin Theological Seminary Canadian Church Relations Liaison Report Winter 2023 Classis Meeting



## Major Initiative Brings **Tuition Parity** for Canadians

Tuition parity has arrived! At their October 2022 meeting, the Board of Trustees for Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS) approved a bold initiative that will enable the seminary to accept tuition funds paid in Canadian currency “at par” with the American dollar. For students enrolled in either the MDiv or MA program, \$1 CAD will be considered equivalent to \$1 USD.

This exciting news means a savings for Canadian students of approximately 30% or more. Over the last five years, the exchange rate between the CAD and USD dollar has sometimes been as high as 45% but has averaged about 30%. In recent months, the rate has hovered in the 34-35% range. Historically, the rate has served as a huge hurdle for Canadians preparing for ministry in the CRCNA but, with this new decision, that obstacle has been removed.

Presently, CTS awards almost \$1.5 million in scholarships to students. It’s the hope of the seminary that these scholarships, coupled with parity, will enable students to graduate from the MDiv or MA program without having to incur any financial debt over the course of their CTS studies. It’s clearly a win for the students and their families, but it’s also a win for the churches and ministries that eventually support them as they finish their studies and launch into Kingdom leadership.

Of course, a vital part of the support students receive is also the support of their classis. THANK YOU for your ongoing encouragement and support for those preparing for ministry! In Canada, the majority of classes pay a significant portion of the tuition for students under their care who are pursuing ministry degrees at CTS. That kind of partnership between the Church and CTS is an essential part of our covenant commitment to work together to nurture and equip future leaders.

The parity initiative has been made possible by some generous Canadian donors. It’s their hope, and the seminary’s hope, that you won’t simply see parity as the opportunity to save the classis some money but rather, as an opportunity to provide additional kinds of support for your students. We encourage you to consider maintaining your budgeted support at its current level and, with the savings due to parity, seek other ways to walk alongside your student. Tuition is certainly not the only cost students face! Canadian students in the distance program, for instance, must bear the cost of a trip to the CTS campus once each semester. Students who choose the residential (on-campus) option for their degree face moving costs to Michigan. Students would be incredibly grateful if some of the monies that your classis saves from the parity initiative went to fund some of these kinds of additional costs. Speak to your students, determine their wide range of needs, and encourage them with your ongoing support above and beyond tuition! This new initiative now makes that possible!



## By the Numbers:

Canadians continue to be well-represented at CTS! The present academic year began with the following students from Canada:

- **MDiv (online distance program): 14**
- **MDiv (on-campus residential program): 5**
- **MA (online distance program): 3**
- **DMin (online distance program): 3**

In addition to these Canadians, of course, CTS continues to also serve a number of individuals in the EPMC program.

## Innovation:

Led by the Spirit, CTS is continuing to innovate in a variety of ways to better serve the Church:

- A new competency-based MA pilot program was launched this year with over 20 participants.
- The new MDiv curriculum was implemented this academic year with major implications for Canadians! The online (distance) MDiv degree can now be completed in four years instead of five! The on-campus (residential) MDiv can be completed in three years.
- Life-Long Learning opportunities for existing pastors and church leaders continue to grow. This past fall, for instance, CTS hosted a free retreat in Alberta called "Navigating The Storm: Maintain Your Emotional And Spiritual Health While Leading Through Turbulent Times." Other retreats, workshops, seminars, lectures, and cohort opportunities will be hosted throughout Canada in the near future. Watch for them!
- A Public Reading of Scripture (PRS) initiative was launched this year and has provided students with yet one more opportunity to develop and foster new disciplines toward their spiritual formation.

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### I Want to Serve You!

From my home office just east of Peterborough, ON, it's my privilege to continue strengthening partnerships between CTS and local churches, pastors, and ministries across Canada. Let me know how I can serve you!