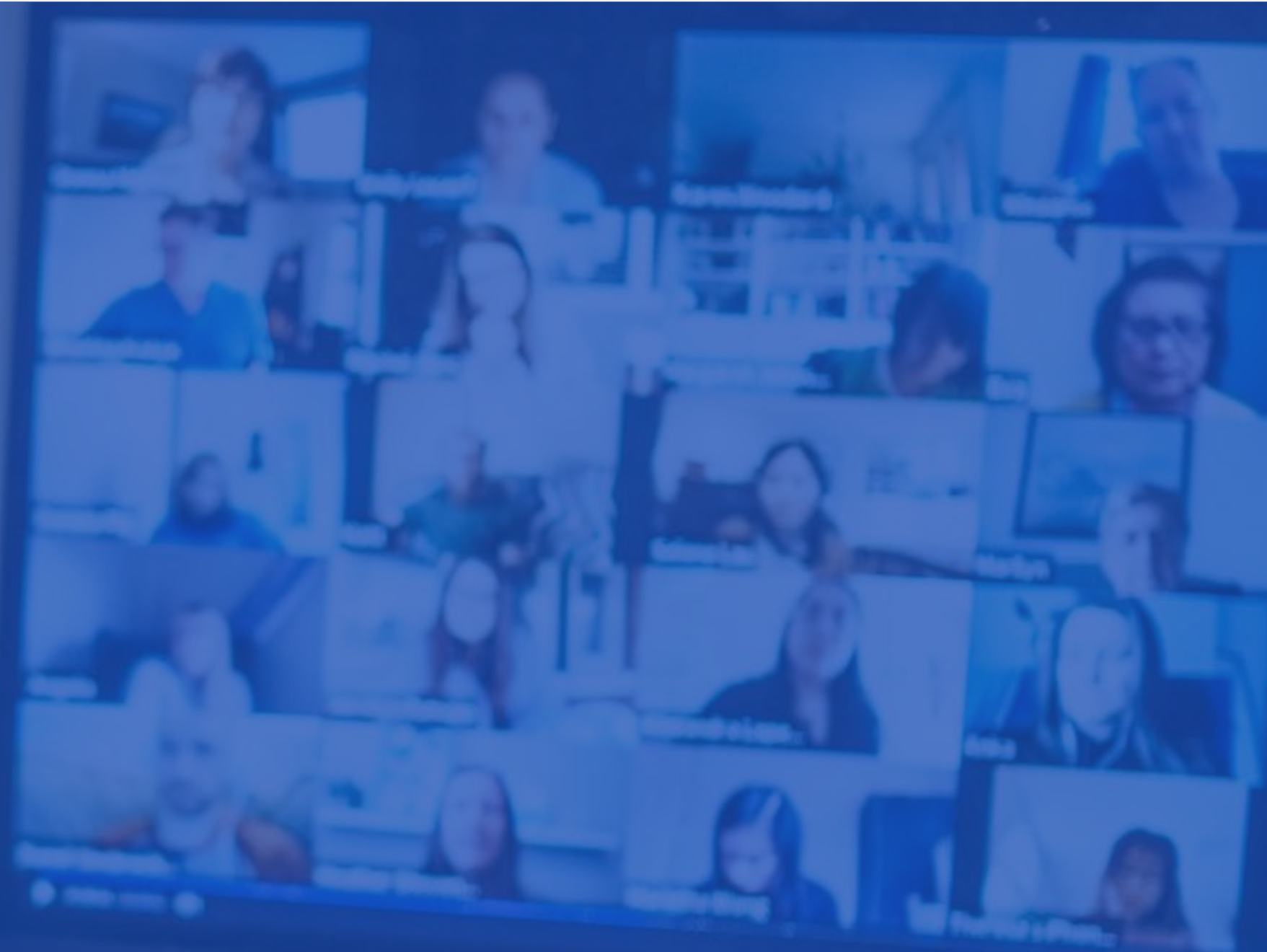




Annual Report

PILLAR SEMINARY

for CONTEXTUAL LEADERSHIP



Reimagining Seminary
for Anyone, Anywhere

2021-2022

With Gratitude

As a new school year begins, I am delighted as I think back upon the last year to report to you all of the wonderful things the Lord has done in our midst — what a momentous year it was for us at Pillar in so many ways!

We taught 68 students from 17 states and 5 countries in our degree or degree-seeking programs (MDiv, MA, Certificate). We also piloted our first Lunchtime Seminary class, taught by Dr. Beth Currier, and had 30 students participate in that with us. We had 7 students graduate with the MA degree this last spring, and several also graduated with the certificate. We had a wonderful graduation ceremony to celebrate all of this, which really put a bow on an incredible year for us as far as students are concerned. Truly, the Lord acted in generous and faithful ways towards us this year!

As far as personnel is concerned, we were able to bring Dr. Currier on full-time as a member of our faculty. Dr. D. J. Moore and I both phased out of our pastoral roles in the local church to commit more time and energy to Pillar. Dr. Scott Booth partnered with Basil Technologies to create the Bible Dojo app, and we are so excited to see how this develops. We brought on a Director of Accreditation and Compliance, Andrew Cress, and are moving forward to submit our application with the Association of Theological Schools next fall. Here too, the Lord's faithfulness is evident in all of his dealings with us.

On the partnerships front, we were invited to partner with Compassion International, Kenya, and we can't wait to see what fruit is borne out of this. Dr. Moore has begun his pilot program with these students this fall, and by all accounts already, the Lord is at work in this with us. We also entered into a formal partnership with the Polished Network, and we've already hosted a workshop together (led by Dr. Currier), and have established the Polished Scholarship together to further serve women in the workplace who are interested in studying with us. We are in the process of establishing a partnership with Payne Theological Seminary, as well, and Lord willing I will have updates for you on this front for next year's annual report.

In addition to the Polished Network scholarship, we partnered with a Board member to establish a Women of Color scholarship, with our first award coming this fall. This last year saw a budget increase of 38%, yet another testimony of the Lord's faithfulness in all our dealings. We are growing in healthy ways, and it is so exciting to be a part of. This growth is reflected in a bumper crop of students enrolled for this fall semester, as well as in the number of new part-time faculty persons we have been privileged to bring on to help us with instruction. Next year's annual report will include further details on this, no doubt! Lastly, I should add, I'm excited to be offering the next Lunchtime Seminary course starting this fall on the Gospel of Luke.

As I hope is clear, the theme for us this year has been the abundant provision of a loving and good God who cares for us and has continued to direct our paths. We as a Board, Faculty, and Staff are uniformly thrilled to be a part of Pillar Seminary and what is happening here, and are so grateful for your participation with us through your sacrificially generous support. We could not do any of this without you, and I'm privileged to speak for all of us here when I say: thank you most kindly for being such an integral part of God's faithful work here at Pillar Seminary this last year!



Dan Lowery, PhD

President &

Associate Professor of New Testament

"Come let us sing to the Lord!
Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come to him with thanksgiving.
Let us sing psalms of praise to him.
For the Lord is a great God,
a great King above all gods.
He holds in his hands the depths of the earth
and the mightiest mountains.
The sea belongs to him, for he made it.
His hands formed the dry land, too.
Come, let us worship and bow down.
Let us kneel before the Lord our maker,
for he is our God.
We are the people he watches over,
the flock under his care."
(Psalm 95:1-7, NLT2)



At a Glance

Typically, advanced seminary training isn't available to just anyone. But we think it should be, and we're doing something about it.

What if anyone — not just a paid professional — could be equipped with world-class seminary training so that they could powerfully and effectively minister and lead where God has placed them? Imagine that church. And not just a church, but the Church worldwide. Transformed servant leaders would lead to a transformed Church.

We are changing the way church leaders are trained by reimagining the way seminary is done. We exist to make world-class seminary training available to anyone, anywhere.

The Challenge

Pillar started as an idea sketched on the back of a napkin in a Kansas City BBQ joint as an exercise in imagining what could be different. What if we didn't have to be constrained by the traditional seminary paradigms? What could a seminary be like?

Our digital Bible and Leadership training program is designed to deepen students' understanding of Scripture and increase their effectiveness in ministry, wherever they are, and whatever their contexts may be. Additionally, we are pioneering new ways to take this seminary training to those who wouldn't typically enroll in our seminary.



Thomas Morse
Auburn, Washington
MDiv Student

"I chose to attend Pillar because I wanted to learn how to read and interpret the Bible better. Every class at Pillar supports this goal. Helping people fall in love with God and his holy words makes all the other challenges of ministry worth it. The leadership courses at Pillar have taught me to look at the bigger picture, history, and context before trying to solve problems. These skills have been indispensable in working with elders to slowly change the course for our congregation."



Financials

The financials tell a story of God’s faithfulness to us in many wonderful ways, as can be seen below. This last fiscal year saw an increase in all forms of income, though especially with donations to our organization. Because of this, we were able to invest more fully in our team, which was wonderful and nourishing, and we were delighted to be able to extend more financial aid to our students, as well. God worked wondrously through the generosity of so many to both encourage and equip — the Lord truly is with us and for us, and it is exhilarating to be a part of all this!

Income	Fiscal Year 2020-2021	Fiscal Year 2021-2022
Donations	\$181,212	\$278,025
Burney Trust Payout	\$0	\$76,525
Grants	\$0	\$5,000
Other Income	\$135	\$14,525
PPP Loan	\$43,594	\$0
Billed Tuition & Fees	\$222,772	\$253,168
Total Income	\$447,713	\$627,243

Expenses	Fiscal Year 2020-2021	Fiscal Year 2021-2022
Salaries	\$249,684	\$259,200
Financial Aid	\$109,600	\$114,800
Other Operational Expenses	\$95,561	\$123,564
Total Expenses	\$454,845	\$497,564

Revenue, Assets	Fiscal Year 2020-2021	Fiscal Year 2021-2022
Total Income	\$447,578	\$627,243
Total Expenses	\$454,593	\$497,564
Revenue	-\$7,015	\$129,679
Cash and cash equivalents	\$105,952	\$235,631
Burney Trust	\$1,027,807	\$846,477
TOTALS	\$1,126,744	\$1,211,787



Mattanah DeWitt
Dallas, Texas
MDiv Student

“Every prayer and hope I had for attending seminary was answered in Pillar. I write this with tears even now, as I see God’s guidance, provision, and profound kindness toward me in connecting me with the staff and professors at Pillar. Not only has Pillar been a wonderful place for me logistically and financially, but I have felt a freedom to grow, learn, ask tough questions, and wrestle with the answers. I have begun to understand the Bible as literature, to engage with it intellectually, and this has been beyond refreshing and pivotal for my own spiritual formation.”

Programs By The Numbers

During the 2021-22 Fiscal Year

- 15 students graduated on June 3 (8 with a Certificate and 7 with a Master of Arts).
- Donor sources made up 72% of Pillar Seminary's operating revenue when combining individual donor support, gifts from trusts and foundations, and support from churches.
- Pillar Seminary piloted a non-credit enrichment course called Lunchtime Seminary with 30 participants.

By the Numbers

- 68 students enrolled at Pillar Seminary during the 2021-22 academic year.
- Students represented 17 states across the US and 5 countries.
- Tuition, fees, and books cost students approximately \$5,600 per year.

2021-2022 At a Glance

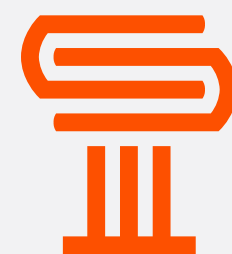
- The seminary awarded scholarships to 43 students in 2021-22.
- Master of Arts students made up 74% of enrolled students.
- \$114,800 were awarded in scholarships through Pillar Seminary
- 16% of students pursued an M.Div in 2021-22.



Ashish Rao
Bangalore, India
MA Student

"Pillar has completely changed the way I study scriptures. Every class is mind-blowing. The Old Testament has never made so much sense. If there is one thing that I regret after joining Pillar, it's that I should have started earlier. At Pillar, a lot of emphasis is on the reflection and application part of the passage. That makes the scripture talk to me directly, like a double-edged sword.

I believe that if every Christian starts to study scriptures this way, the Church will truly become the light that our Lord Jesus always wanted us to be."



Faculty Publications

Dr. Scott Booth

- (Lead Author) "The Buck Stops Here: Deer Antlers in Iron Age I Cultic Contexts at Tel Abel Beth Maacah and Their Implications." In *"Now These Records are Ancient" Studies in Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical History, Language and Culture in Honor of K. Lawson Younger, Jr.*, edited by James Hoffmeier, Wolfgang Zwickel, and Caleb Howard, 79–108. Münster, Germany: Zaphon, 2022.
- "Early Interactions between the Arameans and Israelites." In *The Ancient Israelite World*, edited by Kyle Keimer and George Pierce, 565–81. New York: Routledge, 2023.

Andrew Cress

- "Toward a Mutually Informing Approach to the Integration of Faith and Learning in Christian Higher Education." *Journal of Faith in the Academic Profession* 1 (2022): 7–13.

Dr. Beth Currier

- (Co-editor) *Cognitive Linguistics for Biblical Studies: An Introduction*. Atlanta: SBL Press, forthcoming.
- "Decontextualized Instruction or Disembodied Reading? Performance Context and Speech Performance in Proverbs." *Vetus Testamentum* 72 (2022): 1–32.

Dr. Dan Lowery

- (Co-author) *James: A Commentary for Biblical Preaching and Teaching*. Kerux Commentaries for Biblical Preaching and Teaching. Grand Rapids: Kregel, forthcoming.

Dr. Donnell Moore

- (Co-editor) *Prophets to the Nations: Black Methodism, Liberation, and the American Quest for Racial Justice*. Nashville: United Methodist General Board of Higher Education, 2021.



Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Currier began teaching with us in the Fall of 2020 as adjunct faculty and became a full-time faculty member in the Fall of 2021. One of the things that drew her to Pillar was the opportunity to work with students in ministry roles and other careers, helping people think about the Bible in ways that matter in their immediate contexts. She was instrumental in helping create and teach Pillar's first ever Lunchtime Seminary class on the book of Proverbs and has taught a number of workshops in the past year as well to excellent reviews. Read more about Beth on the Pillar website.



Dr. Beth Currier
Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible

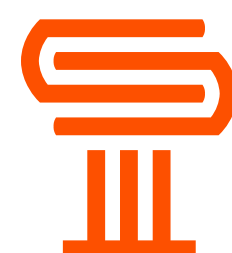


Greg Wallace
Omaha, Nebraska
MA (2021)

Commencement

June 4 marked a special occasion as we held our second ever commencement. 15 students graduated this year: 7 with a Master of Arts and 8 with a Certificate in Contextual Leadership. We celebrated with our graduates both digitally and in person, and Greg Wallace (summa cum laude) delivered a beautiful tribute to the seminary's impact on his life and ministry.

In his concluding remarks he said, "Attending Pillar has been one of the best choices I've ever made. The opportunity provided by the staff, the teachers, the donors has profoundly affected me and has changed my life. Thank you to all involved with this seminary. Please know that you are changing lives and I truly believe you are serving the heart of God."



Alumni Spotlight

Between pastoral ministries and missions, Ben Jones had been in ministry for 15 years before attending Pillar. As much as he wanted to study at a seminary, it just wasn't possible for him to take a break from ministry and work, move his family to a new location, and take on major debt. He didn't need seminary to have a job in ministry and after being in ministry for so long he thought he knew Scripture pretty well. However, Pillar came along and gave him the opportunity to afford and attend seminary right where he was already located. After attending Pillar for a couple of semesters he stepped back to assess, "How is this going? Is this worth it?" He realized he was learning things in Scripture he didn't know and was learning how to lead better. He was learning about resources and tools that could make him more effective in ministry and was being equipped to lead well in the future.

Pillar also became a sustaining presence in the midst of difficulties in ministry. Ben ended up working at 4 different churches during his time at Pillar and struggled through some difficulties. Dr. Moore and other professors really affirmed him in class and out, encouraging him and letting him know, "You are going to make it."

Ben Jones
Phillips, Nebraska
MA (2021)

Joe Mullarkey
Phillips, Nebraska
MDiv Student



Ben is grateful now to be working alongside another Pillar student, Joe Mullarkey, at Monroe Free Church in Phillips, Nebraska. "We never had classes together, but we just get each other. We are very connected." At Pillar, we look forward to watching how the Lord uses them to continue advancing his kingdom in their community and beyond.



The Pillar Team

Faculty and Staff

Scott Booth

Provost, Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible

Andrew Cress

Director Accreditation and Compliance

Beth Currier

Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible

Dan Lowery

President and Associate Professor of New Testament

Lauren Lowery

Director of Development

LaRhesa Mays

Director of Student Services

Donnell Moore

Academic Dean and Professor of Biblical Contextual Leadership

The Board of Trustees

Kat Armstrong

Co-Founder of the Polished Network

Dru Johnson

Associate Professor of Biblical and Theological Studies, King's College

Kevin Kim

Executive Director of Crazy Love & Co-Founder of Basil Tech

Dan Lowery

President, Pillar Seminary

Kim Mackrill

CoFounder of Milemarker, Inc.

Zack McCoy

Chair, Lead Pastor of Redemption Church, Houston

Neil Stanley

Vice Chair, CEO and Founder of The CorePoint

Mandy Stewart

Associate Professor of Literacy and Learning, Texas Woman's University

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