

Leah T. Gunning Francis, Ph.D.
Eden Theological Seminary
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EDUCATION

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL

Doctor of Philosophy in Christian Education and Congregational Studies, May 2009

Dissertation: *Beyond Band-Aids and Bootstraps: Toward a Womanist Vision of Christian Education as Social Transformation*

Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, GA

Master of Divinity, 2001

Concentration in Christian Education and Pastoral Care

Recipient of the *G. Ray Jordan Award* in recognition of ministerial promise as demonstrated through excellence in integrating academic study with constructive leadership and service.

Hampton University, Hampton, VA

Bachelor of Science, 1993

Major: Marketing

Marketing intern (Summer, 1990-93), Sun Company, through the INROADS internship and professional development program.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Eden Theological Seminary

Associate Dean for Contextual Education, July 2014-

Assistant Professor of Christian Education, July 2008-

Courses: Theology and the Practices of Ministry (required), A Call to Oneness: A Practical Theology of Reconciliation, Teens and Tweens: Ministry with Youth in Church and Community, Sister Outsider?: Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Issues for Women in Ministry, Fanning the Flame: Children, Youth and the Faith that Fuels Their Lives, and Educating for Justice and Peace

Methodist School of Ohio

Instructor of Practical Theology and Youth Ministry (2005-06), Adjunct Professor 2007

Courses: Intergenerational Ministries, Theology and Practices of Ministry, Christian Education in the Urban Church and Adolescent World

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

Teaching Assistant (2002-2004)

Courses: Loss and Grief, Practice of Ministry, Premarital, Marital and Family Counseling in Pastoral Care (Lecturer), and Christian Education in the African American Experience (Lecturer)

Candler School of Theology, Emory University

Youth Theological Initiative

Summer Instructor (2002)

Course: The Whole People of God: Caring for Mind, Body and Spirit as Practical Theology

PUBLICATIONS

Ferguson and Faith: An Awakening of Leadership and Community to Change the World, Chalice Press, Forthcoming in July 2015.

Transformative Mentoring as Redemptive Community in Educating for Redemptive Community, edited by Denise Janssen, Wipf & Stock Publishers, Forthcoming in 2016.

Bible Commentary, John 8:12 and 8:21 in *Feasting on the Gospels*, Westminster John Knox Press, March 2015

ECCLESIAL EXPERIENCE

Brice United Methodist Church, Brice, OH

Pastor of Adult Discipleship, 2004-2008

Assisted the Senior Pastor in providing pastoral leadership for our congregation to include, but not limited to, preaching, education, outreach, pastoral care and hospitality.

Sherman United Methodist Church, Evanston, IL

Associate Pastor, 2002-2004

Provided pastoral leadership for the congregation through preaching, teaching, worship design, counseling and leadership training.

St. Timothy United Methodist Church, Stone Mountain, GA

Director of Christian Education, 2000-2001

Provided pastoral leadership for the church's educational ministry through the development and implementation of holistic programs that sought to meet the spiritual, intellectual and physical needs of this multicultural congregation and community.

Ousley United Methodist Church, Lithonia, GA

Student Minister, 1999-2000

Assisted the pastor with the congregational transition through worship leadership, counseling, preaching and teaching.

CORPORATE EXPERIENCE

General Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist Church, Atlanta, GA

Training Coordinator and Facilitator, 1999

Staff Coordinator, spiritual director and facilitator for preparing US 2's,

Mission Interns, Summer Interns and World Missionaries for leadership and service in domestic and international mission fields. Developed and implemented leadership training sessions, organized spiritual retreats, and counseled missionaries.

Aetna US Healthcare, Blue Bell, PA

Senior Account Executive, 1997-1998

Maintained existing and recruited new corporate health insurance accounts for the retiree health benefits division. Collaborated with active employee account executives to develop marketing strategies for our clients. Delivered formal presentations to corporate executives and retired employees. Corporate clients ranged from 20-4,000 retirees.

Marketing Representative, 1994-1996

Corporate liaison to government and community initiatives for the promotion of the statewide Children's Health Insurance Program. Developed and executed promotional strategies and delivered formal presentations to community and organizational leaders.

SELECTED ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

Young Black Males and the Hope for Survival in the Age of Michael Brown, Trayvon Martin and Jarvis Jones – Guest Lecturer, Doane College, Lincoln, NE, October 20, 2014

The Power of Story: (En)Countering Narrative and Risk in the Age of Trayvon Martin – Eden Seminary, Spring Convocation Brugemann and Kulenkamp Lecturer, April 23, 2014

*These A**holes, They Always Get Away: Young Black Men and the Hope for Survival in the Age of Trayvon Martin* – Association of Practical Theology at Vanderbilt University, Nashville TN, March 29, 2014

Foundations for Ethical Leadership – Guest Lecturer for the John B. Ervin Scholars Program at Washington University, St. Louis, MO, January 14, 2012

Roots, Shoots and Fruits: Issues in Faith Formation – Guest lecturer for the Southern Illinois Conference's annual Christian Education Training, Columbia, IL, March 12, 2011.

Christian Education and the Contemporary Black Church – Three day guest lecturer for the Missouri Annual Conference Meeting of the AME Church, St. Louis, MO, October 27-29, 2010.

A Call to Oneness: Reflections on a Practical-Theological Approach to 'Bridging' the Academy and Faith Communities – Paper presentation at the Association of Practical Theology Biennial Meeting, Boston, MA, April 10, 2010.

If it Wasn't for the Women: St. Louis Women and the Civil Rights Movement – Keynote Address for the St. Louis Art Museum's MLK Commemorative Service, January 15, 2010

Beloved Disciples Building Beloved Community: Christian Education as Formation and Transformation – Guest lecturer for the Beloved Community Conference, St. Louis, MO, November 6, 2009.

Ease on Down the Road: Transformation at the Intersection – Guest Lecturer for the Association of Clinical Pastoral Educators' annual meeting, St. Louis, MO, July 9, 2009.

Telling the Story(ies): Narrative and Faith Formation – Guest Lecturer for the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ annual Christian Education training event, Fort Atkinson, WI, March 21, 2009

SELECTED CHURCH CLASSES/WORKSHOPS

The Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, Regional Assembly – Guest lecturer, October 12, 2014

Christ Church Episcopal, St. Louis, MO – Lecture on the Toy Gun Buy Back Initiative, May 18, 2014

Christ Lutheran Church, Webster Groves, MO - Guest Sunday School lecturer on Children and Christian Education, October 21, 2012

Antioch Baptist Church, St. Louis, MO – Christian Education Workshop, July 9, 2011

First Congregational UCC, Webster Groves, MO- Adult Sunday School Class on Faith and Politics, April 10, 2011

First Presbyterian Church, Kirkwood, MO- Adult Sunday School Class on Youth and Spirituality, March 13, 2011

St. Paul UCC, Evansville, IN – Christian Education Workshop, October, 30, 2010

SELECTED CHURCH CLASSES/WORKSHOPS (cont' d.)

Webster Groves Presbyterian Church, Webster Groves, MO – Adult Sunday School Class on Youth Spirituality (3 weeks), September 2010

Central Baptist Church, St. Louis, MO – Panelist and Guest Speaker for Women’s Retreat, July 9-10, 2010

Shalom Church City of Peace, Florissant, MO – Christian Education Workshop for Leadership Training Day, March 20, 2010

SELECTED GUEST PREACHING

Second Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, MO – September 14, 2014

First Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, MO – January 19, 2014

Christ UCC, Belleville, IL- Community Thanksgiving Service, November 18, 2012

Eden Theological Seminary, Webster Groves, MO – Chapel – October 13, 2011

New Northside Baptist Church, St. Louis, MO – July 17, 2011

Antioch Baptist Church, St. Louis, MO – July 10, 2011

Washington Tabernacle Baptist Church, St. Louis, MO – May 8, 2011

Pilgrim UCC, St. Louis, MO – Joint MLK Service – January 16, 2011

Calvary Missionary Baptist Church, St. Louis, MO – November 21, 2010

Washington Tabernacle Baptist Church, St. Louis, MO – August 15, 2010

Sherman United Methodist Church, Evanston, IL – May 23, 2010

New Sunny Mount Baptist Church, St. Louis, MO – April 18, 2010

Cote Brilliance Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, MO – March 21, 2010

Unity United Methodist Church, Webster Groves, MO – December 27, 2009

Eden Theological Seminary, Webster Groves, MO – Chapel – September 28, 2009

Centennial Christian Church (DOC), St. Louis, MO – August 2, 2009

First United Methodist Church, Webster Groves, MO – Good Friday – April 10, 2009

St. John’s UCC, St. Louis, MO – February 8, 2009

Good Shepherd United Methodist Church, Willingboro, NJ - September 14, 2008

FELLOWSHIPS, HONORS AND AWARDS

Summer Fellowship for Pre-Tenure Workshop for Theological School Faculty, Wabash Center, 2013

Engaged Scholars Fellow, Congregational Studies Fellowship, 2012-2013

Pre-Tenure Workshop for Theological School Faculty, Wabash Center, 2012-2013

The Fund for Theological Education, Doctoral Scholar, 2001-2004

Women of Color Scholar, United Methodist Church, 2001-2004

American Bible Society Christian Education Award, 2001

Georgia House of Representatives, Guest Chaplain, 2001

Middle East Travel Seminar, Participant, 2000

United Methodist Seminary Award, 2000

United Methodist Crusade Scholar Award, 1999

United Methodist Foundation Scholar Award, 1998

PROFESSIONAL/ACADEMIC SERVICE

Board of Directors, Chair of Academic Disciplines for Religious Education Association, 2012-

Editorial Board, Journal of Childhood and Religion, 2010-

Workshop Assessor, Fund for Theological Education, 2010

Chair, Continuing Education Committee, Eden Seminary, 2009-

Admissions Committee, Eden Seminary, 2008-

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND AFFILIATIONS

Association of Professors and Researchers in Religious Education

The American Academy of Religion

The Association of Practical Theology

