

BRIEF HISTORY

Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary (MABTS) began in the fall of 1971 as “The School of the Prophets” by a charter granted by the state of Louisiana. The purpose of the school was to provide theological education for those whom God called to vocational Christian service. By action of the Board of Trustees, the location of the school was changed to Little Rock, Arkansas, and the school name was changed to Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary. A charter was granted by the state of Arkansas in March 1972, and the first session of classes began with Founders’ Days, August 23–25, 1972. Four professors offered classes to 28 students. The Seminary conducted classes for three years in the facilities of Olivet Baptist Church, Little Rock, Arkansas.

In 1975, the Seminary negotiated the purchase of the Reformed Jewish Temple and Hebrew School located at 1255 Poplar Avenue in Memphis, Tennessee. The Seminary conducted classes during the 1975–1976 school term in Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. The purchase of the Temple and Hebrew School was finalized in August 1976, and the Seminary moved into the new debt-free facilities in October 1976. In 1982, the Seminary purchased the adjoining property at 1257 Poplar, which housed the Ora Byram Allison Memorial Library and an administration building.

In 1994, friends of the Seminary made available an eight-acre campus in Germantown, Tennessee. The Seminary renovated the facilities, and in January 1996, moved to the new campus debt-free. The campus provided classrooms, offices, library, a chapel, a cafeteria, a gym, a bookstore, childcare facilities, lounges, and resource rooms under one roof. In addition, the campus provided a pleasant, welcoming environment for learning. The move to the Germantown campus allowed the Seminary to expand its course offerings into the evenings and provide more opportunities for the wives of students to enroll in classes and be involved in Seminary life.

In 1996, a group of concerned and committed men formed Mid-America Student Housing, Inc., a 501 (c) not-for-profit corporation for the purpose of providing student housing. A dear friend of the Seminary donated 32 acres for housing that was only 15 minutes from the Seminary in Olive Branch, Mississippi. The first 100 units of student housing opened in August 1998.

In fall 2003, Mid-America’s next-door neighbor, Methodist Hospital, approached the Seminary with an offer to purchase the Germantown campus. After numerous negotiations, Methodist Hospital purchased the campus in December of that year while allowing Mid-America to use the campus for up to four years, rent free, until a new campus could be built. In June 2004, the people of Bellevue Baptist Church, led by their pastor—the late Dr. Adrian Rogers—voted to give Mid-America thirty-five acres of land across Appling Road from Bellevue Baptist Church as Mid-America’s new home.

Construction began in spring 2005 and was completed in August 2006, in time for Founders’ Days and the beginning of the 2006 fall term. Soon after Mid-America received the gift of land, sixteen additional acres of land were purchased adjacent to the Appling Road property as the site for Mid-America’s student housing. Construction of student housing was conducted concurrently with the campus construction and was also completed by fall 2006.

From the beginning of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, the administration and faculty have desired to establish a Bible-believing, Bible-preaching, Bible-teaching, soul-winning campus in the northeastern part of the United States. In 1987, the Northeast campus was approved by the Board of Regents of the State of New York to offer the Master of Divinity degree. The Seminary purchased ten 10 acres in the heart of the Capital District in the state of New York in February 1988, constructed a 15,400 square foot building, and started classes in the fall of 1989. The focus of the Northeast campus would be to train pastors for evangelism, church planting, and serving Southern Baptist churches throughout this heavily populated and strategic area of America. In recent years, Mid-America decided to discontinue its residential programming in the Northeast to broaden its reach online.

In the fall of 2016, the Seminary administration began to prayerfully consider the possibility of establishing a college which would be academically excellent, affordable, Christ-centered, and ministry focused. In the spring of 2017, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to start The College at Mid-America as a school of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary. In the fall 2024 the name of the College changed to Mid-America College.

Accreditation

Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary (MABTS) is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, bachelor, master, and doctoral degrees. MABTS may also offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia, 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC’s website (www.sacscoc.org (<https://www.sacscoc.org>)).

Our Purpose

The primary purpose of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary is to provide graduate theological training for effective service in church-related and missions vocations. Undergraduate training is also offered for effective Christian leadership in various fields. Other levels of training are also offered.

The Seminary attempts to guide students into a thorough understanding of the Bible and its relevance for today, preparing those who have been called of God to preach and teach the Word of God. Further preparation is offered through instruction in preaching, counseling, education, and cross-

cultural ministry. In addition, all graduate and doctoral students are required to participate in Practical Missions of the school and are encouraged to be involved in churches during their seminary days. Undergraduate students are encouraged but not required to participate in Practical Missions.

In response to the distinct training needs among Southern Baptists, the Seminary offers the following programs: Master of Arts, Master of Divinity, Doctor of Ministry, and Doctor of Philosophy.

Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary desires to glorify Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. This purpose is achieved by:

- Teaching the Bible as the verbally-inspired Word of God, wholly without error as originally given by God, and sufficient as our infallible rule of faith and practice;
- Maintaining high academic standards and promoting reverent scholarship;
- Teaching that people should be faithful in the Lord's service through the local church;
- Demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit as His gifts are exercised; and
- Training people to do evangelism at home and cross-culturally.