

## STUDENT PASTOR WILL BAKER VALUES THEOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

William Baker has always had a strong sense of call. Pittsburgh born and raised, he attended Clark Memorial Baptist Church with his family. Yet, Will wrestled with his call. After high school he took a few years to discern and attended a community college. During this time he was asked to preach for a Good Friday service.

“It was in that moment that I knew without a doubt this was what I was supposed to do,” he says.

Will enrolled at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Okla., and pursued a degree in New Testament. In his studies he began asking himself the question of why he believed what he believed. Did he only believe because that was how he was raised? Through the pursuit of this question and by engaging intellectually with his faith, Will discovered a love of study. It gave him the tools to explain his beliefs.



While in college, he also met a beautiful strong Christian nursing major who after a few years of dating agreed to be his wife. Following graduation, Will began serving at Mt. Carmel Baptist Church working with the Rev. Barbara Gun. At Mt. Carmel Will was licensed and ordained to preach in 2009.

That same year he enrolled part time in the Seminary’s Master of Divinity program.

“I always knew my studies weren’t done. I still had more questions. My professors at Oral Roberts spoke highly of the New Testament faculty here, and I knew at Pittsburgh Seminary I would be exposed to a broad range of things, like theology and other denominations. I wanted that. I wanted to be forced to think through things and not be indoctrinated in one line of thinking.”

In 2011 Will was called to Mt. Olive Baptist Church. Since starting, Will has focused on housekeeping and bringing in joy. Now the members are shifting the focus toward reaching and building externally, being active in their community. Through this transformative work, PTS has played a role.

“The Seminary not only challenged me, keeping me sharp theologically while engaged in pastoral ministry,” he says, “but it has also allowed the church to define themselves theologically.” Following his time at Seminary Will plans to continue growing the church, participating with God in his church and community, and being a witness in Pittsburgh.

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