



Berkshire Institute for Christian Studies

Report to the
Eastern Region
Annual Convention
OCTOBER 2026



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. Now in our 39th year, God has continued His work in the lives of young adults at BICS, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to highlight some of the ways we've seen His faithfulness over the past year.

Celebrating the Class of 2026

Last fall, I was diagnosed with an aggressive form of lymphoma, and the months that followed brought treatments that continued through April. I'm very pleased to report that I am now in remission, and I wish to express my deep gratitude to the many who have upheld me

and my family in prayer throughout this ordeal.

Needless to say, this past year didn't unfold the way we expected, marked by hardship and uncertainty in various ways, not least of which was that diagnosis. But our theme for the Class of 2026 was "Take Heart," drawn from Psalm 27:14, and by God's grace it proved far more fitting than we could have known. It hasn't always been easy, but in the midst of it, God has proven His faithfulness to us in fresh ways, and we've learned to lean more and more on His promises. Moreover, what could have simply been a personal hardship has become an unexpected opportunity for discipleship, both for our family and for the students who have walked alongside us.

Saturday, May 16 marked the 36th Commencement of the Berkshire Institute for Christian Studies, and we celebrated the completion of a year of discipleship for the fourteen students in the Class of 2026. We're excited to see how God will use them in the years ahead!



The fourteen students in the BICS Class of 2026 on the occasion of their commencement on Saturday, May 16, 2026

Welcoming the Class of 2027

We're grateful to continue our mission with the Class of 2027. This year we have six students from Maine, Virginia, and even Washington State! Our early recruitment trends made it clear from the beginning that this would be a smaller class, but we're grateful for the opportunity it affords us to invest more personally in each of these students.



The Class of 2027 on the first full day of Orientation, left to right: Cameron Mallis, Alex Walker, Carter Wannemacher, Jaidyn Stuart, Ezra Weigelt, and William Bickford

What unites these students with every other incoming BICS class is their desire to prioritize their spiritual growth and personal development through a year of intensive discipleship. Nearly four decades after our founding, we remain steadfastly committed to helping students become further rooted in God's Word, better equipped with a biblical worldview, and more prepared to use their gifts for the building up of the body of Christ. What a joy it is to welcome this new cohort of students and watch them settle into what promises to be one of the most transformative years of their lives.

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The Class of 2027 at the Ark Encounter

The theme we've chosen for the Class of 2027 is "My Shepherd." Psalm 23 begins with the familiar words, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." Throughout this psalm and all of Scripture, God reveals Himself as our faithful Provider, Protector, Comforter, and Guide. This year, our prayer is that every student and staff member would grow to know these truths not merely as familiar words, but as a daily reality, as together we learn to listen to the Shepherd's Word, rest in His provision, and trust His guidance through every green pasture and every dark valley.

Touring the Lands of the Bible

After two postponements of the Israel trip, we were able to offer one last shared experience before Commencement that was both encouraging and formative for this year's students. At the conclusion of the semester, we took them on an eight-day trip to Sight & Sound Theatre in Lancaster, PA,

the Creation Museum and Ark Encounter in Kentucky, and finally Washington, D.C., where they worshiped at Capitol Hill Baptist Church and spent a day at the Museum of the Bible viewing artifacts from Israel, including fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Then, after much anticipation, on August 4 twenty-eight travelers set out for "the trip of a lifetime," and finally reached Israel, the Land of Promise. This year's tour was unique in a couple of ways. For the first time since 2012, the tour included a day in Jordan, giving us the opportunity to visit Mount Nebo, where Moses looked out over the Promised Land he would not himself enter. And though the trip was shorter than our usual tour, that in no way hindered us from pressing through an ambitious itinerary of more than sixty biblical sites.

We were also glad to travel with a nearly complete class: thirteen of the fourteen students in our Class of 2026 made the journey, joined by one student from the Class of 2020 who had been unable to travel due to the pandemic. 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. If you're interested in learning more about traveling with us in the future, you can find more information on our website.



28 travelers pose atop Mt. Nebo in Jordan in August

Looking Ahead

We remain convinced that the kind of focused, immersive discipleship offered at BICS is urgently needed, and we're committed to keeping it within reach for students who couldn't otherwise afford it. That conviction is what drives the Founders Tuition Scholarship, a \$10,000 award that has now helped 40 students afford a year of intentional discipleship they might not otherwise have been able to pursue. This past year, all fourteen students in the Class of 2026 received this scholarship, and we saw clear evidence of spiritual growth in every one of them.

None of this is possible without the generosity of a vast network of supporters that includes many individuals, churches, and organizations in the Eastern Region — our home since 1988. At the same time, we're asking for your help in identifying future students. If you know of high school juniors and seniors or recent graduates who might benefit from a year at BICS, we'd be grateful if you'd put us in touch with them. You can find more information on our website (berkshireinstitute.org) or reach us at admissions@berkshireinstitute.org.

We thank God for the opportunity to be partners with you in this important work of discipling young adults for lifelong ministry, wherever and however He leads them. Wherever we travel in the Eastern Region, we find alumni and family of alumni who testify to the impact of BICS. Thank you for your continued generosity and support; we look forward to many years of fruitful ministry together.

In Christ,


Andy Rice
President