

# MEET PTS



# ATTENDING SEMINARY OPENS MDIV STUDENT TO GOD'S CALLING

For PTS graduating senior Will Robbins, serving as a pastor was a childhood dream. When his peers were envisioning becoming astronauts, presidents, or professional athletes, young Will imagined a future delivering sermons and sacraments. That seed of calling was watered during his years in youth group and college ministry.

But something funny happened on the way to seminary. As Will was completing his undergraduate education at the University of Mississippi, he began to doubt his long-held sense of pastoral calling. So he decided to try out some other things during his 20s, including a stint overseas for six months for a peace and conflict studies program in the Middle East. When he returned to the States, he thought that it was time for seminary, but during his first year at a school in Boston, he sensed the timing and the fit just weren't right.

So it was back to the Middle East, this time for four years and with a role teaching elementary and high school students. The callings to seminary and ministry remained on hold, but a new calling came into focus as Will met Olivia, who is now his wife! The two moved to Pittsburgh, where Olivia completed her graduate studies in education.

Here in Pennsylvania, Will became involved in the Episcopal church—and his childhood dreams were reawakened. He knew that if he didn't return to seminary, he would always wonder what might have been.

Now at the finish line of the M.Div. program, Will describes his years at PTS as a time of growth, guidance, and learning.

He is particularly grateful for his studies in Greek and his development as a writer—thanks, in part, to the incredible resources available at the **Center for Writing and Learning Support**. Will's strong desire to learn has been nurtured and fed at the Seminary.

As all this was happening, yet another calling emerged in Will's life: fatherhood! Will and Olivia welcomed their baby boy into the world at the same time Will was completing his studies in the Hebrew language. He remembers sitting with his newborn son in the NICU and translating Genesis 1—contemplating the beginning of all things and the beginning of his baby's life. Learning to be a father during seminary has been taxing, but it has also opened new reserves of energy and motivation; his message for other new seminary parents is, "You can do this!"

Ultimately, Will's understanding of seminary and calling shifted. He has come to view his time at PTS not as merely a stepping-stone to some other call, but as a worthwhile journey in its own right. He remains in the Episcopal ordination process as he also steps into the role of stay-at-home dad.

"PTS allowed me to close a chapter that needed to be closed," Will says, "so that I can be open to God's calling on my life."

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