



Eastern Region Association Report

To: Advent Christian Eastern Region Association

Date: October 2026

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is a joy to greet you again on behalf of Berkshire Christian. Some of you were with us at the Triennial in August, and I am glad for the chance to bring this report closer to home. “Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain” (Psalm 127:1). That verse has shaped this entire season. What has happened at Berkshire is not the fruit of clever planning. It is the fruit of God’s faithfulness and your partnership.

Three years ago Berkshire was in a season of discernment, asking the Lord what He would have us be in this chapter of a long history. The discernment has given way to direction. Berkshire Christian is the primary scholarship-granting institution of the Advent Christian denomination, and our calling is to remove the financial barriers standing between the people God has called and the training they need.

Investing in Those Called to Ministry

Scholarships remain the clearest expression of our mission. Our Board approved expanded award levels to meet the rising cost of training and education, so that students may now receive:

- \$600 annually for Ministry Training Institute coursework, plus \$300 toward materials
- Up to \$1,000 annually for undergraduate Bible college students
- Up to \$2,500 annually for graduate and seminary students
- Up to \$5,000 annually for doctoral-level students

We have supported students across the full span of theological education, preparing pastors, missionaries, counselors, and teachers. Our website at www.berkshirechristian.org now takes applications and renewals online, which makes the process simpler for every student we serve. Alongside each award, our



prayer calendar keeps these students and their preparation before the Lord throughout the year.

Three Students, One Calling

Numbers tell part of the story. Names tell the rest. Let me introduce you to three of the people your partnership has reached.

Dawson Jaramillo grew up in Portland, Oregon, and played five seasons of football at the University of Oregon before transferring to NC State to finish his college career. It was in North Carolina that God began planting a different calling in him. With the guidance of ACGC pastors and leaders, Dawson began an internship at Redemption Community Church in Clayton, where he now serves on Sundays and leads the youth group for middle and high school students, and he enrolled in seminary to deepen his training. A Berkshire scholarship made that possible. He told us, "I do not know what the future holds, but I know who holds my future. I trust the Lord with everything."

Travis Hutcheson pastors Shiloh Advent Christian Church in Monroe, North Carolina. A faithful shepherd to his congregation, he sensed God calling him deeper and began a graduate degree at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. At the same time, he and his wife Angela felt called to homeschool their two children, which meant Angela stepped away from the workforce. Like many ministry families, that step of faith came with real financial sacrifice, and adding seminary costs on top of it would have made delay the easy choice. Travis became one of the first recipients of our newly increased \$2,500 graduate scholarship. In his words, "Receiving this scholarship affirmed God's calling in our lives. It lifted a burden and gave us the confidence to move ahead in this season of growth, for me, for Angela, and for our whole family."

Jean Squire is the first recipient of the Joan Cooper Memorial Scholarship, and this part of the story belongs to New England. Jean met her husband David at Gordon College in 1965 and left school to marry him the following year. When God called David into ministry, he transferred his credits to Berkshire Christian College. Berkshire trained him. Together they served churches in Schenectady and Waterbury, planted a church in southern New Hampshire, and spent more than twenty years leading worship in Melrose, Massachusetts, where Jean remains a member today. David died of dementia in January of 2022, and for a



time Jean felt her life no longer had purpose. Her answer was to start a widows group in her neighborhood, and then, at 77, to enroll in the Spiritual Formation Certificate program at Gordon-Conwell so she would have better tools to help women in pain. Nearly sixty years ago Berkshire helped prepare her husband for ministry. This year Berkshire is helping prepare her. The call to serve has no age limit, and neither does our commitment to those who answer it.

A Powerful Partner in Kingdom Work

Berkshire has become not only a grantor of scholarships but a partner in the wider work of the denomination.

We were honored to provide full funding for the first Advent Christian Church Planting Residency, a new initiative of ACGC that combines immersive pastoral mentorship, theological training through the Ministry Training Institute, and hands-on church leadership experience. By funding the first resident, we helped ACGC move forward more quickly with a bold vision for planting healthy, gospel-centered congregations.

Closer to home, our continued investment in the Berkshire Institute for Christian Studies, including a \$30,000 contribution to the BICS Founders Scholarship, is helping young adults build a strong biblical foundation as they discern God's call on their lives.

A Visit to Oro Bible College

In September I traveled to Cagayan de Oro in the Philippines to see firsthand the work of Oro Bible College, which Berkshire supports. I went at the invitation of the Asia Pacific Area Director for ACGC and was there for the college's Foundation Day celebration.

I met President Jess Gawangon, the faculty, and the scholarship students themselves. I sat in meetings with OBC, PACCI, and ACGC leadership. I visited Glorious Claveria Advent Christian Church, the oldest Advent Christian church in the Philippines, now past its seventieth year, and preached at Maranatha Advent Christian Church on the final Sunday. What I found was a school doing serious work on very little, training pastors and leaders who shepherd growing congregations across Southeast Asia.



Berkshire and OBC are now working through a set of concrete partnership possibilities together, including faculty development and direct support for students preparing to lead the college in the years ahead. I expect to have more to report as that takes shape. Leadership development, we are convinced, is both a local priority and a global calling.

A Valued Partnership with Gordon-Conwell

We continue to give thanks for our long-standing relationship with Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, where the Adventual Collection and the Berkshire Professorship have blessed Advent Christian students and scholars for decades. This season brought a significant transition, as Dr. Gordon Isaac retired after more than 26 years of faithful service in the Berkshire Professorship. We are grateful that Dr. Isaac continued to serve Berkshire in an advisory capacity through this period. Gordon-Conwell is prayerfully working to determine next steps, and the immediate future of the professorship is not yet known. We remain committed to the partnership and to ensuring continued support for Advent Christian students, and we will keep you informed as the path forward becomes clear.

A Growing Circle of Support

This has been a year of growth. We have been encouraged by an increase in the number of churches choosing to support Berkshire financially, joining the families and individuals who have stepped forward with renewed generosity. Since our last Triennial, Berkshire Christian has invested more than \$110,000 directly into Kingdom work through scholarships, support for the Berkshire Institute for Christian Studies, partnership with Oro Bible College, and full funding of the first Church Planting Residency. That impact belongs to all of us.

If supporting this work is something your church would prayerfully consider, I would welcome the conversation. Please contact me directly. I would also welcome the chance to visit your congregation and tell these students' stories in person.



Looking Ahead

Each of these steps reflects God's hand at work. We move forward trusting the One who began it: "The one who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it" (1 Thessalonians 5:24). Berkshire Christian's legacy continues, not as a memory, but as a living investment in the next generation of Advent Christian leaders.

Thank you for your prayers, your encouragement, and your partnership in this vital work of equipping leaders for Christ's Church.

Yours in Christ,

Dan Thorpe
Executive Director
Berkshire Christian

www.berkshirechristian.org