Alumni
GORDON CONWELL

Alumni Spotlight: Jamie Johnson (MACH ’03)

Current title: Dean for Spiritual Life and University Pastor at George Fox University

Family: Wife: Erin, Children: Kincaid, Ethan and Esther

Favorite professor: Dr. Catherine Kroeger & Dr. Paul Lim

Favorite class: Christ in the OT

Favorite memory: Game nights in Bell Hall with our neighbors; prayer gatherings in Dr. Kaiser’s on-campus residence; working grounds with fellow seminarians.

Would you tell us about your role there at George Fox? What all does it entail?

As the University Pastor, I work alongside three other university pastors to provide spiritual formation programming for our students. This includes chapel, retreats, service projects and trips, small groups and discipleship. Additionally, I collaborate with faculty on programmatic elements revolving around the student experience in the classroom.

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

When I entered Gordon-Conwell, my aim was to eventually earn a PhD and teach at a Christian university. I was prepared well for this while studying at Gordon-Conwell and had an opportunity to go straight into a great program in Church History one year after graduation. As my wife Erin and I prepared to relocate across the country, however, we felt as though God was asking us to stay on the North Shore and serve at Gordon College. It was there that I learned my love for working with college students could be experienced not just in the classroom, but in the dorms, on athletic fields, and in chapels. The comprehensive education I received at Gordon-Conwell made me versatile theologically and professionally, and I am so thankful for my time there.

What do you love about the work you do?

College is such a pivotal time for young adults, where preparation for one’s calling and significant identity formation are happening at high speed. Being able to establish rhythms of worship, to train young people in how to engage in worship, to develop in them a sense of the wideness of Christian experience, to invite them into times of serving their neighbors, and so much more, is such a gift. And to be able to do this alongside world-class faculty and academic programs allows for a robust engagement of the whole person.

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What are the particular challenges in your role of ministering to and supporting the faith development of the students and campus community at George Fox?

Today's students are navigating things I didn't have to navigate when I was their age. Easy access to information, often in incomplete yet entertaining modalities (think TikTok), makes grabbing their attention more challenging. There is a decrease in biblical literacy, less involvement in the life of the church, and, in the Pacific NW, a strong disdain for Christianity. All of these things create challenges, though also provide fertile ground for the gospel to take root.

What has been Gordon-Conwell's biggest impact/influence on your role or the way you engage in your role?

One of the greatest things it did for me, outside of the exceptional education I received, was the relationships I developed with men and women from many different denominations and faith traditions, allowing me to see the beauty and necessity of an ecumenical approach to theological education. My work is incredibly reliant on the ecumenical experiences I had at Gordon-Conwell, and I am continually grateful for how it opened me to the beauty of the church worldwide.