

How Does a New SCIENCE BUILDING Fulfill the MISSION of JOHNSON UNIVERSITY?



Tommy SMITH
PRESIDENT

Johnson University educates students for Christian ministries and other strategic vocations framed by the Great Commission in order to extend the kingdom of God among all nations.

Every academic program, co-curricular activity, and even physical space on campus must find its foundation, content, and goal in this mission. Any project, therefore, begins with the question, “How does this fulfill the mission of Johnson University?” It is thus with a new science building on campus.

The essential task of extending the kingdom (reign, rule) of God among all nations begins with effectively communicating the good news of redemption, reconciliation, and recreation in the person and work of Jesus Christ. This is the “power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16) and the hope of the world. The work of Johnson University, therefore, is to equip students to accomplish faithfully this Great Commission.

From an academic, curricular perspective, we do this by employing a three-fold approach centering on God’s Word, God’s world, and God’s work. All undergraduate students complete a major (30+ credits) in Bible and theology, a substantive and systematic study of the Scriptures that grounds students in a biblical worldview. The Bible major is surrounded by an extensive course of study in the arts and sciences. Students complete courses in the humanities, natural sciences, social sciences, the arts, mathematics, and communication not only to enable them to understand God’s Word but also to engage God’s world. Without an understanding of the historical, political, economic, social, scientific, and philosophical elements of human society, students cannot effectively communicate the Gospel to their cultural contexts. Professional studies

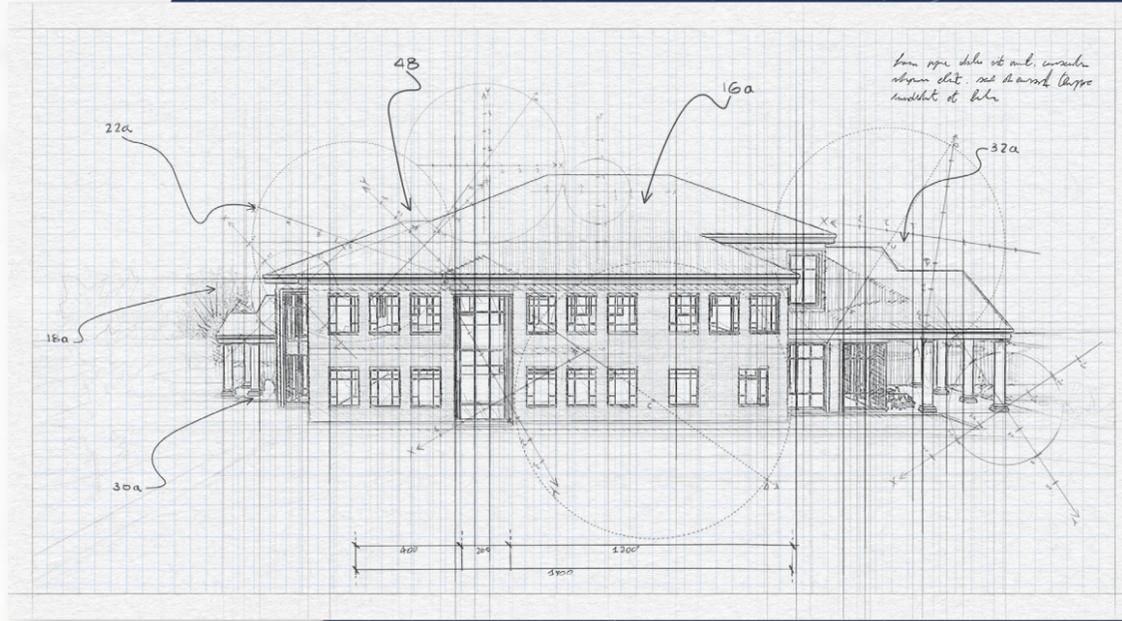


BREAKING *new* **GROUND**

DRAWING FROM THE PAST
SHAPING THE FUTURE

(the third component) are designed to equip students in Christian ministries or other strategic vocations, placing them in areas deemed critical for communicating the Gospel. This area of the curriculum—God’s work—educates students for meaningful work, enabling them to earn a living while pursuing their passion for Christian service. The study of the sciences at Johnson finds a place at the table in all three areas of the curriculum. The Great Commission mandate requires not only a solid foundation in the Scriptures but also an understanding of human communities and the natural world:

- A scientific perspective pervades contemporary culture and effective servants of Christ must be conversant with that perspective.
- The Johnson graduate must understand scientific approaches and concepts in order to evaluate claims made by science, comprehend complex social and philosophical issues, and communicate meaningfully with others, especially those in need of the Gospel.
- There are many opportunities for strategic vocations that emerge from the sciences.
- Science is the study of God’s great handiwork, and is a pathway not only to knowledge but also to worship and praise of the Creator.



CREATOR

A healthy perspective on the value of science is a key component of a Christian biblical worldview. This perspective has been very carefully cultivated by the science faculty at Johnson and has been well-expressed by Dr. Sarah Cathey, Professor of Natural Science and Associate Dean of Arts & Sciences for Sciences at Johnson:

“We are scientists who are unanimous in our view of the created world as God’s handiwork, made with intent and out of his great love. We believe that as the world is God’s handiwork, honest seeking for truth affords us the privilege of learning more about the Creator’s existence, goodness, and purposes.”



Taylor CARTER
SENIOR, LIFE SCIENCE
(WILL GRADUATE IN MAY)

Building this new science building helps to accomplish Johnson’s mission statement as we are providing great opportunities and buildings for students to learn. Coming into a school that provides not only a great spiritual education but is also willing to expand on its other education systems allows for great success for the University! I am excited to see where this project will take Johnson University’s STEM programs while also continually incorporating our mission statement!

“...we embrace the opportunity to know God better through his Word and through his created world, as faithful Christians who are scientists.”

SARAH CATHEY, PROFESSOR OF NATURAL SCIENCE



Vanessa WATKINS, DNP, RN
JOHNSON UNIVERSITY TRUSTEE

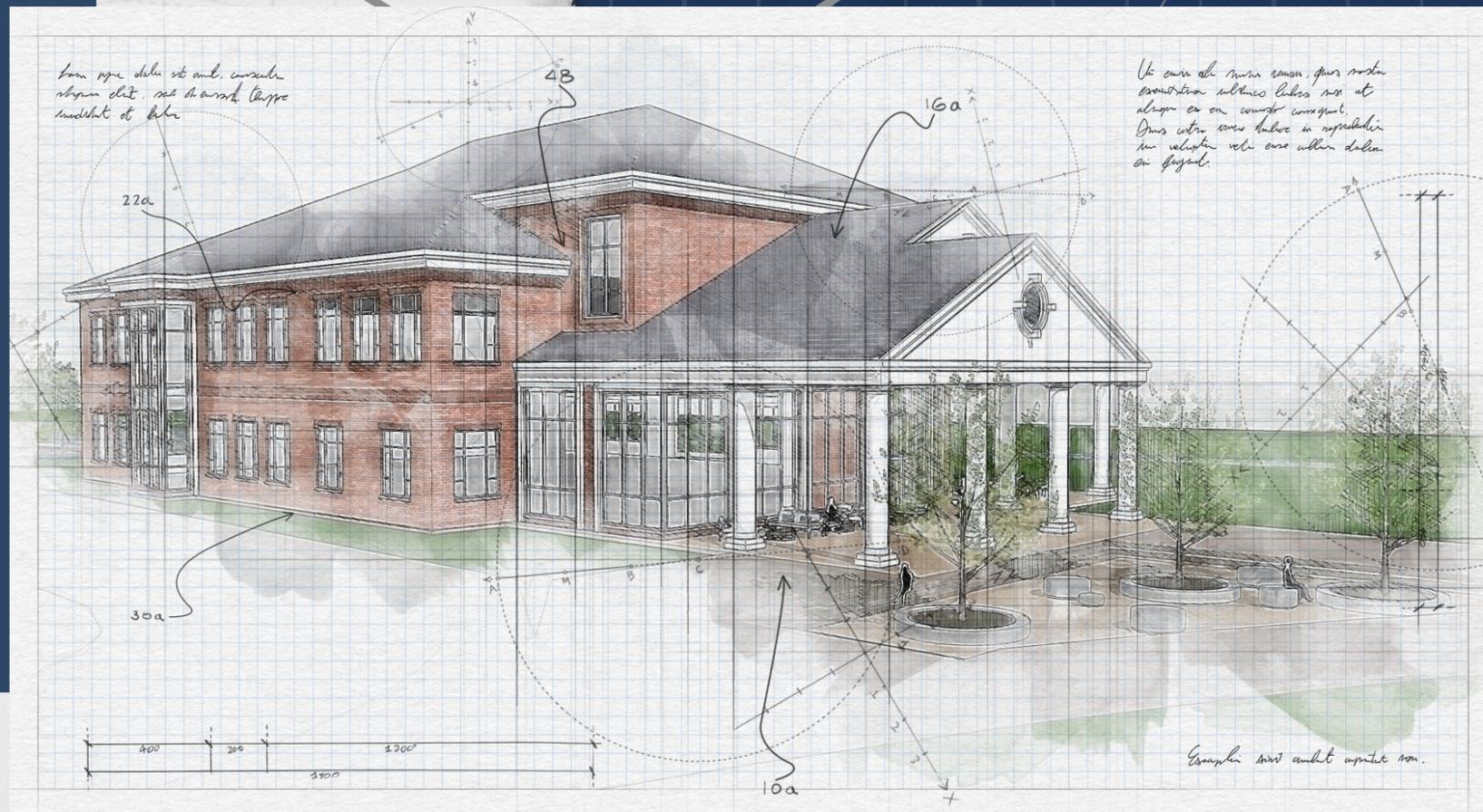
“Understanding the pathophysiology of the human body is based on the knowledge of science. The cellular structure of the human body along with the delicate balance between elements and necessary gas exchange are just the beginning of understanding how “beautifully and wonderfully” we are made. As a nurse, I am excited that we will have such an incredible science building where Health Science and Nursing students can learn from exceptional faculty. Students will learn just how amazing our Creator is and discover the fascinating way the body works. I am excited for Johnson students to benefit from the new science facilities as they embark on their health care journeys.”

From this position, we are not fearful of teaching about the current state of scientific knowledge in the mainstream. The science faculty are committed to presenting the current status of each of our fields of inquiry—biology, chemistry, anatomy and physiology, nursing, exercise science, etc.—in order to prepare Johnson students to interact with others in the public as ministry leaders and servants across other vocations. We also acknowledge and teach that “scientific knowledge” is constantly in flux as new evidence arises, and that critical thinking is crucial in their training as educated Christians.

As a science faculty, we do not avoid discussing topics that may interact with our faith. Rather, we engage and acknowledge the world as we embrace the opportunity to know God better through his Word and through his created world, as faithful Christians who are scientists (Romans 1:20-21). The science faculty rely on conversation and interdisciplinary team teaching with our fellow faculty with expertise in biblical text, interpretation, and theology to assist us in presenting topics where faith and science intersect. Together, we carefully and intentionally walk

alongside students as they weigh how faith intersects with challenging topics as they grow in personal faith and prepare for their strategic vocations, including full-time ministry.”

The new science facility on the campus of Johnson University will not only strongly support the teaching of the sciences that is so important in cultivating a biblical worldview in our students but will give us more opportunities to expand the scope and effectiveness of fulfilling our mission: extending the kingdom of God among all nations.



Emily CHRISTENSEN, PH.D.
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, CHEMISTRY

“What excites me most about a new science building as it is currently designed is the level of intentionality that has gone into making the science building inviting to every student. The central location of the building and the inclusion of outdoor and indoor meeting spaces will create an atmosphere for students in any program to feel welcome utilizing the space.

This building will open more opportunities for us to equip students who are passionate about ministering through strategic vocations. With the new laboratories, classrooms, and collaborative spaces, we will have the facilities to support programs that we could not offer before.

Our goal is to engage our students in a deep study of God’s revelation in nature alongside their study of his revealed truth in the Bible. These new spaces will help us do that.”

SCIENCE in Pursuit of GOD AND HIS MISSION



Daniel OVERDORF
PRESIDENT ELECT

Noted theologian and philosopher J.P. Moreland wrote, “Far from fearing science and what it will reveal, I regularly pray that God will send many Christians into the sciences to conduct their work and make discoveries with humble Christian confidence.”¹ Moreland urges parents and Christian educators to equip the next generation with intellectual and theological foundations for the pursuit of God’s truth, which is evidenced in God’s creation and discovered, in part, through scientific pursuits.

Science reveals the building blocks of God’s creation, illuminating his intricate design and inexhaustible glory. As the Psalmist wrote, “The whole earth is filled with awe at your wonders” (Ps. 65:8). We study creation because this study leads us to worship the Creator more passionately and serve him more faithfully.

For these reasons, Ashley and Emma Johnson included extensive study of the sciences in the early curriculum of Johnson University, offering courses in physiology, botany, physics, zoology, chemistry, and similar fields. In 1924, they opened a science lab that served students for the following forty years.

The new science building at Johnson University will further this legacy and enable us to better equip students to deepen their relationships with God and to pursue their mission for God.

The building will facilitate growth in science-related programs, such as our A.S. in Health Sciences and B.S. in Life Sciences, which includes biology, fitness science, and pre-professional concentrations. Additionally, the building will provide more and better learning opportunities for all students, as they complete requirements in the natural sciences through the core curriculum.

The building will include new labs for biology, chemistry, physics, and

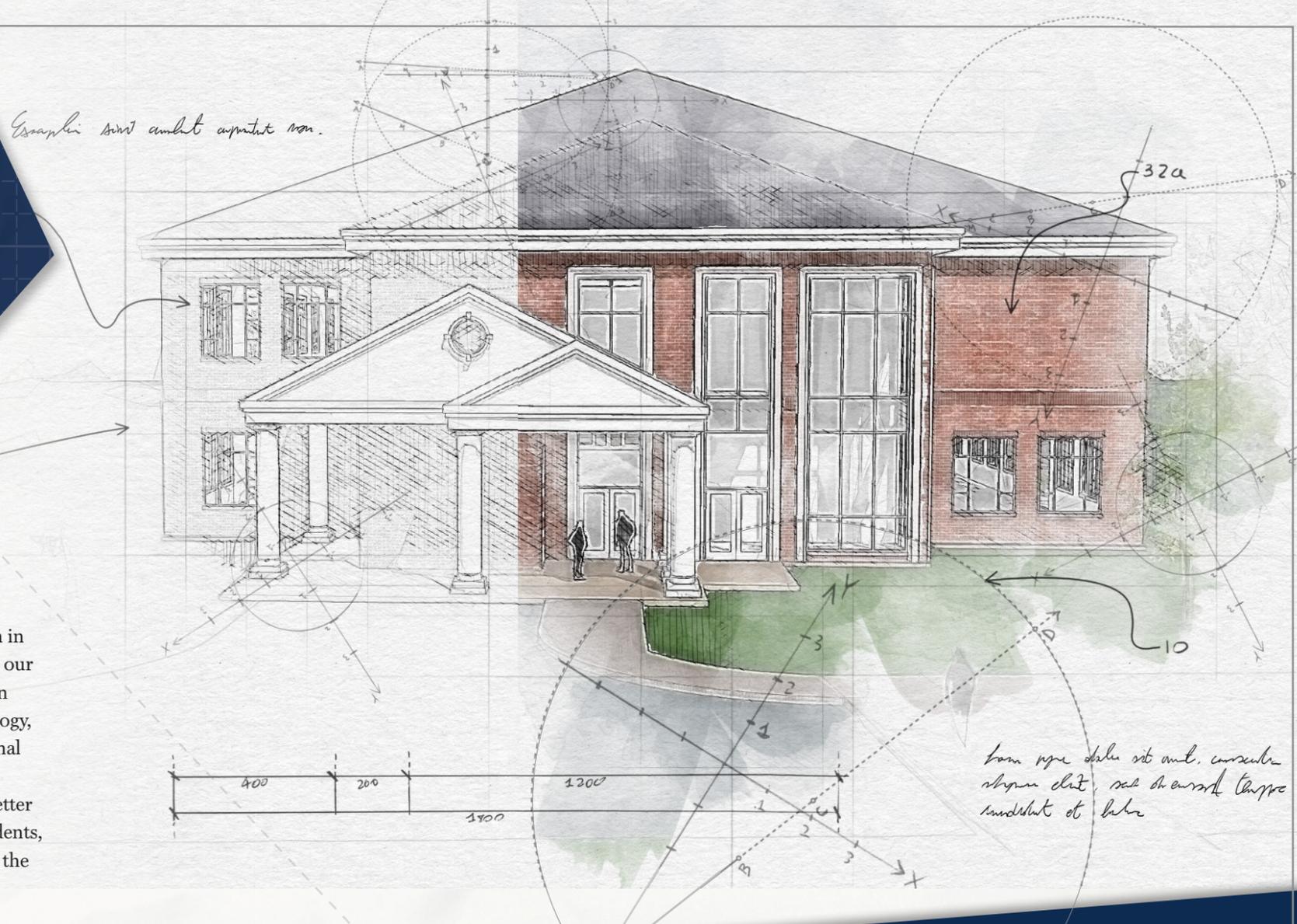
“*...pray that God will send many Christians into the sciences to conduct their work and make discoveries with humble Christian confidence.*”

J. P. MORELAND

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model of lab*

anatomy. These labs, along with new classrooms and additional spaces, will be designed to facilitate collaborative, hands-on learning and research under the guidance of our faculty.

The need is significant, and the possibilities are exciting. Graduates trained in this facility will take the truth and grace of Christ to the

world through nursing, research, microbiology, physical therapy, and other science-related fields. Graduates in fields such as preaching, missions, counseling, education, business, and media arts will understand the world more intricately and engage it more effectively because their education included significant study in a state-of-the-art science facility.

The new science building will help propel Johnson University into the next generation, enabling us to more effectively educate students for Christian ministries and other strategic vocations, framed by the Great Commission, in order to extend the kingdom of God among all nations.

¹Scientism and Secularism: Learning to Respond to a Dangerous Ideology. Wheaton IL: CrossWay, 2018, p 22.

TRUTH