





Dear Calvin Seminary Supporter,

Is it worth it? Is my investment worth it? Is it making an impact?

Through the pages of this 2023 Impact Report, I hope you see that the answer is a resounding and appreciative-YES!

I usually say that there is always "more to the story" and that is especially true about the students, faculty and staff at Calvin Theological Seminary.

This past year, Jackie and I had the privilege of traveling to Indonesia in January and then to Japan and South Korea in November. In those places and more, you will find that CTS has present and even generational impact. For example, we had the privilege of meeting with a professor at a respected seminary in Korea who obtained his PhD degree from CTS many years ago and now his son is going through the PhD program at CTS!

As Calvin Theological Seminary anticipates a 150th birthday party (to commemorate our founding in 1876), we should note that we are privileged to observe the faithfulness of God from one generation to another.

Your role in the story of Calvin Theological Seminary is vital. We could not do what we are doing now without the support, encouragement and prayers of others.

Your investment is the financial and spiritual background for the reach and impact of Calvin Theological Seminary from across the street to across the globe.



Jul Medenblik, President



When I read the Impact Report of Calvin Seminary, I now think of words like healing, hope and encouragement.

The world is in need of healing not just from the effects of a war, but from the ravages of sin rooted in our individual lives and society.

The world is in need of hope and messengers of the gospel not only bringing good news, but helping people "see" that God is still at work in this world which is the foundation for all hope!

The world is in need of encouragement because of the burdens that we all bear.

As you read this Impact Report, our desire is that you find a measure of healing, hope and encouragement because you see God at work through your support and prayers for Calvin Theological Seminary.

Thanks for reading and reflecting on more stories and pictures of impact at Calvin Seminary!

Blessings,







2023 Highlights



JANUARY **Stob Lecture Series**

Dr. Esau McCaulley, author and associate professor of New Testament at Wheaton College, was the featured speaker for the 2023 Stob Lecture Colloquium. His topic was "What is African American Biblical Interpretation and Why Does the Whole Church Need It."



FEBRUARY Art of the Prodigal Book Event We celebrated our Legacy Society members and local donors with a lunch and book event featuring "Art of the Prodigal" by Larry Gerbens.



MARCH Women of the Seminary Event The women of the seminary - students, spouses, faculty, and staff - gathered for a time of learning and fellowship led by Jackie Medenblik.



MAY

Commencement

Jaw Seng Raw receives her diploma from President Jul Medenblik. She is one out of 9 graduates of the Master of Theology degree.



MAY Commencement We celebrate as the second graduation



JULY

International Calvin Congress We hosted the 13th quadrennial ICC where Stan Sturing reenacted Calvin's life in "After Dark: The Life and Times of John Calvin".



AUGUST **CPI Golf Outing**



MARCH

Medenblik Stick Our students, staff, and faculty, along with their families, competed in the Annual Medenblik Stick.



APRIL Student Worker and Volunteer Luncheon We are so grateful for the student workers and volunteers that put so much time and energy into helping the seminary operate.



APRIL ISAT Luncheon The International Student Advisory Team hosted a lunch for all international students to broaden our fellowship.



OCTOBER

Distance Learning Intensive Every semester we welcome our Distance Learning Students for a week of learning together in-person.



NOVEMBER Thanksgiving Dinner

Calvin Prison Initiative (CPI)

ceremony to award bachelor degrees was held inside Handlon Correctional Facility.



JUNE Golf Classic

A chilly but fantastic 9th Annual Golf Classic took place at Thousand Oaks Country Club, raising support for the Annual Formation Fund.

The Third Annual Women's Golf Outing raised \$120,000 for the Calvin Prison Initiative.



SEPTEMBER Convocation Geoff Vandermolen, Director of Vocational Formation and Co-Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program, preached at the 2023 Convocation service.

Our students planned and hosted a traditional United States Thanksgiving dinner for the student body.



DECEMBER

Christmas Around The World Students, faculty, staff and their families gathered for a Christmas meal and shared Christmas traditions through songs and storytelling.

FACULTY PROJECTS

Reformed Identity Project Grows



Dr. Young Ahn Kang Visiting Professor of Philosophical Theology



Dr. Karin Maag Director of the Meeter Center for Calvin Studies



Dr. Ronald Feenstra Professor of Systematic Theology

In 2021, Dr. Young Ahn Kang approached colleagues Dr. Ronald Feenstra and Dr. Karin Maag with an interesting proposition: We need to have more intentional discussions about what it means to be Reformed. The three developed a proposal that focuses on creating content that expresses the seminary's sense of Reformed identity.

With the support of the Faculty Heritage Fund, Drs. Kang, Feenstra, and Maag set out to get the Reformed Identity Project off the ground. Since its inception two years ago, the project has resulted in faculty essays, workshops, recorded roundtables, and discussion groups.

"If we are an academic community, then that involves working collaboratively," Dr. Maag said. "Now we can't all work on one project every time, but if we can train our muscle memory to do this work by sitting down with each other on a semi-regular basis, discussing ongoing projects, and sharing insights with each other—I think that's a wonderfully strengthening thing."

Dr. Feenstra said the project has also allowed faculty to articulate their Reformed perspectives on particular disciplines.

"We get a little window into how each of the faculty members sees their discipline, especially in the classroom," he said. "One of the benefits of this project is that it has gotten us as faculty members to talk to each other about our common work. So we are learning more about what each of us does, how each of us thinks about these things, and how our work all fits together."

Work is currently underway on a volume of essays from professors across the seminary, reflecting on what a Reformed identity and perspective means for the seminary, seminary students, the church, and God's world at large. The collection is intended to be complete by 2025, to be released in conjunction with the seminary's 150th anniversary celebration in 2026.

Impact Report readers need not wait that long, however. Two essay samples are included in CTS' Winter 2023 edition of The Forum, which also features excerpts from the recent roundtables.



<u>Click here to view roundtable videos</u>

Interested readers may also apply to be part of an advanced reader group to provide feedback on the forthcoming anthology by contacting Dr. Maag at <u>kmaag@calvinseminary.edu</u>

Letter regarding Heritage Fund and Presbyterians in Virginia and North Carolina

I am very grateful for the grant of just over \$6,000 I received from the Faculty Heritage Fund in 2022-2023. This grant enabled me to take a two week research trip to Virginia and North Carolina in October, 2023, during my Sabbatical, as well as a brief follow-up trip in November, 2023. The research is ongoing, as I plan a third trip in June, 2024. As my project unfolds, I'm sure others will follow.

My research focuses on Presbyterians in North Carolina and Virginia during the secession crisis and the Civil War (1858-1865). Though I have not yet formulated a precise book proposal, my goal is to explore the way Presbyterians engaged questions of race, slavery, secession, and war during this tragic time in history. This story is an important part of the legacy of the Reformed tradition and its place in American society. I will be presenting some of the initial research on North Carolina Presbyterians and the secession crisis at the Society of Civil War Historians conference in Raleigh, North Carolina, in June, 2024.

I have used the grant to pay the travel, lodging, and research costs necessary to visit numerous archival sites in Virginia and North Carolina, including the Virginia Museum of History of and Culture, the Library of Virginia, the University of Virginia, Virginia Military Institute, Washington and Lee University, Union Presbyterian Seminary, the University of North Carolina, Duke University, the North Carolina State Archives, and Davidson College. During these visits, I photographed thousands of unpublished primary documents written by Presbyterians, including letters, diaries, sermons, essays, and polemical materials. These materials would not be accessible in any other way. Collectively, they will enable me to tell the story of Reformed Christians during the Civil War era in a way that would be impossible relying on published materials. I have focused on Presbyterians of all types, whether clergy or lay, male or female, white and, where possible, black.

To be honest, it will take me years to process this material and develop it into a book, or even multiple books. But it is already shaping the way I teach the history of Christianity in various courses, and it will form a significant part of a new series of courses I plan to teach at the MDiv and PhD levels on Christianity, racism, and slavery. It also shapes the way I teach about racism in Christian Ethics. Many Christians still struggle to grasp the legacy of racism, slavery, political conflict, and war in our own religious as well as national history. I hope my research will help the church do that more faithfully.

I am extremely grateful to those donors who have contributed to the Heritage Fund, for they have enabled me to conduct this research with a level of care and expertise that would have otherwise been impossible but is essential to good scholarship. Simply put, I could not be the scholar that I am without this support.

- Matthew J. Tuininga Associate Professor of Chr

Thank you.

Associate Professor of Christian Ethics and the History of Christianity



Reflections of Gratitude from Scholarship Dinner

Rylan Brue, an Iowa native and future pastor, entered the residential MDiv program in the fall of 2022 after graduating from Dordt University. At the scholarship dinner, Rylan shared his gratitude for the legacy of faith in and obedience to Jesus Christ passed down through generations of his family. The heritage of Rylan's family's faith goes back to the 1920s, where Rylan's great grandmother was invited to church and eventually became a lifelong follower of Jesus Christ, passing on her faith to her children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. While the neighbor who invited Rylan's great grandmother to church isn't named in any missions textbooks, his name is recognized by Rylan's family because of his willingness to acknowledge and proclaim Jesus Christ before others.

Now, as a seminary student, Rylan recognizes that all of the circumstances and events of his life came from God's providential, fatherly hand, and not by any work or action on his part. Out of gratitude for God's providence, Rylan recognizes that his time at Calvin Seminary is meant to be a period in which he is equipped to be thankful when things go well, be patient in adversity, and look with hope toward the future, trusting that nothing can separate him from God's love. Thanks to the generosity of many donors, Calvin Seminary continues to equip students like Rylan who will go on to testify of God's grace and goodness to the world.



The Scholarship Dinner hosted by Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, Grand Rapids.

Uriel Alcivar Ceron was born and raised in Jennifer Fortosis, a wife and mother Mexico City, Mexico. Although he had never received of four from Zeeland, Michigan, entered the formal theological education, Uriel was drawn to hybrid MDiv program at Calvin Seminary thanks opportunities to minister to young people in his to an invitation from her husband, Nick. Prior congregation through discipleship and mentorship. to entering seminary, Jennifer served as a worship After many conversations with and affirmation director for a decade and was involved in several from mentors, fellow believers, and his wife, Uriel mission trips, including on the Amazon River began prayerfully considering opportunities to and in Haiti. After her second child was born, pursue formal training in pastoral care and ministry. Jennifer stepped aside from her role as a worship Following a lengthy search for seminary programs director in order to focus her attention on being in Mexico, he found none, so his wife recommended a mother and seminary student. he investigate Calvin Seminary. With a wife and two children to provide for, Uriel imagined that a Calvin Jennifer shared her experience of calling with Seminary education would be financially impossible. the audience, describing it as an invitation to

learn more about Scripture, doctrine and theology Thanks to the generosity of Calvin Seminary's in order to proclaim Christ to others. After being donors, Uriel was offered a financial aid package introduced to hermeneutics in a Bible Study that allowed him to pursue his studies full time, Fellowship course, Jennifer dove into studying without adding financial burden to his family. biblical languages at Calvin Seminary, enjoying the After a difficult first semester-a combination of challenge and joys studying Greek and Hebrew pandemic restrictions and language barriers made offers. In addition to language courses, Jennifer communication difficult–Uriel adapted to his new has taken courses in missions, church history, and environment and delighted in the opportunity to other areas of study. As a busy wife and mother, the hybrid model of the MDiv program allows her study alongside peers from China, Singapore, Korea, Nigeria, Canada, Cuba, Brazil, Kenya, South Africa. to come to campus for intensive weeks twice a Ukraine, Japan, India, and the United States. While year and participate in residential courses as time allows each semester. Thanks to the generosity at Calvin Seminary, Uriel and his family were prayed for and encouraged as they discerned God's call to of Calvin Seminary's donors, doors have been work as missionaries. Thanks to the generosity of opened for Jennifer to pursue an education that will equip her to proclaim Christ to others, which is Calvin Seminary's donors, Uriel is equipped with the skills and theological knowledge that will aid him her highest calling. in ministering to refugees in Belgium.

Click here to watch each speech



Scholarship Supports Student Israel Trip



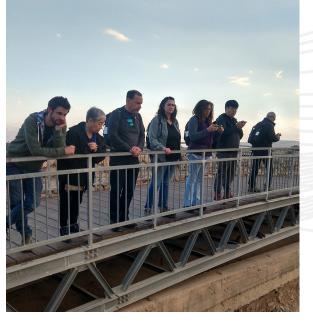


Kelsey Bruinwood Traveling in Israel helped me connect to the places I read about in Scripture and reminded me of God's faithfulness throughout generations.

When I read, "Jesus traveled throughout Galilee teaching in the synagogues" (Matthew 4:23), I remember what those synagogues through Galilee to teach people. I can feel the sweat roll down my back that Jesus must have felt when walking over hills under

looked like. I can feel what it was like to sit on those stone seats listening to the rabbi preaching. I can imagine Jesus walking the desert sun. Standing where Jesus stood around Galilee and Jerusalem—in the synagogue at Capernaum, the marketplace in Magdala, the mount of Beatitudes, the Garden of Gethsemane, the south steps of the Temple-is not just a fun fact to share or some pastoral rite of passage. This is a reminder of what it means that Jesus was fully God AND fully human. Jesus is not just a name in the Bible or a distant deity who loves us from afar. Standing in these spaces is a reminder that Jesus took on humanity fully and completely.

Our trip to Dan allowed me to experience the places of the Old Testament. It was interesting to learn more about the kingdoms of Israel and Judah and their temple practices as we walked through excavation sites. My eyes were opened as I observed the ways the construction of the excavation sites changed as we saw older buildings, as it's easy for me to think of everything in the Bible as simply "a long, long time ago". Seeing the difference between excavation sites built out of mud bricks and the temple ruins in Dan reminded me of how ancient the story of God and his people is. To contrast these Old Testament sites with the excavation sites we saw—the Roman ruins in Beit Shean and all the Byzantine era sites we walked through-helped me place a timestamp on these real stories from the Bible. The visual reminder that God has been present among his people thousands of years before Jesus walked the earth reminds me how faithful he has been through all generations.



JM Na



Our trip to Israel helped me connect to the places of Scripture and provided me a deeper understanding of the long-lasting Israel-Palestine conflict.

The Holy Land's landscapes became living pages of the Bible for me. From the vast Judean wilderness to the seemingly unremarkable Chorazin and Beit Shean, each location breathed life into biblical narratives. The expansive wilderness illuminated the intensity of Jesus's temptation, the challenging road to Jericho reinforced the plausibility of the Good Samaritan story, and the splendor of Chorazin hinted at the stubbornness of those resistant to the

gospel. The opulence of Beit Shean emphasized the true, tremendous value of the village-born gospel, while the cave of Qumran showcased God's faithfulness in preserving His Word for us.

Exploring the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the need for its resolution added another layer of depth to this journey. Despite my background in international politics, the conflict had remained somewhat abstract until this trip. Meeting individuals from various walks of Palestinian life humanized the conflict for me. The visit to the Tent of Nations, where resilience and faith thrived despite adversity, became a turning point. It revealed that understanding the conflict required delving into the lives of Palestinians, prompting a commitment to stand against unjust oppression. Encountering a Jewish activist advocating for Palestinian rights underscored the need for international support, inspiring me to contribute both financially and through prayer.

This journey motivated me to go beyond the written words of the Bible, incorporating geographical and cultural elements into my study of Scripture. This profound shift in perspective, achieved through a two-week trip, has solidified my belief in the transformative power of experiential learning and the importance of compassionate action.



Corrie Bakker

One of the most important things that I learned in Israel is how necessary water is for life, both individually and communally.

The people who lived in Israel for several thousand years knew they needed a source of freshwater, and it was their first priority when Professors Burge and Schreiber pointed out where the water came from, how it was stored, and how it was used. Villages had to be

looking for a place to live and start a community. Site after site, built near a water source, whether a river, spring, or well. If it wasn't near a water source, the inhabitants found ways to direct nearby water to the village, through man-made aqueducts, or rerouting streams. Protecting water sources was also essential, as it could mean the difference in surviving a siege or drought. Storing water, either from rain or from a ground source, led to the development of elaborate cisterns and water conveyance systems. Water was life.

At nearly every place that we visited, we saw water storage cisterns, ritual cleansing pools, channels for moving fresh water through a village, or channels for moving sewage and old water out of a village. As we traveled through the lush area of Galilee, water availability never seemed to be a problem. We experienced a thunderstorm in Nazareth. We hiked in the rain to Gamla, and sheltered in a mikvah large enough to hold our whole group. We went to the middle of the Sea of Galilee, crossed the Jordan River, and heard the rushing waters of the streams in the Dan. As we traveled south, down the Jordan and into the Judean wilderness, we began to see the effects of water scarcity. We saw the towns that thrived in the oases of Jericho and Ein Gedi, and the absolute barrenness of the land where there was no water. We walked through the dark stone tunnel of Hezekiah's tunnel with water flowing around our feet. We saw the dried up pools of Bethesda where a lame man was healed.

Life today is still hard without a reliable water source. The place I understood this most was at the Tent of All Nations Farm in the West Bank. Because the farm no longer has outside access to water, they needed to build cisterns to store water. They have tried to become completely dependent on rainwater to irrigate their trees, vineyard, and other plants. However, at the time of our visit, it was the rainy season, but the cisterns were empty due to no rain. I wonder how often the farmers look toward the sea, hoping to see rain clouds gathering, praying for full cisterns.

This trip helped me realize that water is a main character in the Bible, both in the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Spirit hovered over the waters at creation. Lack of water brought the Israelites to Egypt. Isaiah says that water will gush forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. Jesus calls himself the source of living water, water that will both refresh and purify. Water is life.



Coming Home PhD student follows father's legacy at CTS

Before Eunchan Kim began his PhD program at Calvin Theological Seminary, before he earned his ThM and MDiv degrees, before he even had his driver's license, he had a very important job on campus.

A young Eunchan took seriously the task of accompanying his sister, Eunjin, to the Hekman Library. Together, they would bring their dad, then-PhD candidate Byunghoon Kim, a warm lunch. It was a reminder for the now-Dr. Kim to nourish his body alongside his mind as he completed his PhD program from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s. Some of the familiar faces for Eunchan and his

father in that season are the same people who still serve the seminary today. For example, in 1997, when Dr. Karin Maag began her tenure as the Director of H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies, she and Dr. Kim would converse in the library as she scanned historical documents for the center's digital archives. And a few times, when Eunchan and Eunjin would bring lunch to their father's carrel on the fourth floor, they would be greeted by their dad's classmate, PhD candidate Yudha Thianto (current Chief Academic Officer).

Moments like these stayed with Eunchan as he grew up and embarked on his own educational journey. Initially he pursued engineering during college, but he would soon change his major to history. Eunchan's love for church history would grow, eventually leading him to begin his PhD studies at CTS in Summer 2023.

"It's like coming home," said Eunchan, whose early years were spent visiting campus, living nearby in the Glen Oaks East apartments, and attending local Forest Hills schools.

Eunchan said that his father, a serious scholar, has also long been a warm and caring parent and person of faith. He said his father would often tell him and Eunjin, "Always be humble, always be sincere, always be diligent." These character traits, Eunchan said, were continually nurtured by the seminary community and its Reformed faith tradition.

Dr. Kim echoed the sentiment. "Initially, my understanding of Reformed theology was vague, but during my studies at CTS, I encountered the profound heritage of Reformed theology, finding spiritual richness within it," he said. "Personally, the doctoral program at CTS was a period of profound learning, where I finally grasped the goodness, love, and grace of God that supported me through the academic training in theology."

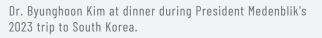
Prior to coming to Calvin, Dr. Kim was already an accomplished scholar, holding MA and MDiv degrees. The PhD Scholarship helped him to earn his terminal degree, focused on the Reformed tradition in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

"I am immensely thankful for the scholarship support extended during my doctoral studies, which sustained me throughout the challenging eight-year period

of studying abroad," said Dr. Kim. "Without such Throughout the seasons, CTS students like Eunchan and his father continue to receive the assistance, the academic environment would have been significantly more arduous." call to ministry, donors continue to reach out in support, and God's enduring faithfulness In addition to financial aid, Dr. Kim said his studies continues to leave us in awe-from generation at the seminary helped him to see the next steps for to generation. his life. "God, through the outcomes of this learning, provided a clear sense of purpose for my return to Korea and the tasks that awaited me," Dr. Kim reflected.

For almost 20 years, Dr. Kim has served as Professor of Systematic Theology at Hapdong Theological Seminary in Korea. He is also Senior Pastor of Nagne Presbyterian Church in Suwon, South Korea, serving his congregation in partnership with his servant-hearted wife, Miyoung Seo. Now, the couple is planning a trip to visit their son at the place they once called home.

In August, Eunchan moved into seminary housing. Around Thanksgiving, his sister Eunjin joined him in Grand Rapids, a place where they could reminisce about their formative years, and where she could complete her writing for a ThD in Church History from Duke University.



When these doctoral students pick up their parents at the airport, the Kim-Seo family will travel the same Beltline to Burton Street as they did in the 1990s, heading toward the same destination: Calvin Theological Seminary.



DEVELOPMENT

We Appreciate You

Thank you so much for supporting the mission of Calvin Seminary! For nearly 150 years, we have been training church leaders for ministry, service, and discipleship. Your support makes it possible for our students to develop the skills and knowledge they need to serve the church faithfully.

With gratitude,

Robert Knoor Director of Development



The 2023 Legacy Award

In October 2023, Terry and Linda Van Der Aa were named the recipients of the annual Calvin Seminary Legacy Award. The award was presented at the Scholarship and Donor Appreciation Dinner that took place at Frederik Meijer Gardens.

For more than thirty years, Terry and Linda have supported the mission of Calvin Theological Seminary in numerous ways, ranging from scholarships to major infrastructure projects. One of their most unique contributions has been their desire for the seminary to offer theological education to incarcerated individuals. Inspired by the success of Angola Prison's seminary program, Terry and Linda invited Calvin Seminary leadership to visit Angola, and then provided funding for Calvin Seminary to launch a similar program in Michigan.

Today, that program is known as the Calvin Prison Initiative (CPI). The CPI program is a partnership between Calvin Seminary and Calvin University; the seminary facilitates the program's fundraising, and the university facilitates the teaching. Students earn a bachelor's degree with majors in faith and

The Van Der Aa family at the awards ceremony



community leadership and human services. This course of study equips them to become agents of change and renewal, both within prison and back in their home communities. The CPI program has been so successful that officials from the state of Michigan have described it as "the gold standard in prison education." The program has also received high praise from the U.S. Under Secretary of Education.

The Calvin Seminary community is deeply grateful for Terry and Linda's vision and passion for theological education. We are honored to have them as our 2023 Legacy Award recipients!

Our Impact in 2023

Annual Fund Support

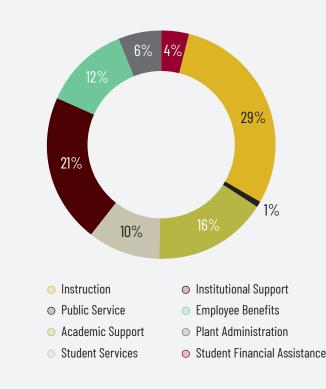
Pastors participated in CEP sponsored seminars and workshops \$1,500,000 32 \$1,536,998 \$1,528,146 Participants in the CEP/Lily Endowment Peer Groups of Preachers (supported by a grant from the Lilly Endowment "Compelling Preaching Initiative") \$1,000,000 162 Worship Symposium registered in-person participants \$500,000 (with The Center for Excellence in Preaching (CEP) & Calvin University) 750 **DID YOU KNOW** CEP had an average of 67,208 unique visitors per month to their \$0 website, which is an almost 20,000 increase per month over 2022 (46,571)

FY 2019

FY 2020

FY 2023 OPERATING EXPENSES \$7,307,134

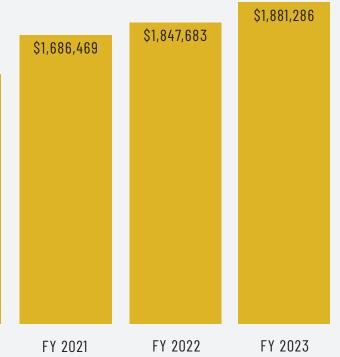
\$2,000,000



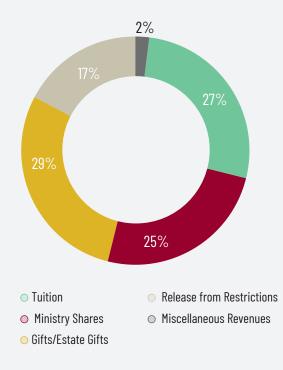
STUDENTS **BY PROGRAM**

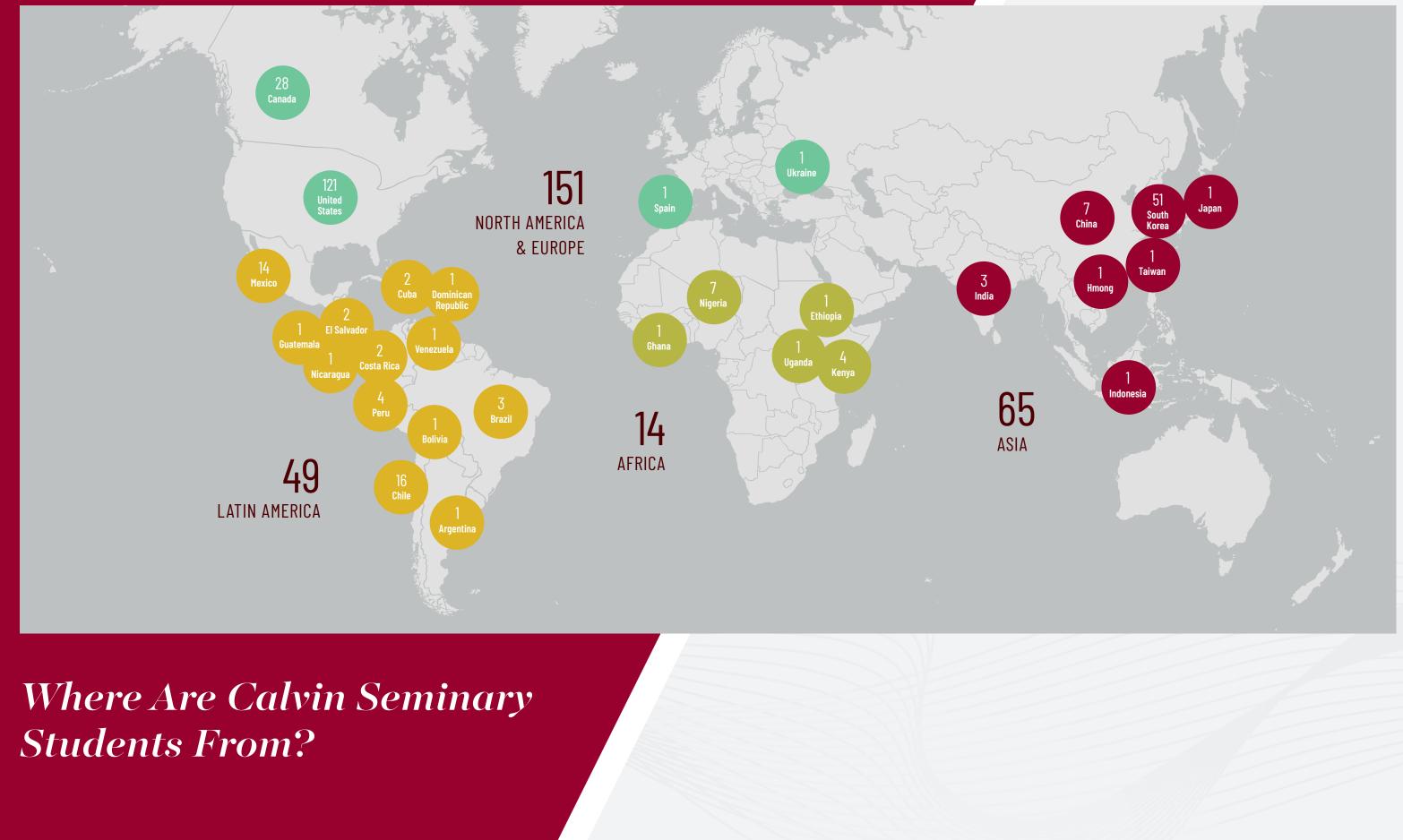
(Fall 2023 Day 10)

Master of Divinity: 80 Master of Arts (all): 78 Master of Theological Studies: 16 Master of Theology: 26 Doctor of Philosophy: 37 **Doctor of Ministry:** 22 Non-Degree: 46 Faculty & Staff: 76



FY 2023 OPERATING REVENUE \$6,860,079





Our students' PhD dissertations were downloaded 6,653 times from 129 countries worldwide in 2023.



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July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024