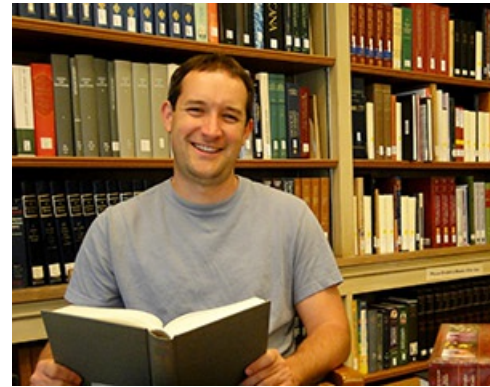


## MDIV STUDENT BRIAN LAYS RECEIVES HOMILETICS SCHOLARSHIP

Senior MDiv student Brian Lays is elated and honored to be the recipient of the Worship and Preaching Scholarship from First Presbyterian Church of Enid, Okla. This excitement comes not from the accolades themselves but from the opportunity to meet more people and to further hone his craft as a preacher. As the inaugural recipient, Brian will preach and lead worship at the church.

“Academics are so worthwhile. It equips pastors not just with understanding theology but also the world around them, granting them a greater capacity with which to connect to their parishioners and the neighborhoods in which they are placed. For me, the study of homiletics is great because it is one of the areas that stands at the intersection of academic and is directly applicable to pastoral ministry,” says Brian.



His journey toward ministry began the summer after 8<sup>th</sup> grade when he took his faith more seriously. Over the course of the next year during Confirmation class, he began to discern a call to ministry. In the years to come, as he navigated through high school, college, and then onto grad school, along with the experiences life brings, his call saw a change in scope but never in substance.

“I have never thought, ‘Nope, never mind. I should go be an accountant. When I realized pastoral ministry was where I needed to go, that was it.”

Although Brian graduates with this MDiv this summer, he plans to be in the area another year as he complete his Master of Sacred Theology at PTS. He continues to pray and discern whether a doctorate would be the next step. Ultimately, Brian would like to return to his native state of Colorado. Regardless of where God calls him, Brian knows he will never cease in his pursuit of study, out of his love of learning and his devotion to God.

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