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Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary Library: Our Story

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The library of the Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary (UETS) began to take shape in 1993. Its development was closely linked to the establishment of the seminary, which began in 1992.

At the time of the seminary's move from Transcarpathia to Kyiv in 1994, its book collection numbered approximately 200 copies. These were mostly reference books and Bible commentaries.

From 1994 to 1997, the Assemblies of God in Australia made a significant contribution to the library toward the purchase of literature. Books were sought in various places: second-hand shops, book markets, and Christian stores. In 1998, when the seminary moved to the village of Boyarka, its collections already consisted of several thousand books and Christian magazines. After the seminary moved to Pushcha-Vodytsia in 2000, the library was housed in a large space complete with a reading room containing computers, as well as book storage. This marked a new milestone in the development of the UETS library.

Two events played an important role in the life of the library. The first was the visit of Bill Armerding in 1998, who had been president of the Canadian organisation Overseas Council since 1993. This organisation cooperates with Bible colleges and seminaries in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, Eurasia, Latin America, and the Middle

East. Armerding's visit opened up new opportunities for financial support that significantly improved both the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the library's collection. A second important event was the cooperation of the UETS with the University of California, which began in 2009 within the framework of research projects devoted to the history and theology of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement. This partnership provided a powerful impetus to the development of the library and the formation of a scientific research base. Of particular value are periodicals, primary documents, archival materials on church-state relations, as well as interviews with participants during periods of historical significance in the Soviet and post-Soviet eras.

The collected archives on the history of the evangelical movement in the USSR, prepared by the staff of the UETS library and research centre, were posted on the website of the University of California, Los Angeles. Thanks to the unique source base provided by UETS, these materials still influence scientific projects around the world, contributing to the writing of books and articles.

Since 2018, the UETS Library has developed a close relationship with Bibliothèques Européennes de Théologie (BETH; the Association of European Theological Libraries). The Association has provided an invaluable platform for building friendships with colleagues in the field and for learning from the shared experiences and expertise of other theological libraries.

The institutions that have made significant contributions to the growth and development of the library's collection since 2020 include the Theological Book Network, Baylor University's Truett Theological Seminary, Oxford Theology Resources Link, and the Langham Partnership. Also of note was the addition of the personal collections of the Old Testament expert Dr Leslie McFall to the library in 2017, as well as those of the Ukrainian Protestant theologian and religious scholar Dr Mykhailo Cherenkov in 2021.

Since 2020, the library staff have been actively involved in preparing a range of publications for the seminary. These projects include translated works addressing the Ukrainian context and contemporary challenges, as well as original publications by local authors.

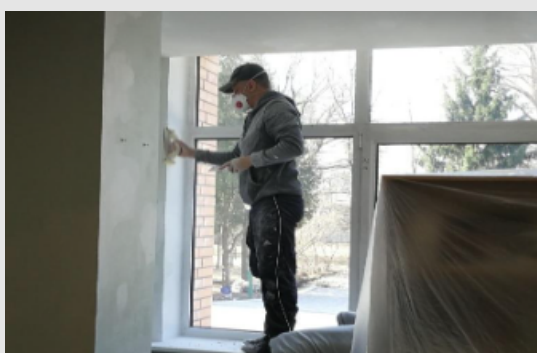
On February 17th 2020, the Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary, together with a group of other Ukrainian theological educational institutions, signed a Memorandum of Cooperation between the libraries of theological educational institutions in Ukraine. It is hoped that, once the war has ended, further cooperation will lead to the establishment of an Association of Theological Libraries in Ukraine.

In 2026, the library is working to meet the state requirements for educational institutions that offer a full cycle of higher education, including doctoral programmes. UETS has become the first evangelical institution in Ukraine to provide educational programmes under state accreditation, opening opportunities that evangelical theological institutions could previously only aspire to. Historically, evangelical churches were regarded with suspicion in the Ukrainian context and, following their emergence, endured periods of discrimination and persecution.

The photographs below show the library's reading room during its second major renovation in March 2026, following shelling and damage sustained after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. During the first renovation, all the broken glass in the windows was replaced.



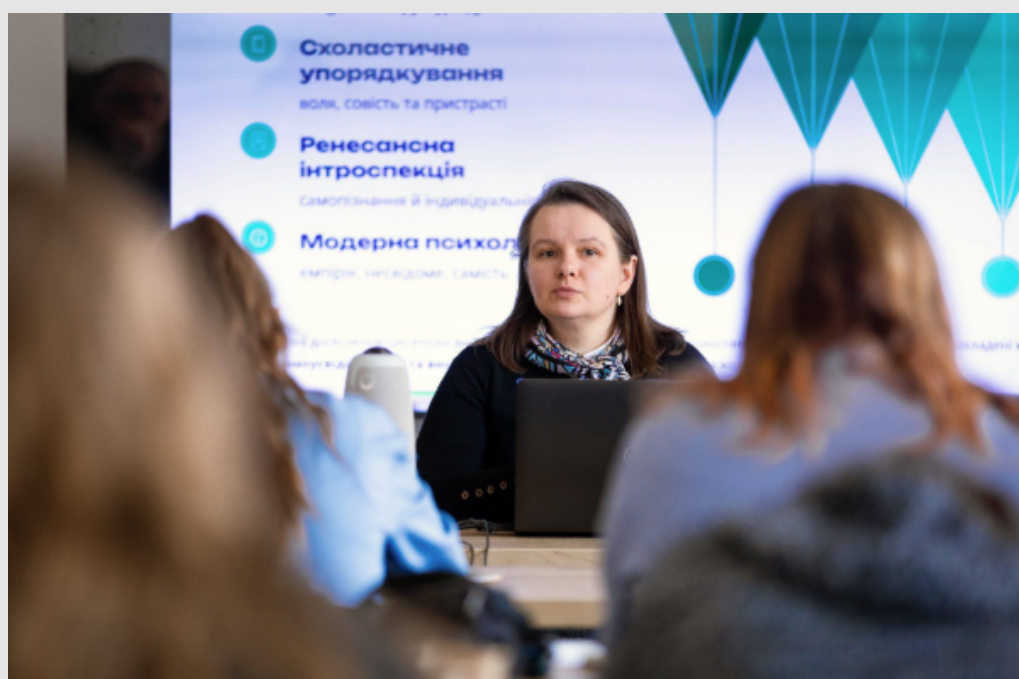
[Image 1-3] Library Reading Rooms (photo provided by Roman Shvets)



Included here are several photographs of this year's classes and students, offering a snapshot of daily academic and community life. These images help illustrate the resilience of our students and staff, who continue to pursue teaching, learning, and ministry formation despite ongoing challenges.



[Image 4] Religious Studies Class at UETS (photo provided by Roman Shvets)



[Image 5] History of Psychology class at UETS (photo provided by Roman Shvets)

Alongside the photographs below are comments gathered from current students about the library service and provision. Many students expressed appreciation for improved access to books and study materials, noting that the library has become an important part of their learning journey. Their reflections remind us that libraries are not simply places that store books but spaces that nurture learning, inspire vocation, and equip future leaders for service.



"I would like to thank the UETS Library, and Mr Roman and Ms Iryna especially. The library is a sacred place in the seminary. Here it becomes possible to find information and understand complex issues for research purposes. In addition to the large size of its collection, the influential and inspirational atmosphere of the library is created by its employees, who are always open to help and discussion." Serhiy, 3rd year student of Applied Theology, Church Pastor.

[Image 6] Serhiy (photo provided by Roman Shvets)

"While studying at UETS, an important part of my studies and research in various theological disciplines is to visit the UETS library. I am constantly using the books and magazines in the library. Also of great importance is the fact that the library provides a steady stream of new books that have been translated into Ukrainian. These usually deal with current topics such as the theology of citizenship, war and peace, suffering, healing, faith, and hope." Alexander, 2nd year student of Applied Theology, Church Pastor.

[Image 7] Alexander (photo provided by Roman Shvets)





[Image 8] Gera (photo provided by Roman Shvets)

“The library has helped me to form an academic and research-based understanding of ‘applied theology’. It contains a significant amount of academic material, thanks to which I was able to research and learn more deeply about everything related to theology. The library is modern in that all the necessary conditions for students are met there: reading and computer rooms. It is especially worth noting the professional attitude of the library staff to their duties and to the students. I have always enjoyed using the library’s services.”
Gera, 3rd year student of Applied Theology with involvement in Youth Ministry.

Despite the challenges of war, the library has remained a place of continuity, hope, and learning, continuing to support students and staff in their theological education and ministry preparation. Above all, we give thanks to God for His faithfulness and provision throughout this difficult season. We would also like to express our sincere gratitude to all those who have contributed to sustaining this work—libraries, organisations, donors, volunteers, and BETH community whose generosity has made access to resources possible. Finally, we thank the students and teaching staff for their resilience, commitment, and determination to continue studying, teaching, and serving faithfully under difficult circumstances.