

MEET PTS



INTRODUCING THE REV. DR. DENISE THORPE, INTERIM DIRECTOR OF THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROGRAM

The Rev. Dr. Denise Thorpe, who formerly taught as an adjunct instructor at PTS, has been serving as interim director of the **Doctor of Ministry Program** since December 2018.

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An independent scholar, theologian, writer, pastor, and facilitator, she is ordained as a minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (USA), a member in good standing of the Colorado Bar, and a trained lawyer and mediator “interested in how and where God is present in the complicated and messy spaces of life.”
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Over the past decade, Denise has fallen in love with the country of Lithuania and “ultimately developed the kind of complicated relationship that love always seems to demand,” she notes. Her doctoral dissertation explored the fascinating and complex world of post-Soviet Lithuania through Lithuanians’ stories about what they do (or don’t do) when they travel to light candles and plant flowers in cemeteries on All Saints’ and All Souls’ days (Visi Šventi Diena and Vālini Diena). She is currently preparing that study for publication under the title, “Memory on Fire: The Re-membering of the Lithuanian Body Politic.”

As Denise continues to explore the wonders of Lithuania, she also ponders “the spatial and sensory experience of faith and belief” here in her own environs in the United States—all with an eye to the purpose and calling of the Christian church.

In addition to her role at PTS, Denise directs the Race, Church, and Theological Practices Collaborative Inquiry Team, a project of five pastors and scholars funded by The Louisville Institute “exploring how well-intentioned practices of the Christian church re-inscribe rather than disrupt racial regimes and how to respond.” She also serves as the pre-publication editor for a multi-author volume on physician well-being and as a consultant, facilitator, and retreat leader for Macedonian Ministry.

Having earned her Th.D. and J.D. from Duke University and her M.Div. from Yale University, Denise is certainly well prepared academically for these diverse and multifaceted roles. Her insatiable curiosity about God’s world and her faithful commitment to the gospel add the spiritual depth necessary for stepping into her role with the Doctor of Ministry Program at Pittsburgh Seminary.

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