

Canadian Church Relations Liaison Report



A New Degree in Mental Health Counseling

The World Health Organization noted that approximately 450 million people around the globe struggle with mental health issues. In fact, it is now the leading cause of disability worldwide. Calvin Theological Seminary's new Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (MCMHC) is a direct response to this growing need. Launched in September 2023, the professional and theologically grounded degree offers coursework in religious and theological foundations, clinical counseling, and clinical practice. Graduates from the program might consider using their knowledge and gifts to serve as a clinical mental health therapist, a clinical mental health counselor, an addiction counselor, a behavior counselor, or in other mental health roles.

Students who enroll in the MCMHC program will be able to complete the 60 credit hours required for the degree by studying on-campus, online, or a combination of the two. The clinical practice portion of the program includes three formative contextual learning opportunities to gain insights, mentoring, and experience in the field.

Dr. Danjuma Gibson, professor of pastoral theology and director of the new program notes, "This degree program is committed to preparing students who feel called to aid and assist the millions of people around the world who suffer from a variety of mental illnesses."



Canadian Tuition Parity

Where can your Canadian loonie stretch to become \$1.34 or more? At Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS)! Through a strategic collaboration with supporters, CTS is now able to accept tuition dollars paid in Canadian funds (CAD) “on par” with the American dollar (USD)!

Parity is a potential game changer for Canadian students, and is a clear indication of the seminary’s commitment to the church in Canada. Referring to the new parity initiative, Canadian student David Vandokkumburg said, “For my wife and I, this feels like a significant burden lifted. Each of our careers require masters-level studies, and so to create a solution that will reduce the total amount of debt we face is a huge relief.”

The Canadian tuition parity initiative, coupled with the \$1.5 million in scholarships that CTS provides to students each year, means that over 90% of CTS students now graduate without having to take on any additional debt while in seminary.



Hearts Exchanged

With the Truth and Reconciliation commission's report, and with the confirmation of hundreds of unmarked graves on the grounds of former residential schools in Canada, we've all been reminded of our calling to be ambassadors of reconciliation between Indigenous peoples and the rest of us who call Canada home.

To that end, Calvin Seminary has been working with Mike Hogeterp (former Director, Christian Reformed Centre for Public Dialogue), Adrian Jacobs (Senior Leader for Indigenous Justice and Reconciliation in the CRC in Canada), and Cindy Stover (Justice Mobilizer for the CRC in Canada) to offer a lifelong learning course at Calvin Seminary. The mini three-week course, Truth, Reconciliation, and Exchanging Hearts: A Canadian Model, will be offered in the summer of 2024 as a continuing education opportunity for pastors and other interested leaders.

Watch for more details to follow soon!

Empower: An Apprenticeship Model for Ministry Preparation

The best way to become equipped for vocational ministry is through taking courses at a seminary, right? Sometimes. But in other cases, an apprenticeship model fits an individual’s life situation and ministry goals better.

Empower is a new path that Calvin Seminary has developed as an option for those pursuing a Master of Arts in Christian Leadership (MACL). Rather than taking courses to earn their degree, students work with a team of three mentors — faculty, vocational, and personal — to develop competencies for ministry. The team coaches the student through a designed learning path, taking into account the student’s prior experience, individual strengths and growth areas, ministry context, vocational goals, and more.

Check out more at www.calvinseminary.edu/empower!

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!

Pastor Shawn Brix
Canadian Church Relations Liaison,
Calvin Theological Seminary
srb08@calvinseminary.edu
705-875-3566