

## Alumni Spotlight: Elizabeth Marvel (MACH '15)



**Current Title:** Academic Director of Global Action

**Family:** Husband: Brett, Children: Virginia & Hudson

**Favorite professor:** Dr. Gwenfair Adams

**Favorite class:** C.S. Lewis Life, Works, & Spirituality

**What have you been doing since you left Gordon-Conwell and what work are you doing now?**

After graduating from Gordon-Conwell, I began a PhD program in the History Department at Baylor University. After graduating from Baylor in 2023, I started my current job as the Academic Director for

Global Action, a non-profit working to bring robust theological education to pastors and church leaders in the majority world. Our program is designed for bi-vocational ministers who cannot attend traditional seminaries. I oversee our curriculum and faculty, as well as traveling and teaching in our program. I also teach World History and Women's History courses at Baylor and Truett Seminary.

**What do you love about your work?**

I love getting to travel and meet brothers and sisters in Christ from all over the world. Of course, it's exciting to go to Nairobi and Budapest and see amazing sights and eat amazing food. But my favorite thing by far is going to a worship service or prayer meeting with people I barely know but am immediately close to by virtue of our shared love of Jesus. Working to bring theological education to these men and women is a tremendous gift.

**What are the particular challenges of non-profit work in general and/or in your specific context?**

At times the sheer amount of work that needs to get done can be overwhelming. There are so many needs and so many good ideas about how to meet them but there are never enough dollars or hours to meet every need. Operating within my own limitations and trusting God to care for his church requires renewed faith and submission on a regular basis. He is calling me to faithfulness, not to fix every problem. I can't even fix myself—that's what Jesus does! So I have to work in light of my own need for salvation, which he has so freely given.



## **How has God woven together your Gordon-Conwell education with other life events to bring you to where you are now? How did you come to be doing your current work?**

I went to Gordon-Conwell because it is one of the few seminaries with a master's program in Church History. While I wanted to pursue training as a historian, I wanted to do it in the context of a seminary. I went on to get a PhD in History, but I am now working for a non-profit that provides theological education. So, I need the foundation of biblical and theological training that I received at Gordon-Conwell for what I am doing now. Not only the academic education, but also the pastoral training from Gordon-Conwell is important to oversee the program at Global Action.

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

I care deeply about academic excellence, but I want that excellence to serve the church. The faculty at Gordon-Conwell modeled this so well during my time there and formed the way I understand my own work as a scholar serving the church. At Gordon-Conwell, theological content was matched with spiritual formation, which is what I strive for as I shape the teaching methods and curriculum at Global Action.



## **What piece of advice would you give to young alumni who are considering working in the non-profit sector?**

I often think of C.S. Lewis' comment on work, which I read in my class with Dr. Gwenfair Adams. Lewis said, "If we let ourselves, we shall always be waiting for some distraction or other to end before we can really get down to our work. The only people who achieve much are those who want knowledge so badly that they seek it while the conditions are still unfavorable. Favorable conditions may never come." Non-profit work sometimes has favorable conditions, but often does not. The work is incredibly fulfilling and its impact for the kingdom is easy to see and celebrate. However, it is still work, so most days are spent just getting on with what needs to be done. But that work is still meaningful and valuable, even when it is mundane.

## **Do you have any publications or links to share?**

Learn more about [Global Action](#).