

CELEBRATIONS



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PITTSBURGH SEMINARY HAS SO MUCH TO CELEBRATE!

This past spring semester, I hosted a lunch-and-learn group for Seminary employees, guided by Brené Brown's book *Dare to Lead*. Those familiar with Brown's works will not be surprised that one of the themes she holds up as crucial in embracing daring vulnerability is "practicing gratitude and celebrating milestones." Brown, who researches human emotions, relationships, shame, empathy, and thriving, consistently points to gratitude as essential for thriving human life. Her revolutionary finding, echoed by so many of our spiritual traditions, is: "It's not joy that makes us grateful; it's gratitude that makes us joyful." We have so much to be grateful for at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

Through the spring 2024 commencement exercises, we celebrated the graduation of a new class prepared for service to the church in its myriad of expressions, including the largest class of doctor of ministry students in recent memory. With the helpful support of Lilly Endowment Inc., we launched the Faith Forming Families (F3) Network. We also organized and launched the PTS Neighborhood Collaborative, which facilitates the Seminary's community partnerships and positions us to offer resources to a broader range of folks interested in working together toward neighborhood shalom. We welcomed new faculty and staff members, hosted our 40th annual Henderson Lectures, sent students on learning fellowships (including our inaugural Hurlbert Family Fellow in Contextual Ministry and Community Research), and launched the H.O.P.E. Network, which promotes nonviolence initiatives in Pittsburgh. Through the work of one of our D.Min. students, we witnessed the revitalization of a small church, and through our Advancement Office, we embraced the investment of another entrusting its resources to our programs.

So much is happening in the world right now. In these times so often filled with seriousness and anxiety, I invite you to share with us in a gratitude practice. Take some time to celebrate the wonderful things that God has done through all of us in the PTS community. As I reflect on these achievements, I am grateful to you, the Seminary's partners in ministry, for the contributions you have made in faithful support of our mission: equipping people for ministries familiar and yet to unfold and communities present and yet to be gathered. Thank you for coming alongside PTS, and I hope you share in the joy of these accomplishments.

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. Dr. Asa J. Lee

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