

# REMEMBERING SUSAN NELSON



Pittsburgh Theological Seminary former professor the Rev. Dr. Susan Nelson '79 died from a

brain tumor Nov. 4. She was 63.

Nelson spent 22 years at the Seminary and was the Directors' Bicentennial Professor of the Theology and Culture. She left in 2006 to become the vice president of academic affairs and dean at Claremont School of Theology in Claremont, Calif.

She is best remembered for encouraging students, especially women, to think theologically and have the strength to express their opinions aloud. In remembering Professor Nelson, former student Michelle L. Wobrak '02 explained, "She was a gracious lady who taught me much: how to think theologically, how to find my own voice, how to think deeply and how to justify my thoughts not with feelings but with logical argument."

"Susan was right at the center of what was going on at the Seminary," said the Rev. Dr. Byron Jackson, dean of faculty. "She was respected even by those who didn't share her views." She was chosen for important jobs such as heading the self-study for accreditation in 2002.

Nelson received her bachelor's from the University of Rochester, M.Div. from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, and doctorate from Claremont Graduate School. She was an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Nelson wrote numerous articles and two books: *Beyond Servanthood: Christianity and the Liberation of Women* (Rowman and Littlefield, 1989) and *Healing the Broken Heart: Sin, Alienation, and the Gift of Grace* (Chalice, 1997) and co-edited *The Other Side of Sin: Woundedness From the Perspective of the Sinned Against* (State University 2001).

She is survived by her husband, David Lutz of Squirrel Hill and Claremont, Calif.; two daughters, Kathryn Edelman of Swisshelm Park and Christina Phillips of Millersville, Md.; a son James Dunfee of Philadelphia; a step-son, David Lutz, and step-daughter, Gretchen Fues, both of Seattle; and four grandchildren.

A memorial service was held Nov. at Sixth Presbyterian Church, Squirrel Hill. Read more about Nelson's life and the family's journey with this disease on daughter Kathryn's blog (<http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/susannelson>).

During the chapel service Wed., Nov. 10, the Rev. Dr. Andrew Purves, professor of Reformed theology, remembered the life and legacy of Susan Nelson. **Read his comments.**

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary is a graduate professional institution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A). Founded in 1794, the Seminary is located in Pittsburgh, Pa. and approximately 310 students are enrolled yearly in the degree programs. The Seminary prepares leaders who proclaim with great joy God's message of good news in both word and deed. PTS is rooted in the Reformed history of faithfulness to Scripture and commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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