

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary



A - Chapel/Academic/Library complex; B - Kerr Memorial Building; C - Billy Graham Way; D - Retreat House; E - Billy Graham Way; and F - Bridge St.

Photo, GCTS, 2020



Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary moved to Hamilton in 1970. The campus was on the highest area, Brown's Hill next to Bridge Street (*upper right corner*).

Photo, Bing Maps.

History of ...

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

*(In May 2022, after years of declining enrollments, budget deficits and deep faculty and staff cuts, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary decided to sell its 102-acre main campus in Hamilton.)*⁴⁴

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (GCTS) moved to Hamilton in 1970. The campus was on the highest area in Hamilton, Brown's Hill next to Bridge Street. The property encompasses an area of between Bridge Street, Woodbury Street and Essex Street. There are two entrance roads: Billy Graham Way, off of Essex Street; and J. Howard Pew Lane, off of Woodbury Street. An exit road, Howard John Ockenga Lane, is on Bridge Street.

GCTS was a graduate school offering degree programs to earn a Doctor of Ministry, Master of Divinity, Master of Arts and lay ministry training.

GCTS was one of four campuses. Others were Boston (*Warren St., Roxbury*); Charlotte, NC; and Jacksonville, FL.

Joining of Seminaries

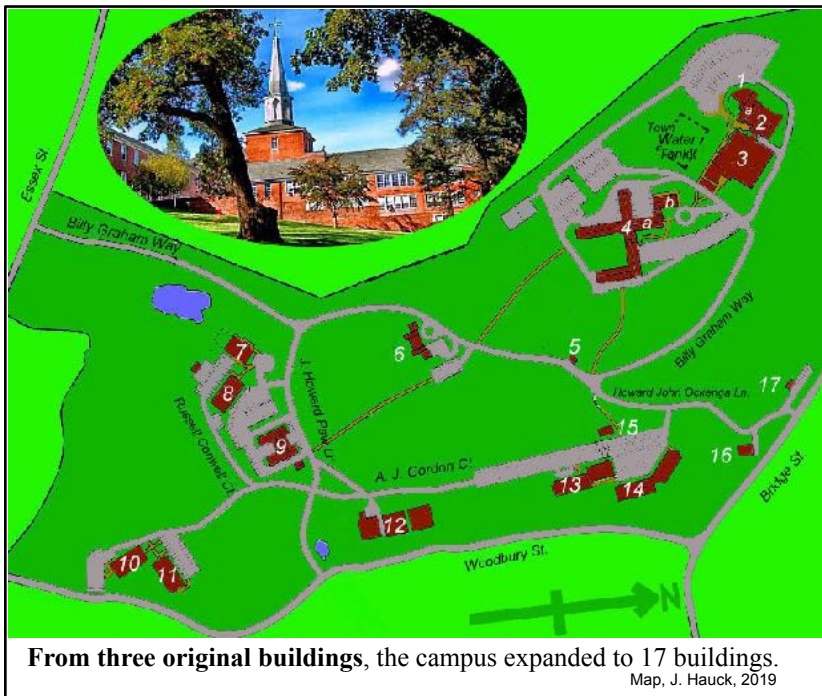
Created in 1970, GCTS was the merger of three divinity colleges: Boston Evangelical Institute, Revere; Gordon Divinity School, Wenham; and Conwell School of Theology, Philadelphia. All three began in 1888 and 1889, during a period of religious activism, called by some as a "Third Great Awakening." In this period, major moral and social changes occurred, including the ending of slavery and prohibition of alcohol.

Boston Evangelical Institute, founded as Revere Lay College (1889), was for black students. The name change to Boston Evangelical Institute occurred in 1897. Rev. Joseph B. Bixby (1833-1906) was first president, serving until 1899 and later of Boston Evangelical from 1904 to 1906.^{3, 4}

Gordon Divinity began, in 1889, as Gordon Bible Institute. Adoniram Judson Gordon (1836-95), a Baptist minister and strong advocate of foreign missions, and his wife, Maria Gordon, established, in 1889, the Missionary Training School in Boston and was its first president for this coeducational school. Later, it was renamed then Gordon Bible Institute.⁵

Boston Missionary Training School, founded in 1889, was established for white and black men and women. In 1916, it became Gordon Bible Institute and, in 1919, moved to Boston's Fenway section. Martha D. Frost provided funds for the purchase of a campus, the former Newton Theological Institute. In 1955, Frederick Prince sold his 1,000-ac. estate, in Wenham, to Gordon Bible Institute, which became Gordon Divinity School at Gordon College.^{3, 6}

Conwell School of Theology began, in 1888, as part of Temple University. It was named for Russell Conwell (1843-1925), a Baptist minister. In 1961, Temple University became a public university and was required to discontinue the theological school. The previous school of theology was re-established as a religious studies department.^{3, 7}



Gordon Conwell Buildings

- 1 - Chapel, 1984
- 1a - Chapel Lobby, 1984
- 2 - Academic Center, 1990
- 3 - Goddard Library, 1971
- 4 - Kerr Memorial, 1948
- 4a - Pierce Great Hall, 2013
- 4b - Former convent, 1948
- 5 - Potting Shed, 1913
- 6 - Retreat House, 1912
- 7 - D bldg., apartments, 1987
- 8 - C bldg., apartments, 1979
- 9 - Pilgrim Hall, Nursery school, 1950
- 10 - A bldg., apartments, 1976
- 11 - B bldg., Kresge Hall, apartments, 1976
- 12 - Wastewater plant, 1977
- 13 - Ruth Graham Bell Hall, apartments, 1987
- 14 - Graham Hall, apartments, 1987
- 15 - Give & Take Shop building, 1950
- 16 - Wilson House, 1912
- 17 - Water pump house, 1986

Prominent Leaders

Daniel A. Poling (1884-1968), a Baptist minister and a Temple University board member, felt Conwell's vision to train Baptist ministers would be neglected if it became a religious studies department at Temple: "Religious education cannot be an ancillary college department." Norman Vincent Peale described Poling as "one of the greatest servants of Jesus Christ in this age or any other."^{1 3}

Poling contacted Rev. Billy Graham (1918-2018) for help. Rev. Graham, at the time leading a crusade in the South, recommended merging the Gordon Divinity and Conwell School of Theology, as an east coast evangelical school, similar to Fuller Theological Seminary, in Pasadena, CA, which was founded, in 1947.²

To assist with the merger, Dr. Graham contacted Dr. Harold Ockenga (1905-1985), a Congregational minister, who was due to take the presidency of Gordon College, in Wenham. Dr. Ockenga had helped found Fuller Theological Seminary.²

Further, Dr. Graham contacted J. Howard Pew (Presbyterian, 1882-1971), who agreed to financially back the merger. However, Pew stipulated that the seminary be separate from an undergraduate college. He provided \$2 million to purchase the former Carmelite Junior Seminary in Hamilton. He also gave several million more to refurbish existing facilities on the property and to build and stock a library.²

Pew (1882-1971), born in Bradford, PA, was the son of Joseph Newton Pew, Sr. (1848-1912), who started a small oil business in Pennsylvania. In 1901, he expanded it to Beaumont, TX, where the company became Sun Oil Co.

When GCTS moved to Hamilton, the founders decided not to be affiliated with a specific Christian denomination. They wanted to "reverse the process of fragmentation among evangelical institutions."⁸ Billy Graham said, Religious education must draw people together from the world, not just nationally. There are no gentiles ... outsiders. He also said, "Jesus prayed for unity among believers. God, who wills man's unity in Christ, is a God of variety."⁵⁵

Rev. Harold Ockenga, a Congregational minister, who for many years was the pastor of Park Street Church in Boston (1936-69), became GCTS's first president. Rev. Stuart B. Babbage (1916-2012), an Australian, who moved to the United States to be the first vice-president and a dean. Others among the original staff were: Dr. Burton L. Goddard, Dr. Richard P. Camp, Dr. Fred Prinzing, Rev. Dean Peterson and Dr. William Nigel Kerr.³

In 2019, Dr. Scott W. Sunquist became the 7th president. He had been the Dean of the School of Intercultural Studies and Professor of World Christianity at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. He replaced Dr. Dennis P. Hollinger, who became President in June 2008.

Dr. Sunquist, an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and his wife, Nancy, served as missionaries in the Republic of Singapore from 1987 to 1995. He received a B. A. in History Education from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; a M. Div. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Hamilton; and his Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary.⁹

Began a School Upon a Hill

A 1911 property plan shows the property had an apple orchard beside Bridge St., a gravel pit next to the orchard, a spring near the orchard, no buildings and a single tree at its peak, Brown's Hill. Reginal C. Robbins of Beverly owned the property.⁷⁶

In 1945, Mathew T. O'Neill of Joliet, IL, sold the property to the Society of Mount Carmel of Massachusetts.⁶⁹ The Mount Carmel bought the hilltop property, to build a junior seminary.

The property had two primary structures.

- A 3-story *mansion*, built in 1912 by George S. Mandell (*former Boston newspaper owner/editor*), that was refurbished by Carmelite brothers, in 1925, to be a Junior Seminary. It had classrooms, cafeteria, dormitories and a small chapel.

- A 2-story gatehouse, off of Bridge St., built in 1913, originally was the home for the Mandell property manager and staff. The Carmelites used it as a residence for priests teaching at the seminary.

To this, the Carmelites added:

- A 3-story brick, cross-shaped building. Built in 1946, its 4 wings provided space for dormitories (98 *students*), administration, classrooms, dining hall, auditorium and priests' quarters.

- A chapel, in the north wing had a center altar beneath an elaborate baldachin and was encircled with pews. The walls were painted coral red and had circular windows, on the east and west sides.¹⁰

- A 2-story brick extension, built at a right angle to the east wing, had a library on its upper floor, a 2-story gymnasium and locker room on the ground floor. Back of the extension, there were a swimming pool and tennis courts.

- A 4-story brick tower was at the center of the main building. It had a wood bell tower and a Christian cross-topped spire. The main entrance was at the ground level.

- A 2-story convent, for the Catholic sisters serving at the school, was attached, in 1948, to the north wing of the main building.

- A 2-story brick house, built in 1950 near the property's south end, was a residence for priests teaching at the junior seminary.

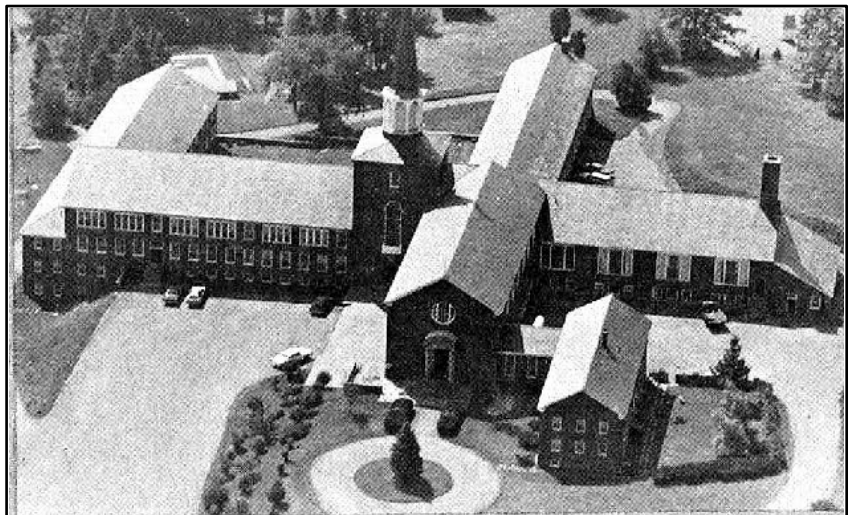
- A 2-story wood house, built about 1950 near the center of the property, was for workers at the seminary and on the property.

Also on the property were two fieldstone grottoes: a small one, near the retreat house and a larger one,



Former Mandell mansion, built in 1912, was refurbished by Carmelite brothers, in 1925, to be a Carmelite Junior Seminary.

Photo, Hamilton Historical Society



Carmelites built cross-shaped building, in 1946, to provide dormitories, administration, classrooms, dining hall, auditorium and priests' quarters.

Photo, Hamilton Historical Society

with an altar, near the gatehouse. The statues were removed when GCTS acquired the property.

The school, run by Carmelite priests, was unable to grow and become sustainable. The Carmel Society sold the property, in 1970, to Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.⁶⁵ Billy Graham met with Cardinal Richard Cushing about buying the property.

The name seminary (*comes from the Latin "seminarium," meaning a seed bed*) up through the early 1900s, generally referred to Catholic educational schools, where young men began their education to become priests. The Protestant clergy that bought the Hamilton property decided to continue with the seminary name: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

Early expansions

GCTS began modifications in 1970.²⁰

Below the chapel in the north wing, GCTS built a cafeteria and kitchen;¹²

In the south wing, opposite chapel, the seminary created a number of offices for the faculty, the president and school administration, as well as a faculty lounge;¹²

The first floor of the west wing, to left of the entrance, became a library; an extension to this wing had a reading room. Seminar students moved, in 12-hours, all books from the Gordon Wenham campus to the Kerr building.³

The first floor of the seminary's east wing, to right of the entrance, became a conference room and the mail center.¹²

On the second floor, above the library, GCTS built a book center; above the conference room and mailroom, an auditorium; and above the faculty, administration and president's offices, male dorms.¹²

In 1972, GCTS renamed the Carmelite building the Kerr Memorial. Dr. William Nigel Kerr (1919-98), born in Scotland, was a long-time seminary professor and religion historian.¹³ (*Note: Kerr had a large collection of the writings of John Bunyan, who wrote Pilgrim's Progress.*)⁴¹

A trace of the Carmelite days was a shield above the Kerr building's main entrance, in the tower. The shield also was inlaid on the floor leading to the administrative offices, in the south wing, and above the old chapel, in the north wing.

In 1984, the original Carmelite chapel, in the north wing became a large study hall. Further, GCTS converted a Carmelite altar, beside the former chapel entrance, into a prayer room.

The Kerr Building's north wing, 4th floor, in 2019, had a prayer chapel, guest rooms and the offices for campus security and building maintenance.

A women's fitness room, in the Kerr building, was available to all female students, student spouses, faculty and staff, more than 18 years old.

In 1999, GCTS had a surge in single students. The seminary did not have enough dorm space for the students. In 2000, GCTS added 23 dorm rooms to the east wing of the Kerr building, bringing the total



Trace of Carmelite past, their shield above Kerr building's main entrance in the tower.
Photo, J. Hauck, 2019

to 59. This was done by eliminating a 2-story gymnasium and locker rooms.¹⁴

Moving about the many rooms in the Kerr Building became much easier in 2000. As part of an expansion program, GCTS built an elevator, with a capacity of 8 people, in the center section to service the building's 4 levels.¹⁴

Another renovation of the Kerr building was completed in 2013. GCTS renamed the renovated study hall, the Pierce Great Room. John Pierce, a Cincinnati businessman, was a long-time trustee of the seminary.

The 35-ft. high vaulted ceiling wing is a single room, with a mezzanine at the west end and below an entrance the center of the Kerr building. Stairs, with turned balusters, on each side of the hall's entrance



Pierce Great Room study hall in Kerr building, was built in 2013.

Photo, GCTS, 2018



Goddard Library entrance, on Billy Graham Way.

Photo, GCTS, 2018

Chapel Complex

Goddard Library

Academic Center

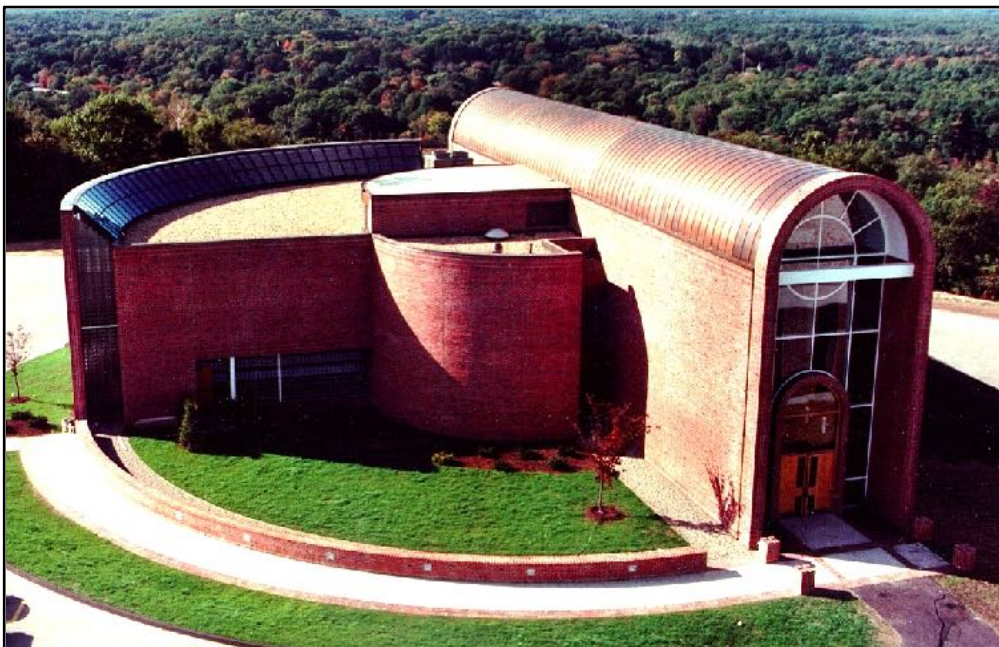
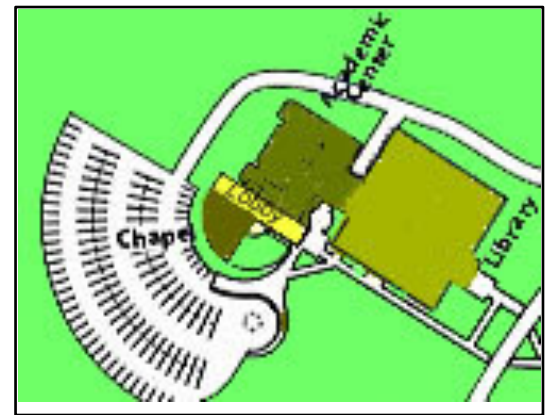
Lobby

Chapel



Academic center entrance, next to chapel lobby.

Photo, GCTS, 2019



Chapel (left), chapel services (center) and chapel lobby (right).

Photo, DRA Architects,



Back of chapel lobby.

Photo, J. Hauck, 2019

go to a lounge having additional seating. On a sidewall there were flags of students' countries, current and past. Wood dividers and trees created small spaces in the hall. These areas had study tables and seating.

The refurbished hall retained the round chapel windows on the east side, but large Palladian windows, allowing more light, replaced the round windows on the west side.

The Pierce Great Room served as a multi-purpose function venue for students and faculty, to gather for conferences, banquets and social events, board meetings and study. It had a system to control audio-visual equipment, window blinds, and lighting.

A game room was on the mezzanine level of the Pierce Great Room.

Next to Pierce Center was a chapel.

GCTS, in 2013, relocated the Pierce Center for Disciple-Building to the academic center. Originally founded by Lois and John Pierce, the Pierce Center helped seminarians develop their own spiritual path. In 2014, the Pierce Center for Disciple-Building moved to the 4th floor of Kerr, next to the Pierce Center Sacred Space.

The original convent, in 1970, became a women's dormitory.³ In 2019, all women dorms were relocated to the Lamont wing of the Kerr building. GCTS used the former convent for guest rooms.

GCTS' President, Dr. Dennis Hollinger, stated in 2018, "It has long been our position to strongly affirm both our women students, who come to us to pursue theological education and our women faculty who help provide it. We believe that the privilege of teaching and studying the Word of God at seminary knows no gender distinction and that, indeed, the perspectives of both genders are essential, for the fullest understanding of biblical texts, incisive theological reflection and a healthy community."⁵²

GCTS opened, at Pilgrim Hall, a nursery school in 1988. It accepted children from 33 months to prekindergarten. Half-day morning classes were held Monday through Friday.⁷⁵ The school closed in 2017.⁷⁴

In 2018, Pilgrim Hall became a center for early childhood care. Offered by North Shore Christian School, the program accepted children, 2.9 years old (*toilet-trained*).⁷⁴

In 2019, NSCS expanded to accept 4-year old children to a pre-kindergarten program. Further, the Early Childhood Program, in 2019, offered both full-day and morning-only options.

GCTS, in the spring of 2019, removed the men's dorms from Pilgrim Hall. They were transferred to the Kerr building.



Pilgrim Hall, beginning in 1988, became a center for early childhood care. Originally, the Gordon-Conwell Nursery School, in 2018, it became the North Shore Christian School.

.Photo, J. Hauck, 2019

The Retreat House, originally the Mandell mansion, was the residence for the Carmelite seminary's rector. In 1970, it became Pilgrim Hall. In 2017, GCTS added women's dorms. In 2019, the dorms were moved to the Kerr building.

Outside the small chapel in the Retreat House, there was a provincial shield, on a cabinet door in the library/lounge.

The original gatehouse on Bridge Street, built in 1916, became, in 1974, the home for GCTS professor J. Christy Wilson, Jr. He headed the seminary's world missions program. It became, in 2000, the J. Christy Wilson, Jr., Center for World Missions, which assisted local churches in fulfilling their global mission.⁷²

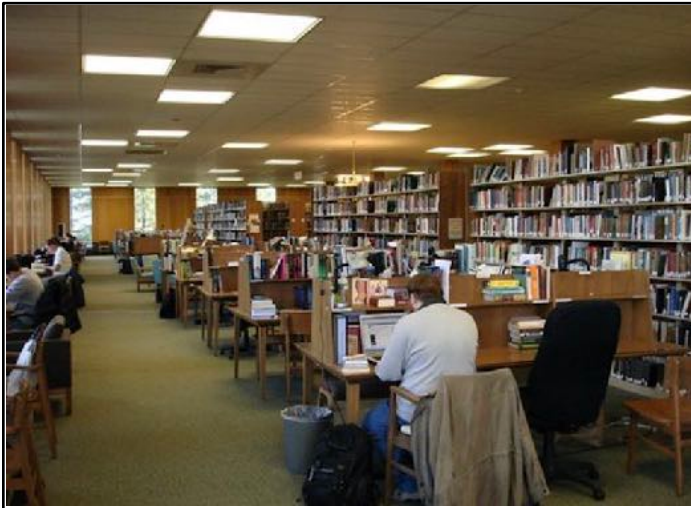
GCTS, in 2000, added an addition to the Wilson Center building. It became a men's dormitory for six students.⁶² Three years later, 2003, the seminary added sprinklers.

In 2019, GCTS refurbished the Wilson building to be 4-bed housing for seminary guests. A student married couple lived here and provided housekeeping services.⁶³



Wilson house, on Howard John Ockenga Ln., near Bridge St.

Photo, J. Hauck, 2019



Goddard library had about 300,000 items, including books, DVD's, CD's and journals.

Photo, GCTS.

New facilities needed

The Goddard Library, built in 1971, was the first new GCTS building. It replaced the original library in the Kerr building. Dr. Burton L. Goddard, a Presbyterian pastor of a Congregational Church in Carlisle, MA, taught, from 1941 to 1948, at Gordon College and Gordon Divinity School. Next, he was the dean and professor of Biblical languages and exegesis, until 1958, when he retired.

For the next ten years, Dr. Goddard was the director of the College library. From 1971 to 1975, he was the first director of the new library, which was dedicated to him. Goddard also was the first general secretary and an editor and translator of the Committee on Bible Translation, which in 1978 produced the New International Version of the Bible, a project that the National Association of Evangelicals began in 1956.

The Goddard library had about 300,000 items, including books, DVD's, CD's and journals. The collection focuses on biblical studies, church history, theology, pastoral ministry, world missions and evangelism. These included special collections and rare books. A prominent part of the library was its collection of masters and doctoral thesis dating back to the 1930s. The library was open to the general public, for on-site use.

The 2-story (29,000 sq. ft.), Goddard Library had a main reading room/stacks (14,700 sq. ft.); downstairs reading room/stacks (9,450 sq. ft.); office area (3,850 sq. ft.); and a climate-controlled rare-book room (1,000 sq. ft.).¹⁵

The library had numerous individual-study spaces, called carrels, with desks, as well as group-study rooms. The carrel desks, which had wifi access, were assigned to students for the year. (*Carrels began in monasteries to provide a quiet space for students away from monks reading aloud.*)

In the basement, there was the Adventual Library, a collection of William Miller/Adventist periodicals; prophetic charts; a book library of 2,500 volumes pertaining to all phases of the Advent movement; and a collection of biographical material. The collection included the records of many Advent Christian churches and institutions and the Berkshire Christian College archives.⁵⁶

Originally, the library was at the New England School of Theology, in Brookline, MA. In 1958, the school and the library moved to Lenox, MA; in 1987, the library moved to the Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, on the fourth floor of the Kerr building; in 2005, the collection moved to a basement room of the Goddard Library.

The GCTS chapel, built in 1984, has 500 seats, similar to the seating capacity to the original chapel in the Kerr building. The wedge-shape, 2-story chapel has a balcony on its curved backside.

Rows of wood pews, on both levels, were arranged to focus on the pulpit. Behind the pulpit, there was a baldachin of six, forward-curved, wood, 2-story columns. A 2-story pipe organ was at right of the pulpit.

To provide sound absorption, the back of the chapel has two curved brick walls. The outer wall is solid. The inner brick wall has alternating open spaces. There is a narrow open space between the two walls.

To provide additional light, without glare from sunlight, the sidewalls of the chapel consist of translucent glass blocks.

Students and faculty gathered to worship in the chapel, on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, from 11 a.m. to noon, during the fall and spring semesters. Students, faculty, staff, administrators, and special guests led the service, with guidance from the Dean of Chapel.

Next to the chapel building, aka the Kaiser Chapel, is a small 2-story, triangular building. It was built in 1984. The lower level has two restrooms and a "robing room" that was behind the chapel stage. The upper level has three offices for use by seminary professors and guests.

A 2-story, 41,000 sq. ft. lobby is on the chapel's north side. Built in 1985, its walls had framed enlargements of pages from Dr. Walter C. Kaiser's book, "Archaeological Study Bible: An Illustrated Walk Through Biblical History and Culture."

The chapel lobby also interfaced with the GCTS academic center. Built in 1990, the center had lecture halls, classrooms, conference rooms, seminar rooms, faculty offices and a faculty lounge. There also is a 6-person elevator. The chapel, lobby and academic center were the only buildings on the campus with central air conditioning.



Chapel, built in 1984, had 500 seats. Pipe organ was at right of the pulpit. Behind the pulpit, there was a baldachin of six, curved, wood, 2-story columns (*right*).

Photo, DRA Architects, 2017

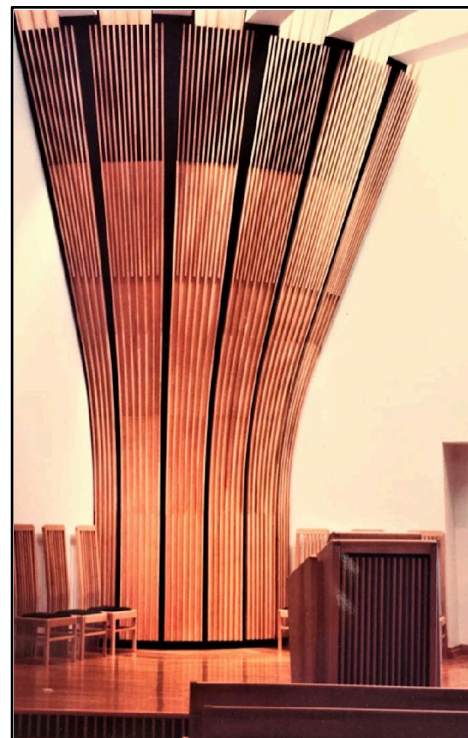
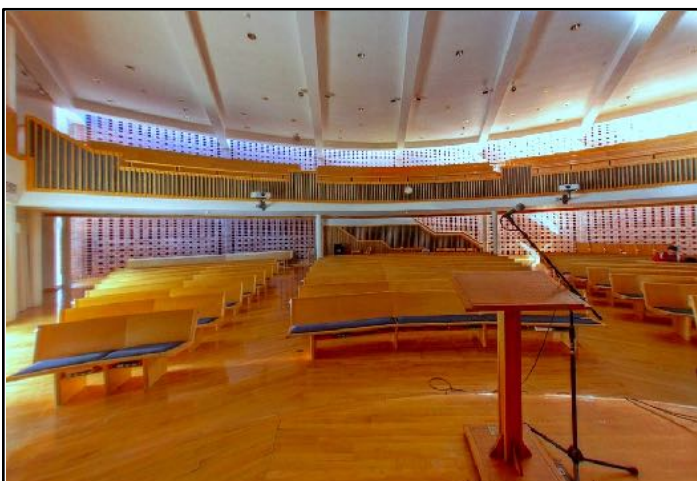


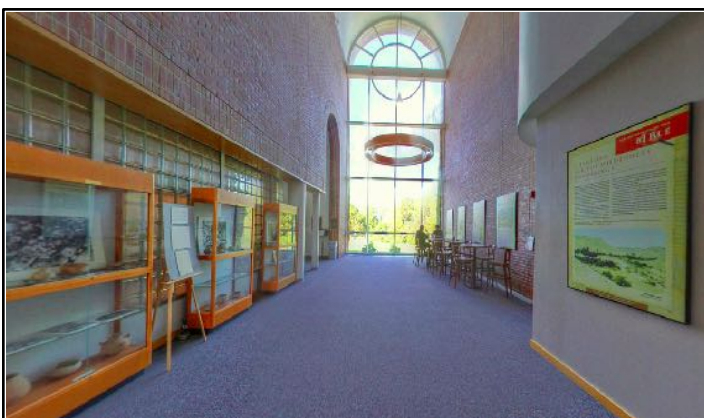
Photo DRAArchitects., 2017,

Chapel Interior



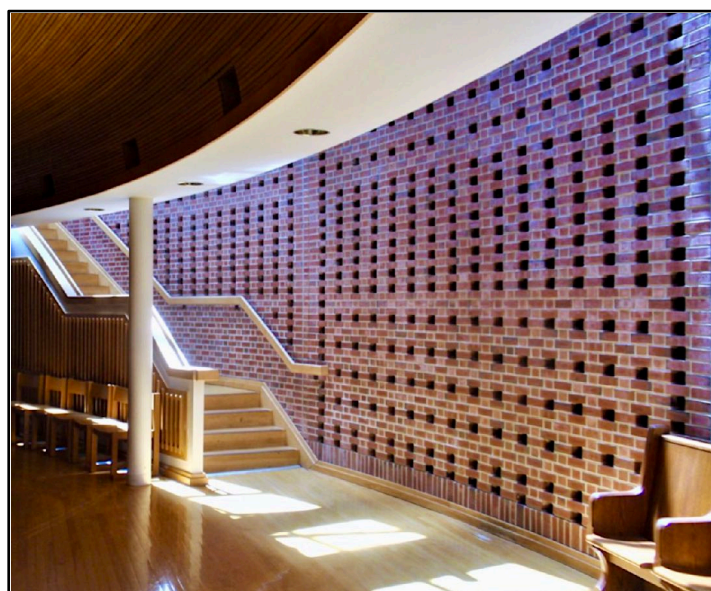
Pews, on both levels arranged to focus on the pulpit.

Photo, GCTS, 2018



Chapel lobby walls had numerous framed enlargements of pages from Dr. Walter C. Kaiser's book, *Archaeological Study Bible: An Illustrated Walk Through Biblical History and Culture*.

Photo, GCTS, 2018



Back of chapel has two curved brick walls. A solid outer wall and an inner brick wall with alternating open spaces. This construction provides sound absorption.

Photo, DRA Architects, 2017



Amphitheater classroom in academic center Photo, GCTS, 2018

A majority of classes were held at the academic center. This reduced students moving between buildings. There also were two classrooms in the Kerr building, on the third floor. GCTS classes began in 1970 in the Kerr building. Most GCTS classrooms had wifi connection and many classes were taped for later viewing.

Early GCTS professors included: noted theologians Meredith G. Kline (1965–93), Roger R. Nicole (1969–86), Addison H. Leitch (1969–73), William Nigel Kerr (1969–98), and Phillip E. Hughes (1969–1990).

A world of students

In 1970, GCTS began holding classes, on the Hamilton campus, for 286 students. A 4-year college degree, at the bachelor's level, was required for all GCTS applicants.

Fifty years later, in 2019, GCTS had 725 students representing 85 denominations, from 41 countries. Since its start, there had been more than 6,000 graduates and students from more than 50 countries attended GCTS, in Hamilton. ³⁵

In 2019, 276 diplomas were awarded at the Hamilton campus, of which 234 were master's degrees and 42 were Doctor of Ministry degrees. Graduation services were held in the Gordon College gymnasium, at the Bennett Center. ⁷³

The GCTS offered postgraduate, masters and doctoral programs, including: Master of Arts, both academic and professional; Master of Divinity; Master of Theology; Doctor of Ministry and Doctor of Divinity. Lay ministry diplomas include: a graduate certificate program, an urban church ministry, and a Lutheran Studies.

Class studies were offered in nineteen courses: apologetics, church history, Christian leadership, counseling, educational ministries, Christian ethics, evangelism, biblical languages, ministry of the church, mentored ministry, new and old testaments, pastoral care/psychology, preaching, spiritual formation, theology, world missions and youth ministry.

GCTS opened some of its classes to a limited number of Hamilton and Wenham residents, who registered at the GCTSI Registration Office. They could attend the classes regularly, but not to receive a grade or credit. ⁶³

The seminary also offered an off-campus program, Semlink+. Students, taking courses from home via electronic audio and video lectures, could complete, online, 50% or more of their degree.

Gordon College, Wenham, and GCTS were closely connected. Students graduating from Gordon, with a B. A. in Christian Ministries or Biblical Studies and, having a 3.0 cumulative GPA or better, could be accepted at GCTS, with as many as 24 credits toward receiving a Master of Divinity.

GCTS is part of the Boston Theological Institute, a consortium of nine theological schools, in the Greater Boston area, and the Carolina Theological Consortium, a consortium of four theological schools in North and South Carolina. The consortium allows students at all locations to access resources, via Internet connections to libraries, and attend classes in the member schools.

Married housing began in 1975

Many of the early GCTS students were married and commuted to the seminary from off campus residences. In the area, there were no large apartments and limited rentals at local houses.

In 1975, Hamilton granted GCTS a variance to erect married student housing. Court action by various town citizens failed to halt the construction. ²¹

In 1976, GCTS built, on the southeast side of the campus, at the end of A. J. Gordon Ct. and near Woodbury Street, a pair of 2-story apartment buildings (*A* and *B*), having a total of 80 beds. One building (*B*) was named Kresge Hall: Sebastian S. Kresge, the founder of the S. S. Kresge Department Stores, was a major benefactor to GCTS.

GCTS also erected, in 1979, a third, 2-story apartment building (*C*), on Russell Conwell Ct. and near Pilgrim Hall. ²⁴ It has studio and 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom units.

Further expansion of apartment space came eight years later, 1987. GCTS added 3 more apartment buildings. ³⁹

One (*D*) is near the 1976 apartments and two are at the north end of A. J. Gordon Ct.

The latter two are called the Ruth Graham Bell Hall (*F*) and Billy Graham Hall (*E*). Each has two sections of 2-story buildings. In total, there are 125 apartments ²⁵ that are studio and 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom units. The apartments have a stove and a refrigerator.



Apartments, A building, Russell Conwell Court, built 1976.
Photo, J. Hauck, 2019



Apartments, B building, Russell Conwell Court, built 1976.
Photo, J. Hauck, 2019

Apartments



Apartments, C & D buildings, A. J. Gordon Court, built 1979.
Photo, J. Hauck, 2019



Apartments, Buildings E & F, A. J. Gordon Court, built 1987.

Photo, J. Hauck, 2019

The six apartment buildings on the campus, all of which are brick structures, had 211 apartments, which are studio, one bedroom, two-bedroom and three bedroom units. They have a stove, refrigerator and some air conditioning, but none are furnished.

There also were four furnished dormitories on campus: three for men and one for women. For single students there were single and double bedrooms units. The dorms were in the Kerr building (in *Lamont Hall for 49 women and Gray and Phippen Halls and main hall for 103 men*). Dorms formerly at Pilgrim Hall and the Retreat House were discontinued in 2019.

GCTS had on-campus rooms for seminary-affiliated guests. These included furnished single rooms and apartments, on the top floor of the Kerr building, and the former nun's building, adjacent to the Kerr building.

Other structures and areas of the campus were:

- A wastewater treatment plant on A. J. Gordon Ct. Built in 1979, the plant connects to all the married student apartment buildings, dormitories and buildings with toilets and sinks.²⁴

There were no athletic fields on the Hamilton campus. However, students had access to the athletic facilities on the nearby Gordon College campus.

- A disk golf course, created by students in 2013, in the large field in the center of the campus. The first tee of the 9-basket, par 28 course was by the Retreat House. The 2,900-ft. course progressed around the field, with the 9th basket being near the Kerr building. In place of holes, the course had metal baskets on poles into which the player threw a disk.

- A small brick building, built in 1913, alongside the large field, on Billy Graham Ave. used for equipment storage. Originally, it was a potting shed.

- A 2-story wood building (*the only wood building on the property*), is a short way from the potting shed. GCTS made it into a Give & Take Shoppe, run by volunteers. It exchanged donated clothing, child-safe toys and small appliances with GCTS students.



Wastewater treatment facility, built in 1979, connects to all the married student apartment buildings, dormitories and buildings with toilets and sinks.
Photo, GCTS, 2019



Disk golf course, 2,900-ft. long, has metal baskets on poles into which the player throws a disk.
Photo, J. Hauck, 2019



Give & Take House on Billy Graham Way. Photo, J. Hauck, 2019



Potting shed, on Billy Graham Way, built in 1913.

Photo, J. Hauck, 2019



Main entrance, on Essex Street

Photo, J. Hauck, 2019



Pond near entrance, on Billy Graham Way.

Photo, GCTS, 2015

Ways and paths

When GCTS acquired the Carmelite property in 1970, it had a driveway off of Bridge Street that wound its way to the main house. Footpaths, from the house, led to other structures and facilities.³⁶

To what originally was a roadless property, GCTS added several roads, a few walkways, 7 parking areas and extended the previous driveway.

The original Mandell driveway off of Bridge Street now is a one-way exit road, Howard John Ockenga Ln. It exits off of Billy Graham Way and connects with Bridge Street.

GTS added two entrances:

The main entrance, Billy Graham Way, on Essex Street, is a 2-way road that goes across the length of the campus to the academic complex, on the north side. At the entrance, there are fieldstone walls, on each side. It was rebuilt in 2013.



Fieldstone grottoes, two, were built when a Carmelite property: one (*above*) with an altar, near gatehouse and one near retreat house.

Photo, JHauck, 2019

A second entrance, on Woodbury Road, also is a 2-way road, J. Howard Pew Ln. It goes west to intersect Billy Graham Way.

Intersecting J. Howard Pew Ln. is A. J. Gordon Ct., At its west end, it intersects Howard John Ockenga Ln. On the south side of the campus, Russell Conwell Ct., a dead-end road, intersects with A. J. Gordon Ct.

There is a paved path from the Kerr Building to the Retreat House on J. Howard Pew Ln. A second paved path connects the Pew building with apartments on the east side that are off of A. J. Gordon Ct.

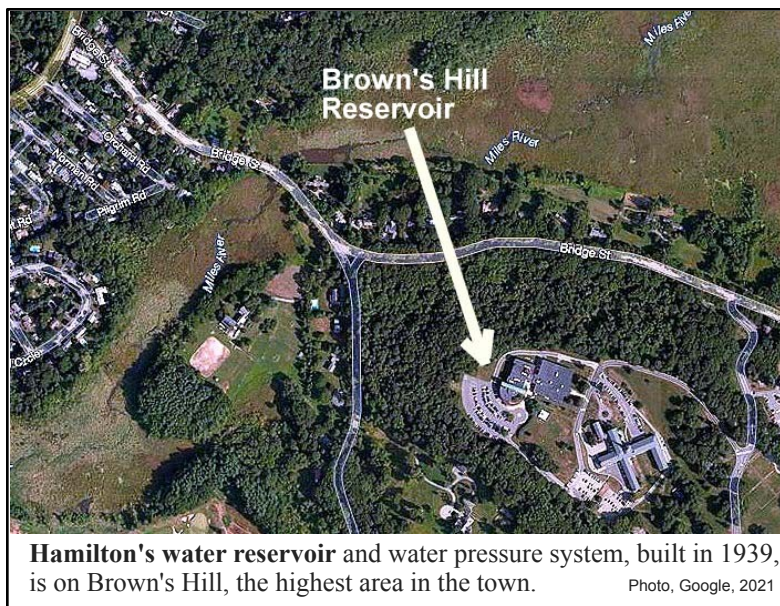
There are two, stream-fed ponds on the campus: one near Billy Graham Way, where it enters on Essex Street; and a smaller one near J. Howard Pew Ln., where it enters off Woodbury Street.

In 2002, GCTS, working with Hamilton's public works department, created a pedestrian/bicycle path, beside Woodbury Street, on the seminary's land. The path connects Essex St. and Bridge St.³³



Early Childhood Program, for preschool children with disabilities, as well as those without disabilities, was at Pilgrim Hall.

Photo, Gordon-Conwell Seminary, 2018



Buried on the GCTS campus is Hamilton's water supply reservoir and water pressure system. Built in 1939, the Brown's Hill water supply system is at the highest area in Hamilton, which is a clearing behind the GCTS library. Hamilton also has a 30-ft. wide right-of-way, for a buried pipeline, from the reservoir to Bridge Street. GCTS granted this in 1970. The total space for the reservoir is 75,260 sq. ft. ³⁶

Since some of the seminary's nearby buildings are above the town's reservoir, they cannot achieve water pressure from the reservoir. GCTS, in 1986, built a pump station near Bridge Street.

GCTS drew water from the town's Idlewood St. well. ³⁸ In 1986, GCTS explored activating a water well on Bridge Street, for both its use and that of the town. While the well provided an adequate supply rate, the water was found to have excessive minerals content and it was not activated. ⁵⁸

Also on the seminary's property, since 1999, are Hamilton's emergency 911 transmitters: they are in the steeple above the Kerr building. Being very high, the transmitters eliminate several dead transmission spots in the town, thus increasing the system's effectiveness. The town does not pay a fee for having the transmitters in the steeple.

Working with town

From its beginning, GCTS maintained a strong relationship with Hamilton's First Congregational Church. In a 1969 newspaper article, GCTS President, Dr. Ockenga, said: "The college must relate to the community spiritually culturally, socially and personally." ⁵⁷

Rev. Dorrington G. Little, a Senior Pastor of the First Congregational Church from 1997 to 2017, graduated from Wheaton College, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and gained his masters degree at GCTS.

Chelsea Kingston Erickson, who received a Masters in Divinity degree from GCTS, in 2015, became the youth pastor at the First Congregational Church.

Philip Best, who received a Master of Divinity degree (1990) from GCTS, in 2008, became the First Congregational Church's manager of Property Management and Maintenance Services.

Dr. David Horn, who received a Master of Divinity degree (1987) from GCTS, was Director of the Ockenga Institute and GCTS' Semlink program, served on the pastoral staff of First Congregational Church. From 2019 to 2021, he was the interim pastor.

At the Episcopal Christ Church of Hamilton and Wenham, in 2019, Rev. Patrick Gray, the Rector, and his wife Naomi attended Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, graduating in 1997. She was the Director of Children's Ministries. Further, Rev. Dean Borgman, Assisting Priest, was a senior professor of Youth and Family Ministries, as well as Social Ethics, at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

In 2018, the non-denominational Netcast Church began meeting, on Sundays, at GCTS' chapel. The church began in 2011 in Boston. Prior to the GCTS chapel, Netcast held services at the Beverly YMCA. In 2019, Netcast announced it would be moving to Liberty Tree Mall, in Danvers.

Children of GCTS students, staff and professors attended the Hamilton-Wenham schools. Annually, the number was 40 to 50 children in the grammar, junior and high schools. The H-WRSD provided bus transportation. ⁶⁰

GCTS' Campus Safety Services also relied upon Hamilton's police and fire departments. Campus Safety Services patrolled the grounds, however, they were unarmed and did not have the powers of arrest. GCTS officers provided emergency first aid, processing motor vehicle and bicycle registration, issuance of visitor passes, security checks, on-campus escort assistance, lost and found service, parking and traffic control, emergency notifications, assistance with motor vehicle lock-outs and assistance with motor vehicle jump-starts. Hamilton officers also regularly patrol the seminary's roads.

Students were responsible for contacting the Hamilton Emergency Response Center regarding crimes, fires and emergency health problems. From 2000 to 2017, Hamilton police officers made, on average, about 20 responses a year to calls for assistance, with 6 or 7 being fire alarms. ⁵⁹

GCTS disposed of its garbage, plowed snow from its roads, and maintained the roads and provided an emergency medical service.

Tax-exempt

As a religious organization, GCTS qualified for exemption from local taxes on its real and personal property. The exemptions are cited in Massachusetts General Law Chap. 59, sec. 5

GCTS did not engage in a "payments to in lieu of taxes" (PILOT) agreement with Hamilton. The seminary said its decision was not without precedent. The seminary referenced a survey of Catholic and Protestant seminaries, in North America, which reported only one out of 252 schools had any kind of PILOT agreement.

However, GCTS, from it start in 1970s and into the 1980s, gave Hamilton, most years, \$17,000 or \$18,000.⁶⁰

Beginning in 1988, GCTS provided rooms on its campus for a Hamilton-Wenham kindergarten program, which had about 140 students and 8 full-time staff members. The town's need for more space came about when a school building project, approved by both Hamilton and Wenham, failed to receive State funding.²⁶ The kindergarten program at GCTS, in 1991, returned to the Winthrop school building, in Hamilton.²⁸

During the 1990s, GCTS only provided funds in 1995, \$25,000.⁶⁰

In 1993, Hamilton and Wenham began, at GCTS, an Early Childhood Program, for 3 and 4 year olds. It accepted preschool children with disabilities, as well as those without disabilities.³²

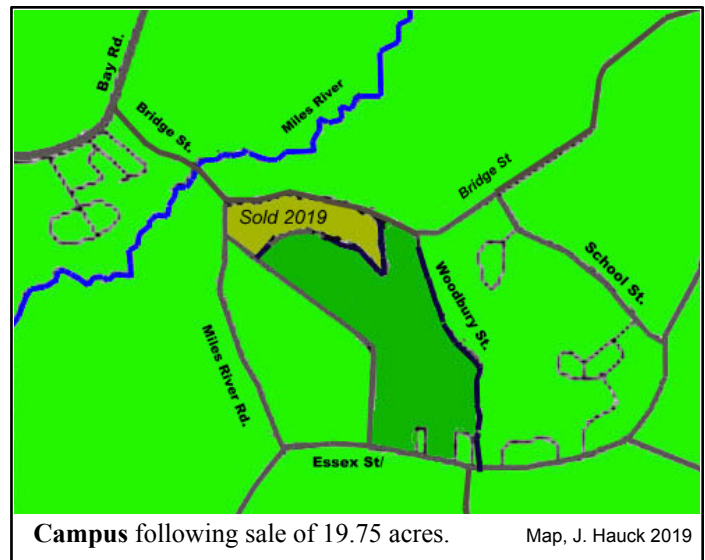
In the early 2000s, GCTS returned to giving money to the town, often \$35,000. Plus, from 2002 to 2005, the college gave \$5,000, each year, to school sports programs.⁶⁰

In 2008 and 2009, GCTSave \$99,000 to Hamilton.. Of which, \$84,000 (*\$2,000 for each of the 42 children living at the seminary*) went to schools; \$5,000 to the town and \$10,000 for the salaries of GCTS students serving as English-as-second-language (ESL) teachers and also as math and English tutors, in the Hamilton schools.³⁴

In 2010, for third year in a row, the seminary's contribution to Hamilton was \$100,000. Further there were \$10,000 in wages paid to seminary students working in the H-WRSD.³¹ From 2011 to 2014, GCTS provided \$100,000 to Hamilton. The next two years, the amount dropped to \$75,000 and was down to \$35,000 in 2018.⁶⁰

Domine, Quo vadis?

Dr. William Nigel Kerr, in 1969, then a professor emeritus of church history, wrote, that GCTS was "a seminary designed to meet the challenges of the late 20th century."³ Fifty years later, cultural and religious challenges of the 21st century are very different and changing.



A 2018 Association of Theological Schools study reported GCTS had 104 teachers (*42 full-time*) and a total student enrollment (*3 locations*) of 2,634.⁵⁰ At Hamilton, there were 725 full-time, of which 417 were men.⁶¹ In 2021, Gordon-Conwell's Hamilton enrollment declined to 633.⁴⁴ GCTS, in 2019, had 127 non-instructional and instruction employees.⁵⁴

Also in 2018, the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, Washington, D.C., said GCTS' total revenue was \$24.3 million. Its total expenses (*\$25.7 million*) were nearly two million dollars higher.⁵³

In 2018, the seminary appointed: Dr. Scott William Sunquist, 1984 M. Divinity alumnus, as its president. Coming from Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA, Dr. Sunquist replaced Dennis Hollinger, the GCSC president since 2008.

"To make ends meet," GCTS, in 2018, GCTS sold, for \$2.5 million, 19.75 acres of its property to Peter Conant, Own A Home, a Boston-based residential housing developer. His plans were to build 43 single-family homes on the slope along the Bridge Street and Woodland Street corner of the GCTS property. An entrance was to be off of Bridge St.⁴²

GCTS finances remained very difficult.

In 2022, GCTS heard the bell tolling and announced plans to close the Hamilton campus and relocate a new campus in Boston. Many of the 60 percent of its students commuting to the Hamilton campus, came from Boston.⁴⁴ GCTS said it would continue having campuses in Florida and North Carolina and offering online degree programs⁴⁴

Gordon-Conwell also said it would begin discussions, with the town of Hamilton, about amending its existing property zoning. It wanted to change the classification into a commercial over-lay district, in order to "significantly increase the property value."⁴⁴ The transition, should it occur, was expected to take several years.⁴⁴

Jack E. Hauck, July, 2022

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