

# MEET PTS



# MDIV STUDENT MICHAEL ONDRICK'S ENTHUSIASM FOR LIFE IS GROUNDED IN GRATITUDE TO GOD

Michael Ondrick is a self-described introvert . . . so of course he does improv comedy. Behind the scenes, he writes sketches and plays . . . and then produces shows to perform them live. Because he loves music, he sings and plays piano, guitar, and balalaika . . . up front in worship services. (Did we mention he was a national spelling bee contestant for several years running?) Let's just say that Michael—United Methodist, merit scholar, M.Div. senior, and this year's Student Association president—hasn't let life pass him by!

There's a reason for Michael's enthusiasm, and it's grounded in his Christian faith. That reason is gratitude. Michael explains: "It's been said, and I find it to be true, that the miracle of gratitude is that it shifts your perception to such an extent that it changes the world you see."

He goes on: "I'm just a blue-collar kid from the foothills of Appalachia. I had opportunity after opportunity to stay on the right track, but I took matters into my own hands because I thought I knew it all. For years, I was a prodigal son—wasteful, misguided, spiteful, self-destructive. I was too miserable to live but too scared to do anything about it. Needless to say, by all rights I shouldn't be here. 'And are we yet alive, and see each other's face?'"

"I believe I've been redeemed by God and God's people. Gratitude—for my very life, and for the fact that *there is nothing we can do to make God stop loving us*—has changed everything. I see the world differently now. It's beautiful. And I can't wait to see what God does through me."

Neither can we—though we've caught a glimpse of what God is already doing through Michael as a student at Pittsburgh Seminary. In addition to pursuing his academic work, he has taken every possible opportunity to enrich his preparation for ministry here. He's traveled to Russia, Egypt, and the Philippines with the **World Mission Initiative**, helped to plan chapel services as a member of the Worship Team, written meditations and prayers for our devotional resource kits, provided leadership in student government—and that's just a start.

Where will Michael's preparation in the way of Jesus lead him after graduation? Doubtless down a multifaceted path of ministry in the church that continues to be fueled by the immense gratitude he has for God's never-ending grace in his life.

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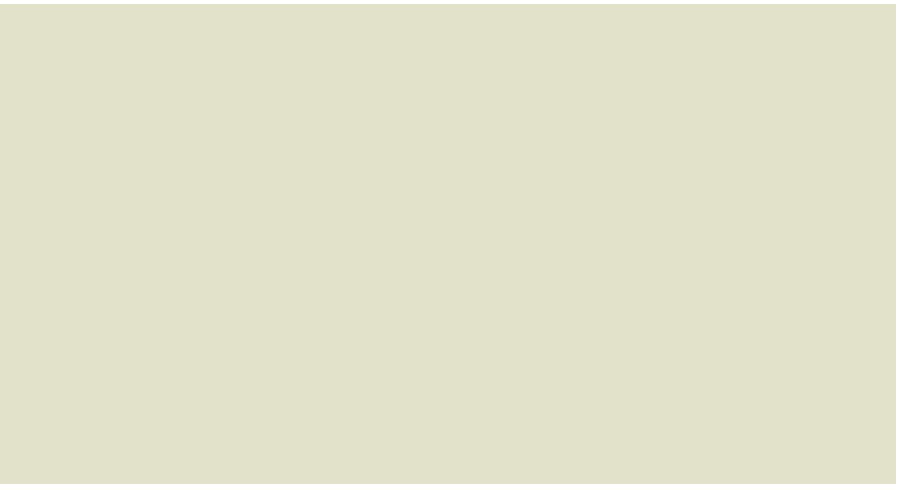
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Pittsburgh Theological Seminary  
616 North Highland Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15206  
Phone: 412-362-5610



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