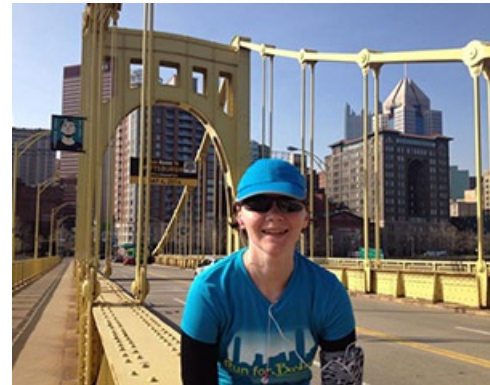


PTS ALUM IS RUNNING THE RACE WITH ENDURANCE

You may have heard it said that Pittsburgh Seminary prepares pastor-theologians. But did you know that we're also a community of pastor-marathoners? The Rev. Charissa Howe '14 is one of them. Pastor of Liberty Presbyterian Church, in a suburb of McKeesport, Pa., and currently a Th.M. student at PTS, Charissa ran her first marathon in 2010. "A regular patron of the yarn store I was working in came in one day and told me she had just run her first Pittsburgh marathon—at age 50. I thought, 'If she can do it at 50, I can do it at 30.'" So Charissa conscripted her husband, Tim, and started training.

"I completed the full marathon in 2010," she notes, "so I ran right past the PTS campus on Highland Avenue. Little did I know then that soon I'd enroll as an M.Div. student at that very school!" Since 2010, Charissa has run half-marathons every year in the Pittsburgh event and does so as a charity runner for The Pittsburgh Promise. "I have three children," says Charissa, "so running for the Promise is a natural for me. In fact, we've made the marathon a family activity—our youngest two children are running in the kids events this year, including our six-year-old son." The 2015 Pittsburgh Marathon takes place on May 3.



Newly this year, Charissa is running on one of three relay teams organized by PTS church history professor the Rev. Dr. Heather Vacek. Two teams are composed of five runners, with Charissa running two legs for the third team of four people. The teams include current PTS students and family members of PTS employees and alums. In addition to the relay teams, "a handful of us are running in other events that weekend," says Dr. Vacek.

Charissa points out, "The student members of my team, Matthew and Garrett, and I went on the PTS trip to Scotland last June, so we started forming a community spirit then that has transferred to our running team now." For the other teams, training for the event this year has been a great community-building opportunity.

Charissa has also used her marathon training in her pastoral work. "A year ago I gave a sermon titled 'Mile 19,' based on Hebrews 12:1-7 and the theme: 'run the race with perseverance.' I plan to participate in the marathon as long as we're living in Pittsburgh," she says, "and for the rest of my life to keep running with perseverance for the prize of the 'imperishable wreath' that Paul speaks of in 1 Corinthians 9."

2015 PTS Pittsburgh Marathon Relay Teams:

PTS Team #1 – Carrie Buckner (captain), Maggie Smith, Erin Angeli, Rebecca Dix, Jane Larson

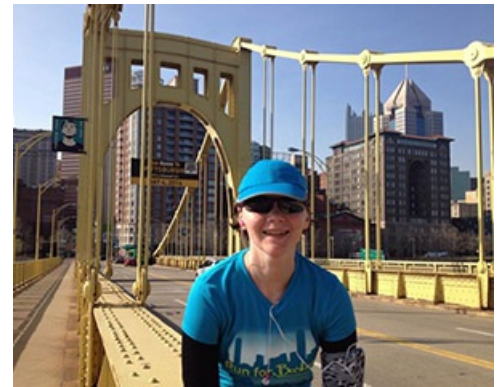
PTS Team #2 – Gary Vacek (captain), JB Parker-Blier, Abbey Parker-Blier, Scott Eckes

PTS Team #3 – Matthew Williams (captain), Charissa Howe, Garrett Yates, Tim Howe

You can listen to Charissa's "[Mile 19](#)" sermon and also read her [PTS blog post](#) on a similar topic.

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