HISTORY HIGHLIGHTS

1968 — THE MIRACLE SCHOOL

Maranatha Baptist Bible College was established by Dr. B. Myron Cedarholm and his wife Thelma. The Cedarholms helped raise $150,000 to purchase a campus from the Brothers of the Congregation of the Holy Cross. The first payment was made June 1 and Maranatha Baptist Bible College opened on September 10, with over 200 students and 27 faculty members.

1969 — FIRST GRADUATION

Maranatha awarded degrees to 13 students on May 31, 1969

1970 – 1980 — FOCUSED EXPANSION

The academic offerings, fine arts options, and intercollegiate athletic programs all greatly expanded under Dr. Cedarholm, who remained president until 1983. Several campus buildings still used today were constructed, including 6 of the 10 dormitories and the gymnasium.

1980 – 1990 — REMARKABLE ADVANCEMENT

During the 1980s and 1990s Maranatha achieved financial stability as well as enrollment growth that expanded nearly every year. No fewer than 39 different buildings and remodeling projects, including the Cedarholm Library were completed between 1983 and 1998

1990 – 2000 — REGIONAL ACCREDITATION

Maranatha earned regional accreditation in 1993, a pivotal moment in the university's academic history. Enrollment continued to grow.

2000 – 2012 — STRATEGIC ADDITIONS

The newest major building on campus, the Dining Complex, opened in the fall of 2005. The Global Encounters missions program began in 2006. The Army ROTC chapter was established in 2006, Maranatha Online and Distance Learning began in 2009, and the Bridge to Campus initiative was launched in fall 2012.

2013 — FROM COLLEGE TO UNIVERSITY

The Board of Trustees approved the name change to Maranatha Baptist University in October 2013. In March 2014, the university's new branding was revealed and the new mascot-the Sabercat-was unleashed in a special ceremony.

2014 – 2018 — ACADEMIC EXPANSION

2014 | Master of Education in Teaching and Learning
2015 | Doctor of Ministry in Preaching and Leading
2015 | Master of Organizational Leadership
2017 | Cross Categorical Special Education Minor
2018 | Graduate Certificates in Math, History, and English

2019 — SPECIALIZED FOCUS

Maranatha Baptist Bible Institute opened, offering comprehensive Bible training and practical ministry experience for students not immediately interested in pursuing a college degree.

2020 — ADMINISTRATIVE RESTRUCTURE

The Executive Office was divided into dual roles with the president providing spiritual leadership, Chapel oversight, and university promotion and the CEO supervising academic and accreditation operations and guiding daily decision making.

2021 – 2026 — CONTINUED ADVANCEMENT

2021 | Online expertise well established to take on the Covid-19 shutdown transition
2022 | Maranatha ranked #1 Best Online Bachelor's Program at a private college in Wisconsin
OnMission podcast launched
2024 | Accreditation reaffirmed by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) for ten years.
2025 | Creation of the Office of Graduate Studies for non-seminary graduate programs
2026 | Maranatha's 6,000th graduate and addition of MA in Ministry: Church Music Track and art courses

GOD HAS BLESSED AND SUSTAINED A SCHOOL THAT REMAINS TRUE TO ITS MISSION—TO DEVELOP LEADERS FOR MINISTRY IN THE LOCAL CHURCH AND THE WORLD "TO THE PRAISE OF HIS GLORY"