

Rev. Catherine E. Williams, Ph.D.

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Curriculum Vitae

Research Interests

The synergistic relationship between preaching and music, particularly in Christian communities of color. Expanding approaches to preaching and worship by decentering traditional, Euro-centric approaches to preaching, giving them equal merit with preaching styles and standards valued in countries where Christianity is burgeoning.

Education

Doctor of Philosophy: Practical Theology – Homiletics (PhD)

Dissertation: “Toward a Decolonial Homiletic: In Search of a Local Preaching Voice for Trinidad and Tobago”
2017 – Princeton Theological Seminary | Princeton, NJ

Master of Divinity (MDiv)

2010 – Palmer Theological Seminary | St. Davids, PA

Bachelor of Music (BMus)

Summa Cum Laude – 1990 – Westminster Choir College | Princeton, NJ

Teaching Experience

LANCASTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY | Lancaster, PA

Assistant Professor of Preaching and Worship, Director of Chapel Worship (2017 – Present)

Teach classes in homiletics and worship in both face-to-face and hybrid online modalities. Supervise teams of students and alumni who plan and implement weekly chapel services.

LEXINGTON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY | Lexington, KY

Adjunct Professor of Preaching and Worship (2021 – Present)

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY | Princeton, NJ (2012 – 2017)

Graduate Instructor

Teaching Fellow

Teaching Assistant

PALMER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY | St. Davids, PA (2007 – 2010)

Adjunct Professor

Teaching Assistant

WESTMINSTER CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC | Princeton, NJ and Lawrenceville, NJ (1990 – 1994)

Branch Director

Piano Instructor

Teaching Experience, continued

Preaching and Worship Courses

1. Introduction to Preaching
 2. Introduction to Worship
 3. Proclamation and Song
 4. The Arts in Black Worship
 5. Preaching in Diverse Contexts
 6. Musical Resources for the Congregation
 7. The Power of Music in Worship
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Publications

Monograph

Assist Me to Proclaim: The Powerful Partnership of Preaching and Music. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, under contract.

Articles and Book Chapters

- “Pastor and Musician: Liturgical Collaborators.” In *Sundays and Seasons: Year C 2025*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, forthcoming.
- “Between Text and Sermon: John 6:51–58.” *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 77, no. 4 (October 2023): 372-374. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00209643231183425>
- “Proclamation: In Many and Various Ways.” *Theology Today* 79, no. 1 (March 2022): 10-16. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00405736211065461>
- “Sermon and Song: A Musically Integrative Homiletic.” *Yale Journal of Music and Religion* 7, no. 2 (December 2021): Article 4, 82-97. <https://doi.org/10.17132/2377-231X.1194>
- “Standin’ in the Need of Prayer: June 21-27.” In *Upper Room Disciplines 2021*. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2020.
- “Preaching and Singing: Partners in the Dance of Worship.” *Touchstone: Theology Shaping Witness* 38, no. 2 (June 2020): 32-41.
- “Trinidad & Tobago Preaching: The Gospel According to Calypso.” In *The Future Shape of Christian Proclamation: What the Global South Can Teach Us About Preaching*, edited by Cleophus LaRue & Luis Nascimento. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2020: 116-135.
- “Martin Luther King, Jr. Homily Notes.” *Ecumenical Trends* 49, no. 1 (January/February 2020): 12-14.
- “Eucharist: The Embrace of Liturgy and Mission.” *Witness: The Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education* 24 (2010): 1-18.

Select Book Reviews

- “Tending the Tree of Life: Preaching and Worship through Reproductive Loss and Adoption by Richard W. Voelz.” *Homiletic: The Journal of the Academy of Homiletics* 43, no. 2 (Nov. 20, 2018): 56-57.
- “New Songs of Celebration Render: Congregational Song in the 21st Century by C. Michael Hawn.” *The Hymn: A Journal of Congregational Song* 69, no. 3 (Summer 2018): 37-38.
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Presentations and Invited Talks

2023. "Proclamation and Song: A Framework for Spiritual Care and Public Discourse," Bethany Theological Seminary virtual lecture, April.
2023. "The Treasure Chest of Black Hymnody," Messiah University Black History Month lecture, Mechanicsburg, PA. February.
2023. "Preach Less, Sing More: A Faithful Response to Congregational Stress" Lancaster Seminary Return and Learn alumni seminar, Lancaster, PA, January.
2023. "Funeral Sermons and the Preacher's Theology of Death" Abundant Life Fellowship Ministers Colloquium, Edgewater Park, NJ, January.
2022. "Proclamation and Song: Widening the Hermeneutical Center in Homiletical Pedagogy" Academy of Homiletics Annual meeting, Louisville, KY, December.
2022. "My Times are In Your Hand," sermon at Mt. Gretna Bible Festival at historic Mt. Gretna Tabernacle, Mt. Gretna, PA, June.
2021. "Spirit, Song, and Sermon: A Nexus of Pastoral Care for Black Trauma" Christian Congregational Music: Local and Global Perspectives Conference, Oxford, England, Virtual Meeting, July-August.
2021. "Hymns at the Pulpit," Lancaster UCC Association Ministerium virtual Lenten planning workshop, Lancaster, PA, February.
2020. "Worship as Pastoral Care in Scripture, Sermon, and Song," RISE Together National Conference, Atlanta, GA, March.
2020. "Song, Spirit, and Sermon: A Nexus of Pastoral Care for Black Trauma" Academy of Homiletics, Virtual Meeting, December.
2019. "Preaching and Singing: Partners in the Dance of Worship" Academy of Homiletics Annual meeting, New Brunswick, NJ, December.
2019. "Preaching Songs and Singing Preachers: A Decolonial Approach to Worship." Christian Congregational Music: Local and Global Perspectives Conference, Oxford, England, August.
2019. "The Art of Preaching." United Methodist Eastern Pennsylvania Minister's Seminar. Reading, PA, April.
2019. "Lenten Worship Planning." United Church of Christ Penn Central Conference ministers' workshop, Harrisburg, PA, January.
2018. "Refreshing Preaching." United Church of Christ Clergy Ministerium workshop, Lebanon, PA, October.
2018. "Songs in the Key of Protest: Learning from the Calypsonians," The Hymn Society of the US and Canada Annual Conference, St. Louis, MO, July.
2016. "The Practical Theologian as Broker of Homiletical Practices in the Classroom," Practical Theology Group, AAR/SBL, San Antonio, TX, November.
2016. Respondent for three academic papers at United Methodist Women of Color Scholars meeting, AAR/SBL, San Antonio, TX, November.
2016. "Toward a Decolonial Homiletic," Koinonia Forum 2016, *The Life of the Mind: Worship and Learning*, Princeton, NJ, February.
2015. "A Calypso-Guided Search for a Local Preaching Voice in Trinidad and Tobago," Academy of Homiletics Annual Meeting, Nashville, TN, December.
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Continuing Education

Lancaster Theological Seminary. "Trauma-Informed Pedagogy." 2021.

Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion. "2021-22 Early Career Workshop for Faculty in Theological Schools." July 2021 – April 2022.

Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion. "Design-Teach Online Workshop." May 2018 – May 2019.

Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion. "Forum for Theological Education Doctoral Fellows Workshop." October 2017.

Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference. Forum for Theological Education Doctoral Student Cohort. February 2017.

Louisville Institute. "Invitational Winter Seminar for Grant Recipients." January 2017.

Fellowships and Honors

Forum for Theological Education Doctoral Fellow. 2016 – 2017.

Honorary Louisville Institute Dissertation Fellow. 2016 – 2017.

United Methodist Women of Color Scholar. 2014 – 2016.

Palmer Theological Seminary presidential scholar, Inter-Seminary Consortium. 2009.

Delta Eta Chapter of Pi Kappa Lambda, National Music Honor Society. 1990.

Academic Service

Consultant, Compelling Preaching Coordination Program, Calvin Institute of Christian Worship. 2021 – Present.

Editorial Review Board, *Journal of Black Women and Religious Cultures*. 2021 – Present.

Nominations Committee Member, Academy of Homiletics. 2022 – Present.

Editorial Board, *Homiletic*, peer-reviewed journal sponsored by the Academy of Homiletics. 2023 – Present.

Ministerial Service

First Clergy Delegate, Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, United Methodist Northeast Jurisdictional Conference. 2022 and 2024.

Interim Pastor of Pastoral Care, Grandview United Methodist Church. June – August 2019.

United Methodist Elder in full connection, Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. Ordained 2017.

Extension Minister, endorsed by the United Methodist Endorsing Agency for campus ministry at Lancaster Theological Seminary. 2017.

Associate Pastor of Pastoral Care, Princeton United Methodist Church. 2015 – 2017.

Assistant Pastor, Princeton United Methodist Church. 2010 – 2014.

Administrative Pastor, Chambers United Methodist Church. 2016 – 2017.

Member, Princeton Clergy Association. 2011 – 2017.

Pastoral Assistant, Abundant Life Fellowship Church. 2003 – 2007.

Professional Affiliations

Academy of Homiletics, 2015 – Present.

American Academy of Religion, 2012 – Present.

The Hymn Society of the United States and Canada, 2011 – Present.