



Berkshire Institute for Christian Studies

Report to the
Eastern Region
Annual Convention
OCTOBER 2025



Greetings from BICS! It's a privilege to report to you and share the work that God is continuing to do through the Berkshire Institute for Christian Studies.

Celebrating the Class of 2025

On Saturday, May 17, we marked the 35th Commencement of the Berkshire Institute for Christian Studies and celebrated the completion of a year of discipleship for the Class of 2025.

As I told those gathered that morning, this day has come to be known around our office as "Lamentsment". Because while we rejoice in the spiritual growth that has taken place in these students' lives, we also lament the close of a meaningful and transformative season. These

students came to us as strangers, but they left as family. They also left more deeply rooted in the truth of God's Word, more formed by the gospel, and more eager to live for Jesus and serve His Church. We trust that their year at BICS will bear fruit for the rest of their lives – and in the lives of those they serve.

The theme that guided us this year was "Our Hope Forever," drawn from Hebrews 10:23: "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful." In a world full of instability and uncertainty, our students were invited again and again to fix their confidence in the unchanging promises of God. And by His grace, they did. They wrestled with big questions, navigated trials, and ultimately set their hope more deeply in Jesus Christ. We're excited to see how God will use them in the years ahead!



The Class of 2025 pictured on Commencement Day

Welcoming the Class of 2026

We're thrilled to continue our mission with the Class of 2026. This year's cohort is our largest in more than a decade, with 14 students (6 women and 8 men) from as far away as Georgia and northern Maine embarking on this journey of discipleship in our community. We're especially grateful to see the legacy of BICS continue, with 5 students who are children of alumni and 6 who have siblings that previously attended.



The fourteen students of the Class of 2026 at Hume New England on their first full day of Orientation: (front row, left to right) Xander Tompkins, Zoe Hutchins, Maddy Johnston, Will Middleton, Paige Mosher, Addie Blackstone, Audia Feagler, and Ella Clark; (back row, left to right) Samuel Brittin, Devin Gasque, Caleb Krotz, Jason Merchant, Owen Brown, and Jeremiah Smith

Our theme for the year is "Take Heart," drawn from Psalm 27:14: "Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!" This theme calls students to a confident trust in God, even amid fear, anxiety, and uncertainty. Life can feel overwhelming, and the future unclear, yet God invites us to find strength and courage in Him and in the promises of His Word.

Throughout this year, our prayer is that students will learn to wait on the Lord with active trust, grow in courage grounded in His faithfulness, and embrace both joys and challenges with hearts strengthened by His promises. We are confident that, as with every class before them, the Lord will use this year to be profoundly transformative for each student.

[continued on reverse]

The Berkshire Institute for Christian Studies

249 Kemble Street • PO Box 1888 • Lenox, MA 01240 • (413) 637-4673

www.berkshireinstitute.org • info@berkshireinstitute.org •   @berkshireinstitute



The 2025 travelers, which included 15 guests, pose in front of the famed Celsus Library at ancient Ephesus - one of many biblical cities visited on the 2-week tour of Turkey and Greece.

Touring the Lands of the Bible

Last spring we enjoyed another unforgettable Bible Lands Seminar, journeying through Turkey and Greece with our students, staff, and guests. This immersive experience continues to be a cornerstone of the BICS program, bringing the Scriptures vividly to life. After months of classroom preparation, our students walked the ancient streets of Ephesus, peered into the jail at Philippi, and stood atop the bema in Corinth - experiencing firsthand the places where the early church took root. Despite ongoing unrest in the Middle East preventing travel to Israel this year, the tour was far from a compromise: from the stunning Mediterranean and Aegean coastlines to rich archaeological sites, every stop offered insight into the New Testament world and the growth of the early church.

For our students, this experience is fully funded above and beyond their tuition through the *Wesley A. Ross Bible Lands Scholarship*, which is made possible by the generosity of our network of supporters.

We're excited to announce that we're returning to Israel in March 2026 with our largest group to date. If you or someone you know is interested in joining a future trip, details for our 2027 tour will be forthcoming on our website.

The Founders Scholarship

We are pleased to continue offering the Founders Tuition Scholarship. This \$10,000 per student tuition scholarship exists to ensure that students who desire to prioritize their spiritual growth and build their lives on the foundation of God's Word can do so at BICS without the burden of debt. Now in its fourth year, students consistently tell us how pivotal this scholarship has been in their decision to enroll at BICS. This year, all 14 students in the Class of 2026 are recipients of this substantial award, made possible through the generosity of individuals, churches, and organizations.

One such supporter is *Berkshire Christian*, whose contribution to the Founders Scholarship Fund earlier in the year helped us meet the increased need created by our much larger incoming class. We appreciate their desire to play a vital role in equipping the next generation of Christian leaders, and we are deeply grateful for their partnership in our work to that end.

Moving Forward on Mission

Now in our 38th year, more than 400 men and women have experienced the BICS program, many serving as pastors, youth leaders, teachers, and in a variety of ministry roles. Our graduates are raising families, teaching Sunday School, directing camps, serving on boards, running businesses, and using their gifts to bless the Advent Christian Church and beyond. We are grateful that the Lord has allowed BICS to play a part in their preparation and growth.

We remain convinced, perhaps more than ever, of the need for young men and women to be firmly grounded in the Word and better equipped to serve the local church wherever and however God leads them. Though challenges remain, by God's grace we are pressing on in the mission to disciple young adults in a Christ-centered and close-knit community.

If you know upper high school students or recent graduates who would benefit from this program, we urgently need pastors and church leaders to help identify them. You can find out more information on our website (<https://www.berkshireinstitute.org>) or get in touch with us via email at admissions@berkshireinstitute.org.

Partnering with the Eastern Region

We remain profoundly grateful for our relationship with the people and churches of the Eastern Regional Association. Your consistent prayers and financial support are a great encouragement to us. Wherever we travel in the Eastern Region, we find alumni and family of alumni who testify to the impact of BICS. To God be the glory!

In Christ,

Andy Rice
President