



# focus germany

NEWSLETTER OF THE GIESSEN SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY  
 FREIE THEOLOGISCHE HOCHSCHULE GIESSEN

FALL 2020

## Buildings for People

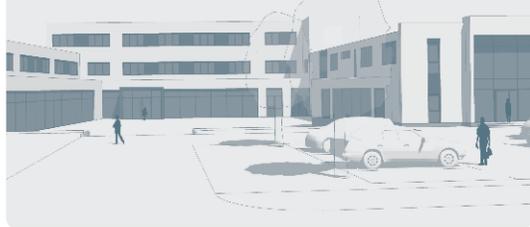
„Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain”. Christian leaders often quote Psalm 127:1 when they announce a building project. What doesn’t always get mentioned is that it isn’t entirely clear whether the term for “house” the psalmist uses here refers to a building – the temple – or the dynasty of David. We have this same ambiguity in English. It also applies to “church” or “school”. These terms can refer to a group of people with a common purpose or the building where they meet. This serves as a reminder that buildings are merely a means to an end. We need them, but it’s all about the people who use them. At the GST we need a larger more modern campus to serve our students. Our classrooms are decrepit; some professors’ offices are in 40-year-old building containers. But even as we embark on our campus expansion project, we will remain focused on our people.



Dr. Joel White

*„Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain”.*

Psalm 127:1



## Dear Friends of the Giessen School of Theology,

We are grateful beyond measure for our many friends and supporters throughout the world. The GST is and always has been an international institution. It was founded in 1974 by an American missionary from Greater Europe Mission. He was convinced that Germany, the land of the Reformation needed a seminary that was committed to the authority of the Scriptures. Here in the birthplace of evangelical faith, a revival based on theological renewal was necessary. From then until now there have always been people from the U.S. and other countries on the faculty and staff. They have been a great blessing to us. Our students are required to spend a semester abroad to broaden their horizons, and we maintain partnerships with Christian colleges and seminaries in other countries to that end.

This year we graduated the 1000th student from the GST! Our alumni are pastors, teachers, church planters, missionaries, Bible translators and



Dr. Stephan Holthaus

leaders of many ministries in 45 different countries. Not only have we been blessed by other nations, we also have been passing that blessing on. That’s how it should be, because we have an international God. His kingdom is global, and we have

the privilege of working for his kingdom here at the GST.

We now have 180 full-time students, the most ever! That makes us one of the largest theological universities in Europe, and we are bursting at the seams. We need to expand. We are in the initial phases of an \$8 Million building program so that we can offer more people the best possible theological education. We’d like to see 250 students at the GST, training for the ministry here and in countries all across the world. Learn how you can help us in this newsletter.

Thanks for your interest and your prayers!

Dr. Stephan Holthaus  
 President of GST



What students are saying about the new building

## Building for the future:

## The GST-Expansion-Project



*„The expansion project demonstrates that the GST is growing and that many young people are preparing for the ministry here. That's great! I'm looking forward to the new library most of all.”*

Ruben Lambertus, third-year B.A. student



*I'm excited about the new campus. Our current classrooms are cramped, and we need more room for the growing student body.”*

Lisa Enns, second-year B.A. student



*„It's amazing that the GST can move ahead with this expansion project in these uncertain times financed entirely through charitable gifts and prayer. It shows how many people understand the strategic role the GST plays in Germany.”*

Tim Loose, first-year M.A.



The Giessen School of Theology is unique among German universities. Nowhere else in the country will you find so many gifted young people preparing for ministry in Christ's Church. We have been training students here since 1974. Our three-year Bachelor's and two-year Master's degrees equip them well for various callings in churches and parachurch organizations. Over 1000 GST alumni are working as pastors, church planters, missionaries, and teachers in 45 countries throughout the world.

The GST is growing. We currently have 180 full time students – our highest enrollment ever! We are bursting at the seams and really need to expand our facilities. We would hate to turn eager and qualified young people away who wish to study here, but without more space, we might have to do that soon.

Of course, it's not the buildings that matter. They're only a means to an end. We're convinced that God wants to do great things in Europe. People here are lost. They don't know God, and they

don't know how to live. They need salvation and direction. Churches need revival. Those churches need pastors. We need missionaries, Bible teachers, counselors, children and youth workers, and much more. At the GST we want to play a part in meeting those needs to the glory of God.

The expansion project is now underway. Old decrepit buildings are being torn down, and the building phase will begin in the spring. We are planning a campus that will hold 250 students, and Lord willing, it will be done in 2022. It will offer us incredible opportunities to expand our work, so that more young people can prepare themselves for the ministry of the Gospel.

The cost of the building project will run to about 8 million dollars. About 70% of that amount has been pledged. In Germany, where there are comparatively few evangelical Christians, that is already a great miracle. Would you consider helping us? Any amount brings us a little closer to the goal!

Dr. Stephan Holthaus, president of GST

## imprint

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Photos: Private / Shutterstock.com



# The Giessen School of Theology

## A Strategic Ministry Worth Supporting!

I am an American layperson who has a heart for missions, and God has especially placed Germany on my heart. Over the years I've led fourteen missions trips there. I first learned about the GST through my close friend, Dr. Joel White, who has been teaching New Testament there for 20 years.

It breaks my heart to see how this country, which produced so many great musicians, artists, inventors, and entrepreneurs, has become so spiritually impoverished through liberal theology, two World Wars and Communism. Dr. White often says that if an idea captures the heart of the German people, whether good or evil, it changes the world. Just look at the Reformation and the Nazi regime. Think what would happen if Germans, with their characteristic drive and determination, once again became excited about the Gospel!

I am passionate about the ministry of GST because the people there are committed to the authority of the Scriptures. The state-run seminaries in



Jimmy Thomas

Germany and across Europe are teaching a very liberal theology that denies the life changing power of God's Word. That's why the beautiful cathedrals there are next to empty, except for tourists. Germany needs a new Reformation, and the GST has the potential for exponential ministry impact!

At the GST there is a map that shows where the school's over 1,000 graduates now serve as pastors, church planters, teachers, missionaries, and Bible translators. As I looked over that map, the Lord gave me a picture of the "Gospel ripple effect" that will extend for all

of eternity through the ministry of the GST! The campus expansion project will allow many more students to be properly equipped to share the Gospel and strengthen the Church in over 45 countries.

Will you join me and my family in contributing to the expansion of the GST campus so that the Gospel ripple effect that goes out from there will grow even stronger and be felt around the world? It is an investment in an eternal mutual fund that will pay great dividends in heaven and never decrease in value.

Jimmy Thomas

### Check out our English Video!

Scan the QR-code or go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uKLMpBRvNjo>.



### Check out our Viewbook in English

Some time ago the GST published an online viewbook that will give a great feel for what we're about. We added a translation for you. Scan the QR-Code or visit [www.fthgiessen.de/english](http://www.fthgiessen.de/english)





## STUDENT IN FOCUS

### Maren Godau

I was 15 years old when my heart began to break for the Democratic Republic of Congo. God had a plan for me and for that country – that much I knew. But what now? Over the next three years in school I thought through a million options of what I could do there and what course of study would prepare me best. It was when I stopped racking my brain for an answer that I realized that my heart ultimately beat for the Church, the people that God created, brought together, and called a family. My hope is to support the existing Church in the Congo the best I can. So I thought it might be a good idea to study theology. I wanted to pursue a B.A. abroad, but that didn't work out, and it was immediately clear to me that the FTH was my best option in Germany. For various reasons: the faculty members have servant hearts – they really do go the extra mile for us - and a love for God and the Church, the student body is very diverse denominationally, and the library is great."



## FACULTY IN FOCUS

### Dr. Armin Baum

I've been a professor of New Testament here at the GST since completing my doctoral studies in 1993. Teaching, research, and writing are the main responsibilities of a seminary professor, and they fit me like a hand in a glove. I can't think of anything I'd rather do than train highly motivated and gifted students for ministry and contribute to the development of a robust evangelical theology in Germany and throughout Europe.

I also serve as Vice President for Research at the GST. In that role, I have been working hard to launch Germany's first evangelical Ph.D. program in theology. That is a huge challenge, but we took a first step toward that goal in the last year by starting cooperative programs with two Christian institutions of higher education, one in Belgium and one in the Netherlands. Already a few candidates have shown interest, and we hope that they will be able to begin their doctoral studies soon!

With each new step we take, I pray the prayer of Moses: "Let the favor of the Lord be upon us and establish the work of our hands" (Psalm 90,17).



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