

LOCAL LAWYER EXPLORES THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Born and raised in Vermont, in his early childhood Jonathan Stewart '15 had a profound experience with Christ that forever changed the course of his life. His pursuit of higher education brought him to the Pittsburgh area, where he also began serving as music director in his church. After graduating from Duquesne University School of Law, he embarked on a legal career as a solo practitioner at the young age of 26.

Jonathan began that career by leasing space downtown in the historic Frick Building. "At the time, it seemed as though I was the youngest tenant in the entire place," he reflects, "and for the first several years, I took careful notice of the stalwart presences in the building." One of those people turned out to be Robert N. Thomson, who recently left to PTS the largest bequest in the Seminary's history.



During those same years, Jonathan was also beginning a new chapter in his personal and vocational life. At church he met and married his wife, Bethany (a physicians' assistant), and together in 2008 they began serving also as pastors to the congregations of the Community of the Crucified One, based in Homestead, Pa. "We have been privileged over the years to use our gifts in support of local church building as well as travel abroad on foreign missions," he notes.

After nine years of practicing law in the same space of the Frick Building, Jonathan formed a partnership and began to expand the firm. The expansion brought him to the sixth floor of the building—and to the office space next door to Mr. Thomson's. "I had the good fortune of exchanging pleasantries and lighthearted conversation with this kind, hard-working gentleman almost weekly," notes Jonathan.

As he was expanding his firm—and gaining professional accolades as a Pennsylvania Super Lawyer and a Top Ten Personal Injury Attorney in Pennsylvania—Jonathan also began pursuing theological education at PTS to equip him for his growing ministerial role, which, in addition to pastoring, included board service for many local and international non-profit organizations. But several months before graduating in June, at work he noticed that Mr. Thomson was "no longer gracing the halls of our floor" in the Frick Building. "As I would later learn, he had passed away."

"In January," says Jonathan, "I agreed to an expansion project that placed my new (personal) office in Mr. Thomson's old office. I am beyond delighted to be occupying the work space of a man whom God gifted to leave the PTS community such a wonderful legacy," he notes. "Mr. Thomson was a gracious man who was an agent for God. His kindness will be felt not only in his contribution toward the health and welfare of the Seminary, but also in his encouragement to a young lawyer who also happens to be a pastor, who also happens to be a graduate of his cherished seminary."

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Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
616 North Highland Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
Phone: 412-362-5610



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