

Gardner-Webb University

Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University

Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive

Gardner-Webb Publications

7-21-2016

Divinity Student Values Supportive GWU Faculty and Staff

Office of University Communications

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive>

Divinity Student Values Supportive GWU Faculty and Staff

 webpublish.gardner-webb.edu/newscenter/divinity-student-values-supportive-gwu-faculty-and-staff/

Office of University
Communications

July 21, 2016

Chase Robinson ('16) Discerns Call to Serve in Local Church Ministry

Two weeks after graduating from the School of Divinity at Gardner-Webb University, Chase Robinson ('16) accepted the call to pastor Sandy Plains Baptist Church in Shelby, N.C. He transitioned to the role after serving as the church's youth and children's minister for three years.

"I love being with people and building meaningful relationships," reflected Robinson, who earned a Master of Divinity in Pastoral Studies. "My job gives me great opportunities to do so."

Originally from Vale, N.C., Robinson also completed his undergraduate studies at Gardner-Webb, having earned a Bachelor of Arts in biblical studies with a minor in missions. When he came to the University he knew he was called to do ministry, but was leaning toward missions. "That slowly changed as I started to work for a couple of local churches," he shared. "First was New Bethel Baptist in Lawndale, N.C., and then Sandy Plains Baptist. During that time I fell in love with the local church and local church ministry. I still have a heart for missions, but right now my mission field is just a little closer to home than I thought I would be when I started at Gardner-Webb."

Not only did Robinson discover where God was leading, he was also introduced to a young woman who shared his passion for ministry. During his sophomore year, he met his wife, Mindy, while serving in FOCUS, a campus ministry involving teams of students who lead youth retreats locally and regionally. "Mindy was my FOCUS leader our sophomore year," Robinson recalled. "The next year we were co-leaders. Before we dated, we were blessed with the opportunity to grow as friends and also to lead in a ministry together. It's amazing to think that my partner in that ministry became my partner in life. And she is just that. She supports me, encourages me, and is one of the only people willing to lovingly tell me when she thinks I'm headed down the wrong road."

Robinson chose to continue his studies at GWU School of Divinity because of his experience with the faculty and staff. "My professors were all wonderful, each brought something unique and important to my experience and education," he affirmed. "They knew more than just my name. They knew me as a person. They were invested in me as a person. There were many excellent teachers, encouragers, mentors, and on some level, even friends. That community and atmosphere

is why I decided to stay at Gardner-Webb for graduate school.”

Divinity school helped him examine his beliefs and become grounded in his faith. “Dr. Danny West (professor of preaching and pastoral studies) gave the analogy of a suitcase my first semester of divinity school,” Robinson related. “He said that we all had a theological suitcase. He claimed that he and the rest of the faculty intended on taking that suitcase and dumping the contents on the table, giving us the challenging but extremely rewarding opportunity to pick up each piece and decide what goes back in and what doesn’t. School was that process for me. The classroom has given me a language to communicate my faith and a confidence to share it with others.”

His divinity school experience also helped him make the transition from youth pastor to pastor. “The classes and material we covered helped in a very real way, but I think even more than that, the community helped me,” he assessed. “I was blessed to have Dr. Robert Canoy (School of Divinity dean) as our interim pastor during the transition. His guidance was invaluable. Other professors encouraged me, answered my questions, and gave me much needed advice and direction. Most of all, I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that I can continue to come to them for direction and encouragement for years to come.”