



# Berkshire Institute for Christian Studies

Report to the  
Eastern Region  
Annual Convention  
OCTOBER 2021



**Greetings from BICS!** It's with great joy and gratitude that I report to you about the continued ministry of the Institute. Though the past year has been characterized by many ups and downs, God has faithfully sustained and provided for us as we've sought to continue our mission to disciple young adults. By His grace, we have endured and redeemed a season without students, and have just recently welcomed another class of students into our program. To God be the glory!

## Redeeming the COVID Season

Last July, our Board of Directors decided not to enroll students for the 2020-2021 academic year due to the uncertainty surrounding the pandemic. The varying COVID restrictions would surely be a detriment to the close-knit community that forms the context for our discipleship efforts. But we resolved not to waste this God-given opportunity. Instead, we set out to redeem this year by working diligently on many projects that would enhance our program and better prepare us to disciple another generation of students.

Admittedly, we were uncertain how God would sustain us in a year without students. In many ways, their absence proved more difficult than anticipated. Without the daily interactions with students, the encouragement of seeing their growth in the Lord, and the joy of making new memories through ministry and travel, this was a trying season for our staff.

Nevertheless, God has been faithful! Fifteen months later, I'm very pleased to report to you that, by His grace and through the generosity of many friends and churches, this has been a fruitful year. Our many partners in ministry have stood with us and enabled us to invest in the continuation of our mission. The sidebar highlights just some of the most significant projects accomplished over the past year. Each project has a direct benefit for future BICS students.

## Summary of Projects in 2020-2021

- ✦ Migration to a web-based comprehensive platform that enables students to manage assignments, communicate with teachers, track their grades, pay their bill, and more
- ✦ Purchase of a 2019 Ford Transit 15-passenger van for student activities/group travel
- ✦ Extensive reorganization and equipment/furniture upgrades in the offices
- ✦ Redesign of 4 courses and addition of one new course called The Local Church & the Mission of God
- ✦ Upgrades in our classrooms, including the purchase and installation of new display technology
- ✦ Significant upgrades and additions to the Oral E. Collins Library, including an online catalog and circulation system
- ✦ Raised over \$5,400 for student scholarships through two BICS Open Golf Fundraisers



The Class of 2022 poses during orientation with their class shirts featuring the theme "Turn Your Eyes". From left to right: Daniel Keniston (Center Ossipee, NH); Hannah Hurlburt (Oxford, ME); Mason Littlefield (Dayton, ME); Abigail Scruton (Farmington, NH); Westley Loignon (Dayton, ME); Jessica Dobson (Hampden, ME); and Isaiah Baker (Hardwick, VT).

## Welcoming the Class of 2022

On August 25 we welcomed the long-awaited Class of 2022 to the Berkshires! This is our thirty-second cohort of students consisting of four men and three women from Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. What a joy it is to have students in our buildings again and to begin the journey of discipleship after a long year of anticipation and preparation.

We are sure that these seven students have been brought together and to us by God's providential orchestration. We're also mindful that He started His work in the hearts of these students long before we met them – and for that we give glory to Him and our thanks to the families and church families whom He has used to that end.

But we are grateful that God has given them to us for the

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## The Berkshire Institute for Christian Studies

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President Emeritus Steve Brown is back in the classroom teaching Old Testament Survey this semester.

next nine months for a season of serious spiritual and life development. Our explicit aim is that these students would be rooted in the Word of God, continually growing in the grace of God, and ultimately that they would flourish for the Kingdom of God.

While we cannot be certain what the coming year holds, we are thankful for the opportunity to welcome another class of students. Our gratitude abounds when we consider both God’s gracious provision over the past year and the generous support of many within the Advent Christian network.

**Praising God for our Alumni**

lay hold of the biblical worldview to inform all aspects of their thinking, whether they pursue vocational ministry or establish careers in other venues as expressions of their obedience to Christ. We now have more than 400 men and women who have experienced the BICS program, many of whom are now serving in churches across the Region and beyond as pastors, leaders, youth pastors, and teachers. Several of our graduates are ministering in international missions venues – in medical environments, translation teams, and churches.

The elements of our program are designed to help students

More importantly, the vast majority of our graduates – whether serving in vocational ministry or not – are serving Christ and are deeply committed to His Church. They are raising families, teaching Sunday School classes, serving as board members, directing camps, running businesses, and fulfilling the call of Colossians 3:23 – “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord...” (ESV). We thank the Lord that He has seen fit to use the Institute in their development and that, in this way, He is using us to bless His Church.



BICS alumni from 10 different classes from 1997-2020 served on staff at Sports & Music Camp in Alton Bay, NH. Many AC camps have BICS alumni on staff each summer.

**Looking to the Future**

Even as we’ve begun this journey of discipleship with our current students, we’re excited about the prospect of continuing our work of helping to disciple another generation of young adults. We are keenly aware of the desperate need for young adults to build their lives on the solid foundation of God’s Word and to be encouraged and equipped to use their gifts in their local churches. Our prayer is that God would use BICS to that end for many years to come.

If you know of upper high school or recently graduated students who you think may be interested in our program, please do not hesitate to put us in touch with them. Likewise, if you have any questions about our efforts, we would welcome the opportunity to dialogue further. You can find out more information on our website (<https://www.berkshireinstitute.org>) or get in touch with us via email at [info@berkshireinstitute.org](mailto:info@berkshireinstitute.org).

**Our Partnership with Eastern Region**

Whatever success BICS has had over the past 33 years in equipping young adults to live and serve with a biblical worldview is owing first and foremost to the faithfulness of God, but secondarily to the generosity and encouragement of a vast network of supporters in the Eastern Region. We thank God for the opportunity to be partners with you in this important work of discipling young adults for lifelong ministry however He leads them.



Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, this summer we purchased a 2019 Ford Transit 15-passenger van which has already been a great blessing to our students.

May God continue to raise up a generation of young believers who love Jesus and who are committed to using their lives in service of His Kingdom.

*Andy*  
 Andy Rice  
 President