

October 15, 2012

To whom it may concern,

I attended Emmanuel from 2008-2009. During this time my father committed suicide. It was a difficult time for me to start a rigorous Master's program. I would not have been able to accomplish the work that I did (3.9 GPA), had it not been for the faithful support and daily affirmation of Dr. Christopher Rollston.

The first thing I noticed about Dr. Rollston was his rigorous academic honesty and ability to wrestle with the text of scripture, tempered by a deep faithfulness to upholding the importance of preaching and teaching in churches and other ministry settings. In his Old Testament Introduction course we daily encountered difficult passages that stretched some students' faith. Dr. Rollston always made sure to stop and talk about the practical pastoral aspects of, for instance, teaching a text such as Psalm 137:9<sup>2</sup> to a congregation, however, he was always open to constructive dialog, including alternate hermeneutical and kerygmatic strategies.

The most surprising aspect of Dr. Rollston's teaching style was his deep commitment to the personal health and well-being of his students. Dr. Rollston's door was always open, and I was able to regularly stop in after class, or drop in unannounced at other times.<sup>3</sup> He regularly asked me about how I was dealing with the subject matter. We talked at length about the practical aspects of confessional faith with regards to the academy. But most importantly, he asked me how I was dealing with my father's death and continued to check in with me throughout the following years. He was a great support and mentor during this tumultuous time. I am forever grateful for this.

Matthew Worsfold