

An Example of Public and Church Leadership

At age 23, the Rev. Clementa Pinckney won his first election to public office in the South Carolina General Assembly. When he was assassinated in June 2015, he was in his fifth year leading the historic Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston.

Pinckney dedicated his life to a ministry that served both the public and the church. At the time of his death, he was working on his thesis for the Doctor of Ministry program at Wesley Theological Seminary.

Wesley's mission involves equipping faith leaders to speak prophetically in the public square. The events that followed Pinckney's assassination are examples of the impact a prophetic leader can have. From President Obama delivering the eulogy at the funeral to Confederate flags falling across the South, Pinckney's life inspired change. The country is left longing for more pastors like him.

"He embodied the idea that our Christian faith demands deeds and not just words; that the 'sweet hour of prayer' actually lasts the whole week long – that to put our faith in action is more than individual salvation, it's about our collective salvation," said Obama of Pinckney.

Wesley Theological Seminary has developed a Doctor of Ministry concentrated on exploring the intersection between public life and church leadership. This concentration within the Doctor of Ministry Degree is focused to encapsulate Wesley's mission and, we hope, will raise up leaders to continue Pinckney's legacy.

The public engagement track offers you the opportunity to engage a variety of theologians, public officials and church leaders in Washington, D.C. This is a unique opportunity for individuals to develop public leadership skills informed by prophetic exegesis from biblical and community resources.