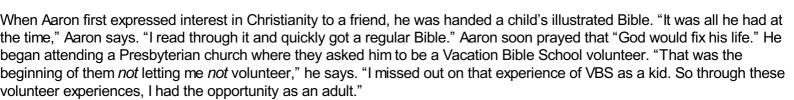# AARON GORDON HOPES TO MINISTER TO DISPLACED PEOPLE

Born into a Jewish family, M.Div. student Aaron Gordon is now preparing to serve as a Protestant minister. Aaron was raised in a home with a nominally Christian mother and a culturally Jewish father. However, they decided that Aaron would be raised in the Reformed Jewish Tradition. He attended Hebrew school until he was 13, when he became a bar mitzvah—a "son of the commandment."

For Aaron's immediate family, being Jewish was a cultural identity. "It was more important to my extended family than to my immediate family," he says. They celebrated the Jewish High Holy Days at an aunt's house.

"I never had faith, or at least I didn't really care too much about it," Aaron says. While in college, he became Agnostic. But, through the ministry of various people, Aaron began attending church. Following graduation, Aaron's life was going well. He was a teaching assistant at his graduate school, had money in his pocket, and was driving a nice care. "But my life was missing something," he says.

When Aaron first expressed interest in Christianity to a friend, he was handed a child's illustrated Bible. "It was all he had at the time," Aaron says. "I read through it and quickly got a regular Bible." Aaron soon prayed that "God would fix his life." He began attending a Presbyterian church where they asked him to be a Vacation Bible School volunteer. "That was the beginning of them *not* letting me *not* volunteer," he says. "I missed out on that experience of VBS as a kid. So through these volunteer experiences, I had the opportunity as an adult."

Being first Jewish and now Christian, Aaron possesses a keen awareness that Christianity was first a Semitic religion comprised largely of Jews. Aaron sees many differences between the Latin Christian tradition, the Eastern Orthodox Christian tradition, and the Palestinian Christian tradition. However, he has also observed many similarities that have helped him connect personally with the Hebrew and Aramaic portions of the Bible. "My experiences have helped me relate to the struggles of the early Jewish Christian church," he says.

After serving as missionaries for two years in New Orleans post-Hurricane Katrina, Aaron and his wife, Jenny, wanted to continue bridging the Word and the world. Hours of prayer and discernment led Aaron to sense that his pastoral gifts needed further development. Seminary felt like a natural step for him. Aaron came to Pittsburgh Seminary because he was awarded a generous scholarship, PTS is close to his extended family and home church, campus housing is conveniently located, and Seminary childcare is available for his family.

Feeling called to serve as a pastor in the PCUSA, Aaron hopes to work in a church that will minister to displaced people groups that have immigrated to the States. He also wants to work in a church that is active in world mission and outreach. This past spring Aaron and Jenny participated in the Israel/Palestine mission trip offered through the Seminary's World Mission Initiative. "It was a very formative experience," he says. "I am praying about how God can create a link between Palestinian Christians and Christians in the USA."

Written June 2012

Born into a Jewish family, M.Div. student Aaron Gordon is now preparing to serve as a Protestant minister. Aaron was raised in a home with a nominally Christian mother and a culturally Jewish father. However, they decided that Aaron would be raised in the Reformed Jewish Tradition. He attended Hebrew school until he was 13, when he became a bar mitzvah—a "son of the commandment."

For Aaron's immediate family, being Jewish was a cultural identity. "It was more important to my extended family than to my immediate family," he says. They celebrated the Jewish High Holy Days at an aunt's house.

"I never had faith, or at least I didn't really care too much about it," Aaron says. While in college, he became Agnostic. But, through the ministry of various people, Aaron began attending church. Following graduation, Aaron's life was going well. He was a teaching assistant at his graduate school, had money in his pocket, and was driving a nice care. "But my life was missing something," he says.

When Aaron first expressed interest in Christianity to a friend, he was handed a child's illustrated Bible. "It was all he had at the time," Aaron says. "I read through it and quickly got a regular Bible." Aaron soon prayed that "God would fix his life." He began attending a Presbyterian church where they asked him to be a Vacation Bible School volunteer. "That was the beginning of them *not* letting me *not* volunteer," he says. "I missed out on that experience of VBS as a kid. So through these volunteer experiences, I had the opportunity as an adult."

Being first Jewish and now Christian, Aaron possesses a keen awareness that Christianity was first a Semitic religion comprised largely of Jews. Aaron sees many differences between the Latin Christian tradition, the Eastern Orthodox Christian tradition, and the Palestinian Christian tradition. However, he has also observed many similarities that have helped him connect personally with the Hebrew and Aramaic portions of the Bible. "My experiences have helped me relate to the struggles of the early Jewish Christian church," he says.

After serving as missionaries for two years in New Orleans post-Hurricane Katrina, Aaron and his wife, Jenny, wanted to continue bridging the Word and the world. Hours of prayer and discernment led Aaron to sense that his pastoral gifts needed further development. Seminary felt like a natural step for him. Aaron came to Pittsburgh Seminary because he was awarded a generous scholarship, PTS is close to his extended family and home church, campus housing is conveniently located, and Seminary childcare is available for his family.

Feeling called to serve as a pastor in the PCUSA, Aaron hopes to work in a church that will minister to displaced people groups that have immigrated to the States. He also wants to work in a church that is active in world mission and outreach. This past spring Aaron and Jenny participated in the Israel/Palestine mission trip offered through the Seminary's World Mission Initiative. "It was a very formative experience," he says. "I am praying about how God can create a link between Palestinian Christians and Christians in the USA."

Written June 2012

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
616 North Highland Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
Phone: 412-362-5610

FIND YOUR PROGRAM

REQUEST INFO

APPLY ONLINE

VISIT THE CAMPUS

News & EventsContactDirectionsEmployment Save Page As PDF