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PITTSBURGH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY HONORS JAMES A. DURLESSER WITH ANDERSON AWARD

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary has posthumously given The John Anderson Award of Merit to the Rev. Dr. James A. Durlesser '78/'80. The awarding was announced May 26, 2023 during the Seminary's 227th Commencement. The John Anderson Award of Merit is bestowed by the Board of Directors of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary upon those individuals who have contributed distinctive service to the Seminary and community at large.



From 1999 to 2017, Dr. Durlesser was a lecturer in biblical languages at PTS. In this capacity, he taught Hebrew and elective courses in Hebrew Bible, Aramaic, and Greek. After 2017, he continued to teach in the Doctor of Ministry Program, providing academic guidance and support to students by assisting them in planning and structuring their course work and electives. He served on more than 20 Doctor of Ministry Student Project/Paper Faculty Committees, either as first or second reader. At the time of his death on Aug. 16, 2022, Dr. Durlesser was visiting professor of doctor of ministry studies at the Seminary.

"Dr. Durlesser's title—visiting professor of doctor of ministry studies—does not in any way convey the extent to which he has been a mentor and caring teacher to our doctor of ministry students," says President Asa Lee. "Jim's unique ministry of accompaniment was a vocation lived amongst many of our students through counseling, writing, and pastoring them to complete their theses. His ministry among us will not soon be forgotten, and we honor his memory with this bestowal of The John Anderson Award of Merit."

Dr. Durlesser was also an alumnus of PTS, earning his M.Div. in 1978 and a Th.M. in Old Testament in 1980. In addition, he earned a B.A. in religion from Westminster College and a Ph.D. in religious studies with a concentration in Hebrew Bible from the University of Pittsburgh. He was an ordained elder in The United Methodist Church and served local congregations in the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference for almost 50 years.

In 2020, Dr. Durlesser published *The Biblical Theme of Peace/Shalom* (CSS Publishing, 2020), which he co-authored with Dr. Ronald H. Love. He was also the author of *Metaphorical Narratives in the Book of Ezekiel* (The Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), and wrote nine articles for the *Westminster Theological Wordbook of the Bible*, which was edited by his mentor, the Rev. Dr. Donald E. Gowan, Robert C. Holland Professor Emeritus of Old Testament at PTS. Dr. Durlesser wrote more than 20 study guides and articles published by The United Methodist Publishing House, as well as numerous scholarly articles and papers.

The Anderson Award is named for Pastor John Anderson, founding president of the Seminary in 1794. The honorees receive the presidential medallion bearing an inscription of their names and the date. Senior administration of PTS will visit Dr. Durlesser's wife, Joy, at a later date to formally present the award to her.

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