

MACDONALD LECTURES
IN BIBLE & THEOLOGY

FINDING WONDER IN A FALLEN WORLD

*Deploying Ecclesiastes in
a Post-Secular Context*



CENTRAL SEMINARY

FOR THE CHURCH. FOR THE GOSPEL.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2025
PLYMOUTH, MN

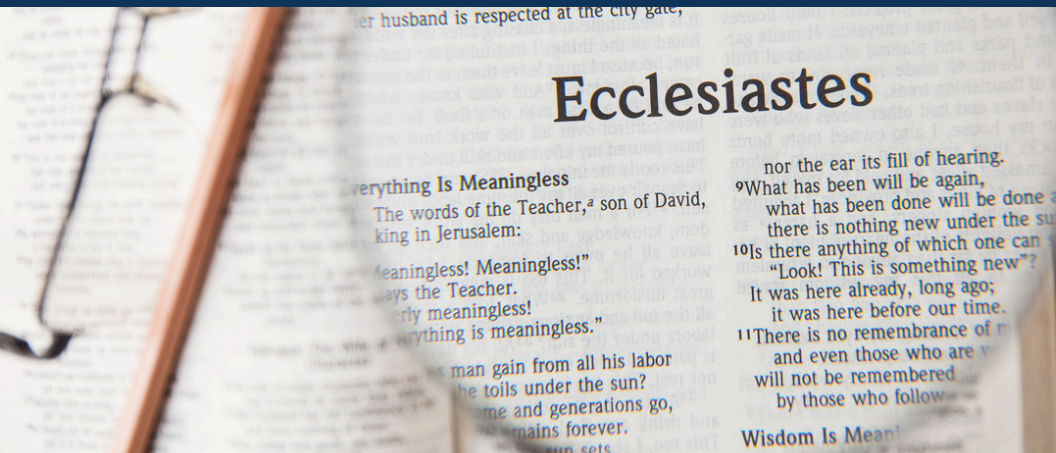
**THE MISSION OF CENTRAL BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IS TO
ASSIST NEW TESTAMENT CHURCHES
IN EQUIPPING SPIRITUAL LEADERS
FOR CHRIST-EXALTING
BIBLICAL MINISTRY**



**CENTRAL BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

SCHEDULE

- **8:00AM –8:30AM REGISTRATION**
- **8:30AM–9:30AM SESSION I**
POST-SECULARISM AND THE USE OF ECCLESIASTES
- **9:30AM–9:45AM BREAK**
- **9:45AM–10:45AM SESSION II**
FINDING WONDER IN A FALLEN WORLD:
THE MAIN THEME OF ECCLESIASTES
- **10:45AM–11:00AM BREAK**
- **11:00AM–12:00PM SESSION III**
WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?
STRATEGIES FOR DEPLOYING ECCLESIASTES
- **12:00PM–1:00PM CATERED LUNCH**
FELLOWSHIP HALL (DOWNSTAIRS)





PLEASE SILENCE YOUR ELECTRONIC DEVICES

RESTROOMS LOCATED IN SEMINARY WING

To maintain the safety of our school children, use only the seminary restrooms located in the seminary wing



LUNCH SCHEDULE

Food will be served in the Fellowship Hall, located in the lower level of Fourth Baptist Church & Christian School. Seminary staff will guide you downstairs. There is an elevator available for any who need it.

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Matt Morrell

*President, Central Baptist Theological Seminary
Senior Pastor, Fourth Baptist Church*

Thank you for joining us for our 2025 MacDonald Lectures. We pray these lectures challenge and encourage you in your study of God's Word. May God continue to bless you all.

INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVES

Central Baptist Theological Seminary intends its graduates to function as Christian leaders, and therefore expects that its students will develop in the following areas.

- Biblical and doctrinal knowledge (ideas that the graduate believes, knows, and understands, including moral convictions)
- Ordinate religious affection (Christ-like character that the graduate demonstrates, including devotion to God, moral fiber, integrity, perseverance, and self-denial)
- Functional ministry skills (tasks that the graduate performs in the execution of Christian leadership)

MACDONALD LECTURES SERIES IN BIBLE & THEOLOGY



Every winter, Central Seminary conducts the MacDonald Lectures Series in Bible and Theology. This academic lecture series was created in memory of Charles MacDonald, Th.D. (1903–1971), beloved professor of pastoral theology at Central Seminary.



DR. CHARLES MACDONALD
CHAIRMAN, DEPARTMENT OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY, 1967-1971

Academically, Dr. MacDonald received a B.S. degree from Northwestern University, the Th.B., B.D. and Th.D. degrees from Northern Seminary, and a D.D. degree from Central Baptist Theological Seminary of Minneapolis, where he taught the last four years of his life. From 1936 to 1939 he taught on the faculty of Northern Seminary.

Dr. MacDonald served three pastorates, at Elgin, Illinois, then eight years at Mount Morris, Michigan, and eighteen years at Lincoln Park, Michigan. His warm pastoral heart, his efficient dedication, his Biblical principles based on a life of successful service gave his teaching a practical value that was helpful to prospective pastors, pastors and many laymen serving in local churches.

PREVIOUS MACDONALD LECTURES IN BIBLE & THEOLOGY



2024 - Dr. Manfred Kober, Christians Living Under a Hostile Government

2023 - Dr. Matt Shrader, The Building of a Baptist Tradition: *The Early History and Theology of Northern Baptist Seminaries*

2022 - Dr. Ryan Martin, The Sources and Context of “Gracious Affections” in Jonathan Edwards

2021 - Dr. Preston Mayes, The Widow, Orphan, and Immigrant in Deuteronomy: *What can Moses teach Christians about the modern social justice movement?*

2020 - Dr. David Saxon, Defending the Gospel: *Lessons from the Polemical Writings of Andrew Fuller*

2019 - Dr. Jon Pratt, Issues in Sanctification

*Previous Lecture Videos & Notes
are available at centralseminary.edu*

Today's lectures will also be posted later this week

UPCOMING EVENTS

Spring ThM Seminar - March 26-28

Advanced Hebrew Reading and Grammar (Dr. Preston Mayes)

Biblical Theology of Jesus (Dr. Jon Pratt)

Seminar in Modern Theological Thought (Shrader, Bauder, Williams)

Spring DMin Seminar - April 1-4

Theory & Practice of Public Worship (Dr. Scott Aniol)

Biblical Framework Counseling & Mental Disorders (Dr. Kirk Barger)

Friends & Family Banquet – Monday, April 14

Contact Ron Gotzman to Host a Table or to be Invited

Commencement – Friday, May 16

7:00 PM Service

Summer Module Course

June 2-6 Romans (Dr. Ardel Caneday)

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2025



FALL CONFERENCE

with

DR. KEVIN BAUDER

RESEARCH PROFESSOR OF
SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY



OUR 2025 GUEST LECTURER

DR. KYLE DUNHAM

Kyle C. Dunham is the associate professor of Old Testament at Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary in Allen Park, Michigan. He has been at DBTS since 2016.

Prior to coming to DBTS, Dr. Dunham served from 2011–2016 as the Associate Professor of Old Testament and registrar at Virginia Beach Theological Seminary. Previously he was adjunct professor at The Master's Seminary in Sun Valley, California, and at Northland International University in Dunbar, Wisconsin. He also has assisted with a church plant in Bakersfield, California, and has taught various Bible studies and seminars in Michigan, California, Kenya, and southeast Asia. Prior to this, he served as an associate pastor in upstate New York and as a short-term missionary in Ecuador.

Dr. Dunham earned the Doctor of Theology in Old Testament from The Master's Seminary and the Master of Divinity and Master of Theology in biblical studies from Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary. As a recipient of the National Merit Scholarship, Dr. Dunham received the Bachelor of Science in missions from Baptist Bible College of Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania. He has also completed additional graduate studies toward the Master of Business Administration from the University of La Verne in La Verne, California.

Dr. Dunham's areas of expertise include the kingdom of God, ancient Near Eastern theodicy, the book of Job, and Israelite wisdom literature. He is a member of the Evangelical Theological Society and the Society of Biblical Literature.

Dr. Dunham published a monograph on the role of leading counselor Eliphaz in the book of Job in light of ancient Near Eastern theodicy literature. He is currently researching and writing a co-authored commentary on Ecclesiastes with Lexham Press.

Dr. Dunham and his wife, Judith, reside in Southgate. They have two daughters who are both pursuing higher education. In their spare time, they enjoy reading, playing and watching sports, cooking, hiking, and hosting get-togethers.

SESSION 1:

POST-SECULARISM AND THE USE OF ECCLESIASTES

1. What Is Post-Secularism?

2. How Is the World Becoming Re-Enchanted?

The rise of podcasts emphasizing spirituality.

Adult conversions to Christianity.

New atheists have gone mystic.

Rise of theosis discussions in evangelical circles.

Re-enchantment as a hot topic.

The growth of pan-psychism.

The rise of modern pagan movements.

The revival of Stoicism.

The popularity of the “unseen realm.”

3. How Does Ecclesiastes Fit?

SESSION 2:

FINDING WONDER IN A FALLEN WORLD: *THE MAIN THEME OF ECCLESIASTES*

1. Reflectiveness and Curiosity (to see):

Ecclesiastes calls for intellectual engagement and deliberation (Eccl 1:13–15; 7:25).

2. Relinquishment of Control (to submit):

Ecclesiastes charges us to recognize our finitude and mortality (Eccl 9:1–6).

3. Absorption and Flow (to strive):

Ecclesiastes elevates good work as providing a qualified advantage for humans (Eccl 1:2-3, 13; 3:10; 5:20; 10:19).

4. Awe and Mystery (to sense):

Ecclesiastes encourages us to appropriate God's good gifts with joy and remembrance (Eccl 11:7-12:1).

5. Attention to God (to sanctify):

Ecclesiastes informs us that God has placed eternity in our hearts and charges us to fear God and keep his commandments (Eccl 3:11; 12:13).

FINDING WONDER
IN A FALLEN WORLD

Deploying Ecclesiastes in a Post-Secular Context

4. Preach or teach the book in twelve or more sections.

A suggested outline is found below:

I. INTRODUCTORY FRAME (1:1–11)

- A. Title: The Words of Qohelet (1:1)
- B. Thematic Statement: “All Is Enigmatic” (1:2)
- C. Programmatic Question: “What Is the Advantage for Mankind?” (1:3)
- D. Contextualizing Poem: Relentless Rhythm of the Finite Created Order (1:4–11)

II. OBSERVATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING THE RELATIVE ADVANTAGES AND DETRIMENTS OF HUMAN LIFE IN A FALLEN WORLD (1:12–11:8)

- A. Experimental Observations on Wisdom and Folly in Human Behavior (1:12–2:26)
 - 1. Superscription Introducing the King and His Royal Quests (1:12)
 - 2. Quest 1: The Totality of Human Effort and Achievement (1:13–15)
 - 3. Quest 2: The Totality of Knowledge, Wisdom, and Folly (1:16–18)
 - 4. Quest 3: The Totality of Pleasure and Diversion (2:1–2)
 - 5. Reflection on Quest 3: Pleasure Offers No Lasting Advantage Because It Is Empty and Fleeting (2:3–11)
 - 6. Reflection on Quest 2: Wisdom Offers a Relative Advantage That Death and a Forgotten Legacy Negate (2:12–17)
 - 7. Reflection on Quest 1: Human Effort and Achievement Offers No Lasting Advantage Because Satisfaction and Legacy Are Elusive (2:18–23)
 - 8. Conclusion: Enjoy God’s Good Gifts Judiciously (2:24–26)

- B. Reflective Observations and Instructions Concerning Human Transience, Finitude, and Evil vis-à-vis Divine Timelessness, Transcendence, and Righteousness (3:1–7:24)
1. Human Transience and Divine Timelessness; Human Finitude and Divine Transcendence (3:1–22)
 2. Possible Advantages and Detriments of Toil and Leadership (4:1–16)
 3. Instructions for Successful Navigation of Life in View of Human Transience, Finitude, and Evil (5:1–20)
 4. Observations on the Enigma of Fleeting Wealth and Legacy (6:1–12)
 5. Instructions for Successful Navigation in View of Man's Inability to Fathom the Enigmas of Life (7:1–14)
 6. Observations and Instructions Concerning the Enigma of Inconsistent Rewards and Punishments (7:15–24)
- C. Reflective Observations and Instructions Concerning the Applicability of Wisdom to the Enigmas of Life (7:25–10:15)
1. Observations and Instructions Concerning the Snares of the Seductive Woman and Indiscreet Political Intrigue as Impediments to the Application of Wisdom (7:25–8:8)
 2. Observations and Instructions Concerning Wicked People Who Impede Applications of Wisdom (8:9–9:10)
 3. Observations and Instructions Concerning the Connection Between Deeds and Results (9:1–10)
 4. Observations on Human Finitude and Transience as an Impediment to Some Applications of Wisdom (9:11–10:15)

D. Instructions Concerning Successful Toil and Leadership (10:16–11:10)

1. Mature, Thoughtful Leadership Will Establish a Nation; Immature, Careless Leadership Will Destroy It (10:16–20)
2. Be Bold Yet Prudent While Enjoying God’s Gifts Because Life Is Uncertain (11:1–10)

III. CONCLUDING FRAME (12:1–14)

A. Climactic Poem on the Brevity of Human Life (12:1–7)

B. Thematic Statement: “All Is Enigmatic” (12:8)

C. Epilogue (12:9–14)

1. Qohelet’s Pursuit of Wisdom and Instruction (12:9–12)
2. Conclusion: Fear God and Keep His Commandments (12:13–14)

5. Pray that God would continue to do a surprising work in our day as we engage with Ecclesiastes.

THE CENTRAL SEMINARY PODCAST



Recent Episodes



Deploying Ecclesiastes
with Kyle Dunham



Praying for Our Leaders in Government
with Rory Martin



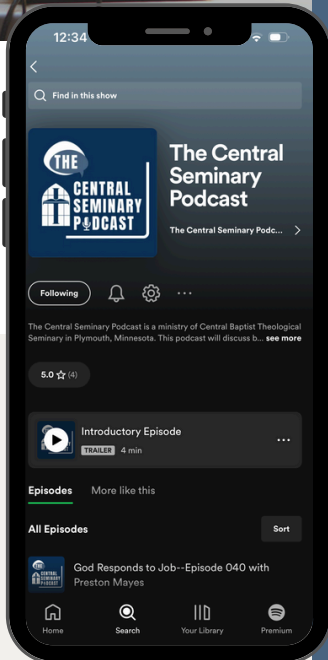
Fellowship with the Body of Christ
with Pat Thompson



Missions & Technology
with Luke Tanis & Sebastian Basaldua



Alumni Interview!
with Lt. Col. (r) Scott Nupson



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WCTS began broadcasting on FM100.3 in June of 1965, as a ministry of Central Seminary. Studios were located at 2105 Fremont Ave. N. in the old Fourth Baptist Church building.

Today, true to our original mission, WCTS ministers to the Twin Cities region at AM1030 and FM97.9 from our studios at Fourth Baptist Church in Plymouth, Minnesota. Our program lineup features conservative Christian music and Bible teaching, both designed for Christian growth and encouragement.



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