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Forum for Theological Exploration (FTE) Announces the Departure of its Vice President of Strategic Initiatives

ATLANTA (June 21, 2019) --- The Forum for Theological Exploration (FTE) announces the departure of Matthew Wesley Williams, vice president of strategic initiatives, with deep gratitude for his leadership.

After 15 years of service and impactful leadership, Williams will assume the role of interim president at the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) in Atlanta upon the retirement of current President, Dr. Edward L. Wheeler. A graduate of ITC and an ordained Presbyterian Elder, Williams will begin his transition into the role on July 10, 2019.

"I am eternally grateful for the beloved mentors, colleagues and friends I've gained during my time at FTE," said Williams. "Over the years, this cherished organization has been an incubator for my own leadership and I have grown so much personally and professionally because of it. Being blessed with the opportunity to play a role in the vocational development of so many gifted, young leaders in the church and the academy is something I will always be proud of."

During his tenure at FTE, Williams led initiatives in recruitment and leadership development for young adults and emerging scholars of color pursuing vocations of pastoral ministry and scholarship. As vice president of strategic initiatives, he was instrumental in restructuring FTE's operations and implementing new initiatives to help FTE be more responsive in a rapidly changing religious landscape.

"Matthew's leadership and strategic mindset over the years has been a tremendous gift to FTE," said FTE President Stephen Lewis. "His ability to bring a deeper analysis around our initiatives, constituent base and goals has truly helped the organization grow and be more aligned with its mission."

Williams' leadership in organizational strategy also helped revitalize FTE's 50-year-old doctoral fellowship program for underrepresented PhD students pursuing degrees in religion, bible and theology. In addition to his work around FTE's doctoral initiatives, he established an institutional doctoral network. After studying the challenges theological schools and their executives encounter, Williams created the network to train and develop their capacity to lead change and address barriers to diversity in higher education.

"I am confident Matthew will bring to ITC competencies in institutional strategy and care that will help ITC imagine a more hopeful future for itself and its constituents," continued Lewis. "On behalf of the FTE staff and Board of Trustees, I would like to thank Matthew for his many years of service, contributions and invaluable leadership. We wish him well on his new and exciting journey at ITC."

About Forum for Theological Exploration

The Forum for Theological Exploration is committed to cultivating diverse young adults to be faithful, wise and courageous leaders for the church and the academy. FTE provides resources and a forum for young adults and students to explore their purpose and call to pastoral ministry and teaching. For more information, visit fteleaders.org.

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