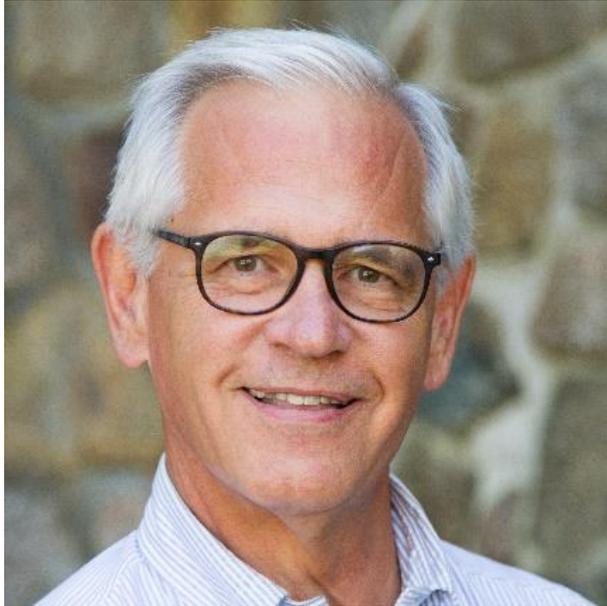


Alumni Spotlight: Jim Pocock (M.Div. '81)



“Some of the most impactful, lifelong relationships I have were formed at GCTS, both with fellow students and with professors.”

Current title: President, Elevate New England

Family: Married for 38 years to Beth, whom I met in what is now called Alumni Hall, where I was the orientation speaker and she was a new student. Our son Nathan and his wife live in Seattle.

Favorite professors: Dick Peace and David Scholer

Favorite class: The Life of Jesus, taught by Gordon Fee

Favorite memory: Playing Sinkball in the library men’s room, a game we invented to break up long boring evenings.

What have you been doing since you left Gordon-Conwell?

I served for 30 years as Senior Pastor for three successive churches in Connecticut, California and Massachusetts. After that I spent a couple of years doing Development work for Gordon College, then got into my current gig.

What are you doing now?

Glad you asked. Five years ago I co-founded a non-profit that helps at-risk urban youth graduate high school and succeed in life. Elevate New England operates in Lowell and Lawrence MA, and what started out small and part time is now my full-time occupation. I chair the Board, raise all the funds, and help the model launch in other struggling US cities.

How has God woven together your Gordon-Conwell education with other life events to bring you to where you are now?

I have lived and served in both chronically poor communities and significantly wealthy ones, and I’ve seen the power of the gospel transform both. That gospel, and the God behind it, I learned about academically and personally at Gordon-Conwell, and developed a lifelong trust in God to do things far greater than my pastoral ability could ever account for.

How has your Gordon-Conwell education served you in your past and current work?

My Gordon-Conwell education opened me to the infinite breadth of the Kingdom of God, where God is right now redeeming absolutely every aspect of creation, not just saving individuals.

What Scholer and Fee and others showed me in the Scriptures, Dick Peace, Dean Borgman and Steve Mott helped me apply practically. At GCTS I discerned a divine calling to a ministry of renewal—of dead or stagnant churches and moribund communities. That call is still confirmed; it's what I'm still doing 39 years later.

What has been Gordon-Conwell's biggest impact/influence?

I developed lifelong relationships at the seminary. I've stayed close to all the professors I've named, as well as others, every one of whom always answered on the first ring, love to hear what I'm doing or what problem I'm facing, and partner with me offering scholarly or research-based advice.

What piece of advice would you give to young alumni who are just entering the working world?

I'd encourage pastors to remember that their people spend 98% of their time NOT in church, and most of that time is at work. It's easy to lose that perspective when your life IS the church. Visit your key people at their workplace. Ask them good questions about their life there. Listen well.

Do you have any links you'd like to share?

Check out my website www.elevatenewengland.org. This is the best model I've ever found for reversing generational poverty—the Kingdom of God in urban America!