



# NEW BRUNSWICK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Think Critically • Act Justly • Lead Faithfully

## COMMENCEMENT SERVICE

May 20, 2023



## CLASS OF 2023

35 Seminary Place | New Brunswick, NJ 08901 | 732-247-5241

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# Participating in the Commencement Service

**Rev. Micah L. McCreary, PhD**

*President*

*John Henry Livingston Professor of Theology*

**Rev. Beth LaNeel Tanner, PhD**

*Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs*

*The Norman and Mary Kansfield Chair of Old Testament*

**Elder Russell T. Paarlberg, JD**

*Attorney, Lanting, Paarlberg & Associates, Ltd.*

*Moderator, NBTS Board of Trustees*

**Rev. Eddy Alemán**

*General Secretary, Reformed Church in America*

**Rev. Dwayne Jackson** (Class of 1999)

*President, General Synod of the Reformed Church of America*

*Co-pastor, Second Reformed Church of Hackensack*

**Rev. Samuel Cruz, PhD** (Class of 1994)

*Associate Professor of Religion and Society, Union Theological Seminary*

*Member, NBTS Board of Trustees*

**Rev. Jaeseung Cha, PhD**

*Associate Professor of Foundational and Constructive Theology*

**Rev. Leslie Copeland-Tune, DMin**

*Chief Operating Officer, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA*

**Rev. Neal Presa, PhD**

*Vice President of Student Affairs and Vocational Outreach*

*Associate Professor of Preaching and Worship*

**Benjamin T. Berman, MM**

*Organist*

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# COMMENCEMENT SERVICE

SATURDAY, MAY 20, 2023

11:00 AM

PRELUDE

*Aria in F Major from the Twelfth Concerto Grosso*

George Frideric Handel  
arr. Alexandre Guilmant

\*PROCESSIONAL

*Voluntary II*

William Boyce

\*VOTUM, SENTENCES AND SALUTATION

Micah L. McCreary  
*President*

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. **Amen**

O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!  
The Lord is our God, we are the people of God's pasture, and the sheep of the Lord's hand.

Grace to you and peace from God our Parent and the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen**

GATHERING PRAYER

Beth LaNeel Tanner  
*Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs*

WELCOME AND RECOGNITIONS

Micah L. McCreary

Introduction of the Speaker

Recognition of Arrivals, Leave-Takings, and Distinctions

Recognition of Board of Trustees

Recognition of Alumni

\* *We invite you to rise in body or in spirit.*

PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES OF FITNESS FOR MINISTRY, REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA

Russell Paarlberg  
*Moderator, NBTS Board of Trustees*

GREETING FROM THE RCA

Eddy Alemán  
*General Secretary, RCA*

SCRIPTURE READING

Mark 6:6b-13

Dwayne Jackson  
*President, General Synod, RCA*

Samuel Cruz  
*Member, NBTS Board of Trustees*

Jaeseung Cha  
*Associate Professor of Foundational and Constructive Theology*

<sup>6b</sup>Then [Jesus] went about among the villages teaching. <sup>7</sup>He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. <sup>8</sup>He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; <sup>9</sup>but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. <sup>10</sup>He said to them, “Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. <sup>11</sup>If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.” <sup>12</sup>So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. <sup>13</sup>They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

*Go Forth, Understanding the Assignment*

Leslie Copeland-Tune  
*2023 Commencement Speaker*

CONFERRING OF DEGREES

Certificate in Theological Studies  
Master of Arts  
Master of Divinity  
Doctor of Ministry

Micah L. McCreary  
Beth LaNeel Tanner

BLESSING OF THE GRADUATES

Micah L. McCreary

\*BENEDICTION

God of the prophets, bless the prophets' heirs;  
Elijah's mantle o'er Elisha cast;  
each age in turn for solemn tasks prepares;  
make each one nobler, stronger than the last.

Those, here and now, who catch your mystic voice,  
with "Here am I! Speak Lord!" shall bravely stand!  
As they dare answer, we with thanks rejoice;  
God lead them forth to joyous work and grand.

Anoint your servants, faithful servants, they:  
prophets for right, who every evil break;  
priests, interceding for a world astray;  
rulers who, for their Christ, a kingdom make.

Send them, apostles, heralds of your cross!  
Forth may they go to tell all realms your grace;  
inspired of you, may they count all but loss,  
and stand at last with joy before your face.

O mighty age of Prophecy return!  
With truth and faith, enrich our urgent time!  
Lord Jesus Christ, again with us sojourn;  
a weary world awaits your reign sublime!

Text: Denis Wortman (NBTS class of 1860)  
Written for the Centennial of New Brunswick Theological Seminary, 1884, alt.  
Tune: abridged from Psalm 124 in the Genevan Psalter (1551)

You are cordially invited to a reception at NBTS,  
35 Seminary Place, New Brunswick, NJ.

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# About Our Commencement Speaker

## The Reverend Leslie Copeland-Tune, DMin



Rev. Dr. Leslie Copeland-Tune (NBTS DMin 2012) is a faith leader, public theologian, consultant, strategist, writer, and justice advocate. She is currently the Chief Operating Officer for the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Ordained into the Gospel ministry more than twenty years ago, Dr. Copeland-Tune has worked for a number of faith-based organizations and has used her gifts to serve in local congregations. Her passion and work for social justice and advocacy has been nationally recognized. Recently, Dr. Copeland-

Tune was appointed to be on the Faith-Based Security Advisory Council for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and is the author of the newly released book, *24/7 Embodying Christ-like Leadership*. She also has a chapter on Christian leadership in the book, *Church on Purpose: Reinventing Discipleship, Community and Justice* edited by Adam L. Bond and Laura Mariko Cheifetz. In 2022, Dr. Copeland-Tune was named as one of the “22 Faith Leaders to Watch,” by the Center for American Progress, a think tank in Washington, D.C. She is also the Chair of the National Religious Partnership for the Environment and serves on the board of the One America Movement, an organization which seeks to end the toxic polarization in our nation. Dr. Copeland-Tune has degrees from Syracuse University, the University of Maryland, Duke University, and New Brunswick Theological Seminary. She also attended the Summer Theology Programme at Oxford University in England. She is blessed to have two wonderful, justice-minded, young adult children.

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# THE CLASS OF 2023

## DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

### *Pastoral Care and Counseling*

#### **Mary Ann Brown**

*Doctoral Thesis:*

The Spiritual Transformation of Formerly Incarcerated Individuals: An Exploration, Assessment, and Evaluation of The Religious and Spiritual Experiences of Formerly Incarcerated Individuals

#### **Samuel L. Hayes, Jr.**

*Doctoral Thesis:*

“From Eligibility to Inclusion”

Investigating the Importance of Inclusive Home Space as a Pastoral Care Issue in the New Jersey Veteran Memorial Home Long-term Care Facility

#### **Barrington C. Hibbert**

*Doctoral Thesis:*

To Investigate the Impact that the Absence of a Counseling Training Program for Pastors and Ministers at the Church of Jesus Christ (Apostolic), Inc. (CJCA) Has on their Job Satisfaction, Frustration Levels, and Self-Efficacy

*With Honors*

#### **Nevin T. Lewis**

*Doctoral Thesis:*

The Impact of Pre-marital Counseling on Marital Satisfaction for Couples in Tobago

#### **Kenyatta T. Williams**

*Doctoral Thesis:*

Understanding the Effects of Emotional Distress on Leaders in the Black Church

### *Transformational Preaching*

#### **Tracey Cowan Henry**

*Doctoral Thesis:*

Mary of Nazareth: Mother of God, Mentor for Us—Women Preachers Exploring Mary's Story from the Protestant Pulpit

*With Honors*

### *Prophetic Urban Ministry*

#### **Carver D. Pace, Jr.**

*Doctoral Thesis:*

The Impact of Technology as a Critical Component of Prophetic Urban Ministry

*With Honors*

### *Missiology and Global Christianity*

#### **James Hart Brumm**

*Doctoral Thesis:*

The Reformed Church Center at New Brunswick Theological Seminary and the Work and Witness of the Reformed Church in America

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## DUAL DEGREE MASTER OF DIVINITY & MASTER OF ARTS (PASTORAL CARE & COUNSELING)

**Omotayo C. Cole Cineus**

**Lynette J. Fraiter** *Summa Cum Laude*

**Betrice C. Thompson** *Summa Cum Laude*

## MASTER OF DIVINITY

**Chela Bien-Aime** *Cum Laude*  
**Tosha Brown**  
**Sharon Y. Davidson** *Cum Laude*  
**Judson Destine**  
**Kia L. Inman** *Summa Cum Laude*  
**Kelly J. Kotch**

**G. Maurice McRae, Jr.** *Summa Cum Laude*  
**David E. Roebuck**  
**Arlene L. Romaine** *Summa Cum Laude*  
**Eunice Sarzedas** *Summa Cum Laude*  
**Etasha D. Webb** *Magna Cum Laude*

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## MASTER OF ARTS (PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELING)

**Sharon A. Brown**  
**Diane R. Burnett**  
**Patricia E. Johnson**

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## MASTER OF ARTS (THEOLOGICAL STUDIES)

**Barbara E. Shadis** *Magna Cum Laude*  
**Maurice P. West** *Summa Cum Laude*  
**Benjamin J. Zaccaria**

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## CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

**Young Jin Ahn**  
**Johnathan R. Banks, Jr.**  
**Patricia Gilmer-VanDorp**  
**Donna Hayes**

**Janet A. Paduano-Cardillo**  
**Claudette A. Reid**  
**Patricia N. Smith**

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## CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS FOR MINISTRY, REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA

**Arlene L. Romaine**



# BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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**(MDiv 2011; DMin 2016)**

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Senior Pastor, Graceway Presbyterian Church  
New Brunswick, NJ

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Irvington, NY

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**(MA 1994)**

Associate Professor of Religion and Society,  
Union Theological Seminary City of New York  
Senior Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church  
Brooklyn, NY

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**(MDiv 1988)**

Senior Pastor,  
First Baptist Church of Highland Park  
Landover, MD

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Grandville & Grand Rapids, MI  
RCA Global Missions, Coordinator for  
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Orange City, IA

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Minister of Word & Sacrament, RCA, Retired  
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Emerita, Union College  
Schenectady, NY

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Director of Engagement and Outreach  
Higher Education Resource Services (HERS)  
Somerset, NJ

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**(MDiv 1973)**

Classis Minister, Classis of Delaware  
Raritan, Retired  
South Plainfield, NJ

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Park Hills Community Church  
Los Angeles, CA

**Rev. Abigail Norton-Levering**  
**(MDiv 2004)**

Synod Ministries Coordinator,  
Regional Synod of Albany (RCA)  
Albany, NY

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Attorney, Lanting Paarlberg & Associates  
Schereville, IN

**Rev. Zachary K. Pearce**

Pastor, First Presbyterian Church  
Port Jervis, NY

**Rev. Wilfredo Rodriguez**  
**(MDiv 1994)**

US Navy Chaplain Commander, Retired  
Pastor, Reformed Church of Linden  
Linden, NJ

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Interim Pastor,  
Taiwanese Presbyterian Church in Hawaii  
Honolulu, HI

**Rev. Ronald L. Slaughter, DMin**

Senior Pastor, Saint James AME Church  
Newark, NJ

**Rev. Elizabeth (Liz) Testa**

Women's Transformation and Leadership  
and Equity-Based Hospitality, Reformed Church  
in America  
New Brunswick, NJ

**Rev. Anthony Vis**

Minister of Word & Sacrament  
RCA, Retired  
Grimes, IA

**Dean Zimmerman, PhD**

Professor, Founder and Director of the  
Rutgers Center for the Philosophy of  
Religion, Rutgers University  
New Brunswick, NJ

*Ex-Officio*

**Rev. Eddy Alemán**

General Secretary, Reformed Church  
in America  
Grand Rapids, MI

**Rev. Micah L. McCreary, PhD**

President, New Brunswick  
Theological Seminary  
New Brunswick, NJ

**Congratulations  
to the  
Class of 2023!**

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# NEW BRUNSWICK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

We are a multiethnic, intergenerational, ecumenical theological institution of higher education that instills creative, contextual, and critical thinking and a passion for justice that reflects God's transforming love in Jesus Christ.

## Our History

New Brunswick Seminary began in 1784, when the Synod of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church—now known as the Reformed Church in America—elected a New York pastor named John Henry Livingston (1746–1825) to be its “professor.” His task was to prepare students to become the Reformed Church's ministers of the Word.

Livingston fulfilled that task first in New York City and then, from 1810 until his death, in New Brunswick, where—at first sharing a building and other resources with Queen's College (now Rutgers University)—what began as only a small group consisting of this theological professor and his students, quickly acquired the structures of organization and support that made it a resilient institution. And here in New Brunswick, surrounded by the College Avenue campus of Rutgers (though from 1867 no longer officially connected with it), the seminary has thrived for more than two centuries.

Over that time, some things have not changed. The seminary's task is still to prepare ministers for their calling. It still has ties to the Reformed Church in America, and it remains centered in the doctrines of the grace and sovereignty of God that are dear to the Reformed tradition.

But in many other respects, the seminary has changed, especially over the last half-century, as the range of communities it serves has broadened and its vision of ministry has widened. Beginning in the 1960s, major adjustments in the curriculum brought a new emphasis on urban ministry. Then in the 1970s, NBTS made a commitment to offer evening classes and to welcome part-time students, female students, and students of color. Thus began an evolution which has continued ever since—seen more recently in our move to online and hybrid learning which expands our reach and serves our students in ways that meet their needs. All these developments reflect a vision which we still embrace today: to be a multiethnic, intergenerational, ecumenical theological institution of higher education that instills creative, contextual, and critical thinking and a passion for justice that reflects God's transforming love in Jesus Christ.

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## Purpose

Called in Jesus Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, New Brunswick Theological Seminary participates in God's own laboring to fulfill God's reign on earth.

Rooted in the Reformed tradition and centered in its trust of God's sovereignty and grace, the Seminary is an inter-cultural, ecumenical school of Christian faith, learning, and scholarship committed to its metro-urban and global contexts.

Our purpose is to educate persons and strengthen communities for transformational, public ministries in church and society. We fulfill this through creative, contextual, and critical engagement with texts, traditions, and practices.

## Vision

We envision empowered leaders, ministries, and communities who actively pursue, promote, and engage in the work of justice, reconciliation, and unity, affirming the equality of all God's people.

We envision a community of graduates who bear witness to God's light in the world, where all lives are dignified and all voices are heard, and all are included to share in God's bountiful love.

We envision spiritual communities who embody grace and love, rooted in critical, creative, contextual thinking and leadership that inspires others to live fruitful and faithful lives.

We envision a world where hearts are renewed, justice is established, and faith is restored.

## Mission

Our mission, rooted in God's grace, is to empower people and communities...

- to explore their calling and live into their futures by providing a place of connection and spiritual formation;

- to bring a curiosity, openness, creativity, and logic to the critical examination of text and context; and

- to act with fairness and integrity through analyzing systems of power and privilege.

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# NEW BRUNSWICK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



**Think Critically • Act Justly • Lead Faithfully**

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**Graduate Theological Education since 1784**

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**NJ CAMPUS** | 35 Seminary Place | New Brunswick, NJ 08901 | 732-247-5241

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