



DREW UNIVERSITY

The Theological School
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To Whom It May Concern:

Jonathan Esterman has been a doctoral student of mine since the summer of 2016. He enrolled in the Semiotics and Future Studies cohort at Portland Seminary, and excelled in his mastery of post-critical studies and biblical semiotics. He did seminal work in the academic arena, all the while showing his colleagues in the program the wise and true ways of bridging the two testaments. He impressed everyone by his knowledge of Judaism. He is quiet and unassuming, but when called upon, is always ready to make an astute and perfectly pitched comment to keep the conversation going, not close it down.

As the Lead Mentor of this program, I have had the pleasure to study with Jonathan from 2016 to 2019 and found him to be an exceptional student, a gifted semiotician and skilled communicator, as well as an excellent educator. He has a brilliant and quick-thinking mind, and boasts the gifts of a natural story-teller and story-catcher. He writes with a distinctive voice and vision. He would be an asset to any team that seeks to grow and succeed.

His dissertational work on Jewish-Christian Relations is an essential starting point to the roadmap of improving inter-religious dialogue and tolerance. I look forward to see his disciplined and daring work come to fruition. Jonathan's engagement in the cohort reflects the Jewish tradition of PaRDeS within a harmonic mandorla concept. His mission of building intra- and inter-religious bridges of respect and understanding is an essential metaphor and mission that I fully endorse and embrace.

If you have any further questions about his candidacy for your position, feel free to contact me at my personal email (lenisweet@aol.com) or my home phone 360.376.5131.

Sincerely,

Leonard I. Sweet

Visiting Distinguished Professor, George Fox University
E. Stanley Jones Professor Emeritus, Drew University
Charles Wesley Senior Professor of Doctoral Studies, Evangelical Seminary
Distinguished Visiting Professor, Tabor College