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Communications

June 7, 2016

In 2007, basketball standout Chris Gash ('16) graduated from Gardner-Webb University with a degree in psychology. A leader on the court and a role model for his teammates, he headed to Orange, Calif., for a coaching job. A year later, however, his convictions brought him home to Kingstown, N.C.

Chris Gash and his wife, Shareece Fluellen Gash, and their children Paul Christopher Gash II and Skylar Giselle Gash

“I felt the call to preach when I was 17. I moved back to be closer to family and to serve my community,” Gash affirmed. “I do not believe in individual success. Anyone, who has been, is now, or will be successful, does so because of the help of others. Kingstown sowed enormously into me. It was only right that I went back to say thanks through my services. I am grateful for many of the citizens in that great town for their loving support and the structure they provided in my life.”

Choosing to enroll in the GWU School of Divinity was a “no-brainer,” he assessed. “When I was at Gardner-Webb for my undergraduate degree, my youth pastor was enrolled in the divinity program, and my pastor had just finished up. I would hear them speak highly of the program during church services.”

Gash serves as associate pastor at his church and also works for the Department of Social Services. He felt his studies would help in both areas. “I knew I needed to make sure I was properly educated,” Gash offered. “The divinity school offered a concentration in pastoral care and counseling. I felt that gaining additional biblical, theological, and historical knowledge would be a great asset. In addition, having the opportunity to go further in depth with my studies concerning relational skills would help in ministry and at the Department of Social Services.”

Through his classes, he learned how to help people in crisis situations. “Many times when emergencies take place we are limited as to what we can do,” he explained. “School has taught me meaningful information on how to aid individuals who experience a crisis. In addition, I have learned not to be so judgmental of individuals and their situations. I believe we as a human race are so quick to stereotype and force our beliefs on others. God is bigger than our beliefs, bank accounts, influence, education, and family ties. We are of equal importance in God’s eyes.”

Gash also had an opportunity to explore different cultures when he took an intercultural studies class that included traveling to eight countries in Southeast Asia. “I think it is important to understand that even in all of the differences we have as a human race, we are equally similar,” he asserted. “The trip allowed me to see different forms and styles of politics, religion, and social dynamics.”

While completing his studies in the School of Divinity, Gash has worked and served in a variety of capacities—foster care worker, youth pastor, assistant pastor, coach, and town councilman. He is also a husband and a father of two. “My classes have empowered me in every field,” he affirmed. “Professors in the School of Divinity train individuals to attempt to see God in everything we do. I value my education, and I value the community togetherness. I am thankful that I was able to establish meaningful relationships with professors and fellow students. I see myself serving in ministry wherever God places me. I am excited to see what God has in store.”