

Theological Seminary of the EBC Georgia

Background and History

The Baptist Theological Seminary was established in 1993 in the Eastern Georgian province of Kakheti in the town of Gurjaani. That time was a difficult political and economic period for Georgia, as the collapse of the USSR created plenty of unilateral problems. At the same time Georgia faced bloody civil war and the ethnic conflicts. Despite the heavy condition the Union of Evangelical Baptist Churches of Georgia (Now the Evangelical Baptist Church of Georgia) managed to establish the first Baptist educational centre. This was a significant achievement. The first steps actually were been enough difficult. The Seminary had 3 teachers and 15 students. Almost every student was from the Eastern Georgia.

In 1998 the Seminary moved to the capital city of Tbilisi, due to the several problems, mostly of the financial character. At the same year the branch of the Seminary (College) was established in Kutaisi, the second largest town of Georgia, as the growing number of Baptist churches requested theologically trained ministers.

Contemporary condition:

The Baptist Theological Seminary separates into two parts: 1. The Seminary with 7 years educational program; 2. The College – 3 years training program in Tbilisi (1) and Kutaisi (2).

The monthly length (in hours) of the following subjects accepted by the staff board:

1. Introduction to the Old Testament
2. Introduction to the New Testament
3. Church History
4. Comparative Religious Studies
5. Homiletics
6. The History of Georgia
7. Medieval Georgian Christian Texts
8. NT Greek
9. Hebrew
10. Bible Archeology (The History of the Ancient World)
11. The History of Ancient Arts
12. Medieval Georgian Literature
13. Christian Ethics
14. Additional short courses in Geography, Modern Politics and Economy
15. Exegetics
16. Patristics

Number of students: Seminary – **40**, College (1) – **20**, College (2) – **15**

Library: The library of the Seminary consists approximately 3-4 thousands of Theological books and booklets.

Academic staff:

Bishop Malkhaz Songulashvili – Introduction to the NT and OT, and Hebrew

Mr. Ramaz Paresashvili (Dean) – Comparative Religious Studies and Bible Archeology

Mr. Lukhum Maisuradze (Principle) - Christian Heritage, Medieval Georgian Literature, Christian Ethics

Mr. Merab Karchava – Homiletics, Exegetic

Ms. Nina Nakudashvili – NT Greek

Mr. David Jugeli (Dean of the Kutaisi Branch College) – Church History, The History of Georgia

Mrs. Khatuna Songulashvili - The History of Ancient Arts

Mr. Elguja Giunashvili - Medieval Georgian Christian Texts

G. Kakabadze – Patristic

Temporarily the Baptist Theological Seminary is located at the Central Baptist Church of Tbilisi (The College in Kutaisi also utilises the building of the Kutaisi Baptist Church), though it is not the best environment for the educational institution. The next academic year will be held at the new building for the Theological Seminary (the building is still under the construction), which was planned and created as a modern educational centre with all necessary supplies including: Chapel, classrooms, common room, library, dining room, bedrooms, computer room, and etc.

The purpose and the mission:

Contemporary religious and social circumstances in Georgia produces a solid base for the active and broad mission to the Evangelical Baptist Church of Georgia. Therefore the purpose of the Theological education is highly important. Baptists have fundamental experience and capacity in the field of social relief and in the Christian mission. The Baptist congregation recognises the significance of the Christian message for the entire population of Georgia that suffers under the heavy social and economic circumstance.