



EMORY | CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

CandlerNEWS



MAY 2026

Terrence L. Johnson Named Candler's Next Dean

Emory University Provost Badia Ahad has announced the appointment of **Terrence L. Johnson** as the next dean of Candler School of Theology. Joining Emory from Harvard Divinity School where he directs the Religion and Public Life program, Johnson is a noted theological scholar, academic leader, and ordained itinerant elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. He will begin his term as Candler's Mary Lee Hardin Willard Dean on August 1, 2026. [Read the Emory News Center article about the appointment.](#) [Read Dr. Johnson's letter to the Candler community.](#)

Candler Clubs are Almost Here!

It's an exciting season in the Candler community, and there's no better time to renew or strengthen your connection than our upcoming

Candler Clubs. These gatherings of alumni during summer denominational meetings are the perfect opportunity to enjoy a meal with fellow alumni and friends, talk with faculty and staff members, and learn more about what's going on at Candler. And of course, all Candler alumni and students are welcome at any event regardless of denominational affiliation! We look forward to seeing you soon. [See a list of dates and locations and register for a Candler Club near you.](#)

Candler Sends Forth Pioneering Class of 2026

Candler's Class of 2026 celebrated with family, friends, faculty and staff at the school's Graduate Recognition Ceremony on Saturday, May 9 in Glenn Memorial United Methodist Church on Emory's campus. [Check out a recap and recording of the joyful gathering.](#) Congratulations and welcome to our 133 newest alumni!

One of these new alums is **Tara Stevens**, this year's outstanding graduate representing Candler in Emory's annual commencement coverage. A member of Candler's inaugural hybrid MDiv cohort, Tara has made a point to build community in seminary, even though she lives nearly 1,000 miles from Atlanta. [Read Tara's story here.](#)

Bonfiglio Named Exemplary Teacher of the Year

Ryan Bonfiglio, professor in the practice of Old Testament and executive director of The Candler Foundry, has been named Emory University's winner of the 2026 Exemplary Teacher Award, sponsored by The United Methodist Church's General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Bonfiglio was honored for his innovative approach to teaching, including his work leading the public theological education initiatives The Candler Foundry and TheoEd Talks. [Read more about Bonfiglio's impact.](#)

With Blessings for the Journey

As the Class of 2026 moves into their next chapter, so do two retiring Candler faculty members who have deeply influenced our community. You can read more about their Candler stories by clicking on their names. [L. Edward "Ed" Phillips 79T](#), associate professor of historical theology and Christian worship, is retiring after 18 years on the Candler faculty. [David B. Daniel](#), assistant professor in the practice of music ministry and director of chapel music, is retiring after 15 years. We give thanks for the rich legacies Dr. Phillips and Dr. Daniel leave, and pray blessings upon their next steps!

Add Candler in Conversation to Your Podcast Playlist

Craving wisdom? Give a listen to "Candler in Conversation," a podcast exploring faith, ministry, and vocation with Candler faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Produced by the talented team at The Candler Foundry, the show features host **Cristha Lea 21T** going behind the CV with some of your favorite Candler wisdom-keepers in "The Scholar, Unscripted" series, and host **Elizabeth "Ebby" Arnold 21G** talking books with Candler authors in the "PUBLICATIONS" series. Recent guests include Luke Timothy Johnson, Robert Franklin, Sarah Bogue, and more. [Watch episodes](#) on Candler's new video library, or listen and subscribe on [Spotify](#) or [Apple Podcasts](#). New episodes drop regularly, so check back often!

UPCOMING EVENTS

All events are listed in Eastern Time. Click on the event title for more details and registration information. Please note that events are subject to change. [See a full listing of upcoming Candler events](#).

May 16, 2:00 p.m.: [BRIDGE Initiative Gathering: "The Sound of Learning."](#) In person.

Ongoing in May and June: Candler Clubs

Candler Clubs provide an opportunity for alumni to gather during summer denominational conferences. Enjoy a meal together, connect with Candler faculty or staff members, and hear the latest news about the school. All Candler alumni and students are welcome at any event regardless of denominational affiliation. [See a list of Candler Clubs here](#) and be sure to check back for updates! You can also register at the links below:

May 29: [North Alabama](#)

June 1: [South Georgia](#)

June 2: [Holston](#)

June 2: [Kentucky](#)

June 3: [Mississippi](#)

June 5: [Florida](#)

June 8: [Alabama-West Florida](#)

June 8: [Tennessee-Western Kentucky](#)

June 8: [South Carolina](#)

June 18: [Western North Carolina](#)

June 19: [North Georgia](#)

June 9-30, Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.: [Candler Foundry Online Course: "Let's Talk About Christian Nationalism"](#) with Research Fellow [Dominic Erdozain](#). Course fee: \$50.

July 1: [Final application deadline for all Candler degree programs](#)

July 7-28, Tuesdays, 12:00 p.m.: [Candler Foundry Online Course: "Five Misconceptions of Paul"](#) with Candler Foundry Scholar-in-Residence [Elizabeth "Ebby" Arnold](#). Course fee: \$50.

CLASS
NOTES

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