

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL



ADVENT PROGRAM

APPLY ONLINE

VISIT CAMPUS

REQUEST INFO



ABOUT PITTSBURGH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Rooted in the Reformed tradition, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary is committed to the formation of women and men for theologically reflective ministry and to scholarship in service to the global Church of Jesus Christ.

BECOME A STUDENT

Master's

Doctor of Ministry

Non-Degree

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Graduate Certificate in Church Planting and Revitalization

Graduate Certificate in Ministry

Graduate Certificate in Missional Leadership

Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies

Graduate Certificate in Urban Ministry

Spiritual Formation Certificate

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Church Planting Initiative

Continuing Education

Kelso Museum of Near Eastern Archaeology

Miller Summer Youth Institute

Metro-Urban Institute

World Mission Initiative

Zeitah Excavations

FACULTY

In addition to their on-campus duties, our faculty are experts in their fields and are available to preach and teach. Learn more about their **topics of research and writing** and invite them to present at your congregation or gathering.

EVENTS

The Seminary hosts a wide range of events—many of them free!—on topics of faith including church planting, mission, vocation, spiritual formation, pastoral care and counseling, archaeology, and many more. Visit our **calendar** often for a listing of upcoming events.

VISIT PTS

Interested in the Seminary? **Come visit us!**

STAY IN TOUCH WITH PTS

Sign-up to receive the Seminary's newsletters: Seminary News (monthly), Church Planting Initiative (monthly), Continuing Education (monthly), World Mission Initiative (monthly), Metro-Urban Institute (quarterly), and Kelso Museum. Alums, there's also one for you!

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL DECEMBER 11, 2018

SCRIPTURE

1 THESSALONIANS 5:12-28

12 But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; 13 esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. 14 And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint hearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. 15 See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. 16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 19 Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not despise the words of prophets, 21 but test everything; hold fast to what is good; 22 abstain from every form of evil. 23 May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this. 25 Beloved, pray for us. 26 Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss. 27 I solemnly command you by the Lord that this letter be read to all of them. 28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

DEVOTIONAL

Dr. Helen Blier, Director, **Office of Continuing Education**

When my children were little, we had two rules in our house: Be Kind and Do Your Job. (Later on, when the eldest became a teenager, Tell the Truth was added, but that's another story.) The challenge was to identify what simple rules would best name the behaviors that let us live as a family by lifting up some of the practices required of love without burden or distraction? These two rules worked for us, and they grew as the kids grew. When they were little, being kind and doing their job meant fair play on the playground and brushing teeth before bed. As they got older, it got more complex—time management, making good choices about friends, leveraging their privilege in behalf of the common good. Over and over again, the simple rules became an invitation to have important conversations about what we are called to do as family members, community dwellers, Christians, children of God. (And if you ask me, I think the two of them are turning out pretty well!)

Paul's exhortation to his friends in Thessalonica isn't so much a laundry list of behaviors or rules to follow—it's naming some of the things that happen when the Spirit is present and people live in the joy of the Good News. And what's obvious to me is how much Paul really loves these people! The delight he takes in them is infectious. He wants them to do the right thing because he wants them to participate in the promises of Christ—and in his enthusiasm he's reminding them of what makes that possible. Seek good for all. Give thanks always. Greet others with delight. Rejoice! In other words, be kind and do your job. These are the hallmarks of love practiced, the conditions that create welcome, as he says, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. And in addition to commanding his friends to do, Paul participates in this joyful expression himself.

As we head toward the third and joyful Sunday of Advent, what can you do to make sure that this love, practiced in delight, marks your own preparation for the coming of the Christ child?

PRAYER

Dear Lord, on behalf of my beloved community,
May we pray without ceasing
Give thanks without reason
Do good to all because it is good to do—
And in doing so welcome the Christ child with joy and love into this, our human family.

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL DECEMBER 11, 2018

SCRIPTURE

1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

12 But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; 13 esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. 14 And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint hearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. 15 See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. 16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 19 Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not despise the words of prophets, 21 but test everything; hold fast to what is good; 22 abstain from every form of evil. 23 May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this. 25 Beloved, pray for us. 26 Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss. 27 I solemnly command you by the Lord that this letter be read to all of them. 28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

DEVOTIONAL

Dr. Helen Blier, Director, **Office of Continuing Education**

When my children were little, we had two rules in our house: Be Kind and Do Your Job. (Later on, when the eldest became a teenager, Tell the Truth was added, but that’s another story.) The challenge was to identify what simple rules would best name the behaviors that let us live as a family by lifting up some of the practices required of love without burden or distraction? These two rules worked for us, and they grew as the kids grew. When they were little, being kind and doing their job meant fair play on the playground and brushing teeth before bed. As they got older, it got more complex—time management, making good choices about friends, leveraging their privilege in behalf of the common good. Over and over again, the simple rules became an invitation to have important conversations about what we are called to do as family members, community dwellers, Christians, children of God. (And if you ask me, I think the two of them are turning out pretty well!)

Paul’s exhortation to his friends in Thessalonica isn’t so much a laundry list of behaviors or rules to follow—it’s naming some of the things that happen when the Spirit is present and people live in the joy of the Good News. And what’s obvious to me is how much Paul really loves these people! The delight he takes in them is infectious. He wants them to do the right thing because he wants them to participate in the promises of Christ—and in his enthusiasm he’s reminding them of what makes that possible. Seek good for all. Give thanks always. Greet others with delight. Rejoice! In other words, be kind and do your job. These are the hallmarks of love practiced, the conditions that create welcome, as he says, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. And in addition to commanding his friends to do, Paul participates in this joyful expression himself.

As we head toward the third and joyful Sunday of Advent, what can you do to make sure that this love, practiced in delight, marks your own preparation for the coming of the Christ child?

PRAYER

Dear Lord, on behalf of my beloved community,
May we pray without ceasing
Give thanks without reason
Do good to all because it is good to do—
And in doing so welcome the Christ child with joy and love into this, our human family.

ABOUT PITTSBURGH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Rooted in the Reformed tradition, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary is committed to the formation of women and men for theologically reflective ministry and to scholarship in service to the global Church of Jesus Christ.

BECOME A STUDENT

Master’s

Doctor of Ministry

Non-Degree

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Graduate Certificate in Church Planting and Revitalization

Graduate Certificate in Ministry

Graduate Certificate in Missional Leadership

Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies

Graduate Certificate in Urban Ministry

Spiritual Formation Certificate

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Church Planting Initiative

Continuing Education

Kelso Museum of Near Eastern Archaeology

Miller Summer Youth Institute

Metro-Urban Institute

[World Mission Initiative](#)

[Zeitah Excavations](#)

FACULTY

In addition to their on-campus duties, our faculty are experts in their fields and are available to preach and teach. Learn more about their [topics of research and writing](#) and invite them to present at your congregation or gathering.

EVENTS

The Seminary hosts a wide range of events—many of them free!—on topics of faith including church planting, mission, vocation, spiritual formation, pastoral care and counseling, archaeology, and many more. Visit our [calendar](#) often for a listing of upcoming events.

VISIT PTS

Interested in the Seminary? [Come visit us!](#)

STAY IN TOUCH WITH PTS

Sign-up to receive the Seminary's newsletters: Seminary News (monthly), Church Planting Initiative (monthly), Continuing Education (monthly), World Mission Initiative (monthly), Metro-Urban Institute (quarterly), and Kelso Museum. Alums, there's also one for you!

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 & Events](#)[Contact](#)[Directions](#)[Employment](#) [Save Page As PDF](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[COVID-19](#)

[Accessibility](#)

[Anti-Discrimination](#)

[Title IX And Anti-Harassment](#)