

Rev. Katrina Jessica Olson

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education

PhD in Homiletics and Liturgics

2022

Vanderbilt University | Graduate Department of Religion

Advisor: Dr. John S. McClure

Minor: Feminist Practical Theology -- Advisor: Dr. Bonnie Miller-McLemore

Dissertation: *Worship Wider, Worship Deeper: Coorienting Relationship in the Christian Imagination*

In this dissertation, I use the social developmental model of coorientation to explore all elements of worship. By creating a tool that is both evaluative and constructive, I propose a method for examining reciprocal formation occurring in worshipping bodies. Doing so not only exposes limiting or harmful patterns to remove or rework, but also shows how to move toward more inclusive and thoughtful worship and preaching. I contend that this is possible by paying careful attention to multifaceted role-taking rooted in scriptural witness. As a result, this model enhances communication on both a vertical and horizontal axis by mapping worship's embodied imagination space, offering greater opportunities to deepen our relationships with God, with others, and with ourselves.

Master of Arts

2020

Vanderbilt University | Graduate Department of Religion

Master of Theology in Worship

2016

Calvin Theological Seminary

Advisor: Dr. John D. Witvliet

Thesis Project: "Calvin's Eucharistic Theology: An Encouragement to the Weak"

Master of Divinity

2016

Calvin Theological Seminary

Bachelor of Music with Honors in Education

2006

The University of Western Ontario

teaching experience

Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkeley, CA

2022-current

Visiting Assistant Professor of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology

- Introduction to Homiletics
- Introduction to Pastoral Theology and Care
- Embodied Homiletics: Exploring the Preacher's Intersectional Identity
- Preaching Within Suffering Worlds
- *Specialized Reading Course*: Cultivating a Deep Green Faith in Urban Episcopal Communities

Lexington Theological Seminary, Lexington, KY

2024

Adjunct Instructor

- The Two P's of Seminary: Prayer and Praxis

Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, TX

2021–2022

Visiting Instructor (in conjunction with Vanderbilt University's *Theology and Practice Fellowship*)

- Introduction to Preaching
- Worship Wider, Worship Deeper

Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN

2017–2020

Teaching Assistant

- History of Global Christianities II
- Collaborative Preaching
- Oratory and Rhetoric for Proclamation

..... **publications**

Transformative Preaching and Worship: A Strategic Practical Theology for Developing the Christian Imagination. T&T Clark, 2026.

Chapters and Articles

“Preaching to Dusty Selves: Embracing the Truth of Ash Wednesday as a Framework to Generate Eco-Empathy in Every Season.” In *Prophetic Preaching for a Planet in Peril*, ed. by Leah Schade and HyeRan Kim-Cragg. *UNDER CONTRACT with Cascade*, 2027.

“The Beating Heart of Preaching: Claiming a Loving Authority that Cultivates Interdependent Community.” In *Re-Mixing Homiletics: Essays in Honor of John McClure*, ed. by Chelsea Yarborough and Richard Voelz. *UNDER CONTRACT with Pickwick Publications*, 2027.

“Considering the Social Action within Preaching: Reading 1 Samuel 3 through the Lens of G. H. Mead and H. R. Niebuhr.” *Homiletic*, 46, no.1 (June 2021): 40-52.

Book Reviews

“Stand-Up Preaching: Homiletical Insights from Contemporary Comedians” & “Humor Us! Preaching and the Power of the Comic Spirit.” *Interpretation* 79, no. 1 (January 2025): 102-103.

“Conversations about Divine Mystery: Essays in Honor of Gail Ramshaw.” *Homiletic* 48, no. 2 (December 2023): 60-61.

“Work in Worship: Reconnecting Our Labor and Liturgy.” *Worship* vol. 97 (April 2023): 184-86.

“Witness at the Cross: A Beginner’s Guide to Holy Friday.” *Homiletic* 47, no. 1 (June 2022): 48.

“Pixilated Practices: Media, Ritual, and Identity.” *Homiletic* 46, no. 1 (June 2021): 97-98.

“Preaching God’s Grand Drama: A Biblical-Theological Approach.” *Homiletic* 45, no. 1 (June 2020): 25-26.

“Religion Online: How Digital Technology is Changing the Way We Worship and Pray.” *Homiletic* 44, no.2 (December 2019): 47-48.

..... presentations

- "Behind the Pulpit: Parsing the Communicative Place of the Preacher's Body"
Academy of Homiletics 2025
- "Preaching to Dusty Selves: Generating Eco-Empathy Through Embodiment"
Academy of Homiletics 2023
- "Worship Wider, Worship Deeper: Coorienting Relationship in the Christian Imagination"
North American Academy of Liturgy 2023
- "Experimenting with *Ungrading*: Reflections on a Collaborative Practical Theology Classroom"
Academy of Homiletics 2022
- "Hearing God's Voice: How Preaching Can Construct Narratives About the Other with the Other"
Societas Homiletica 2022
- "Coming Together: How Language Shapes Worship's Collective Imagination"
Christian Scholar's Conference at Lipscomb University 2021
- "Considering the Social Action of Preaching: Reaching 1 Samuel 3 Through the Lens of G. H. Mead and H. R. Niebuhr"
Academy of Homiletics 2020
- "From Knowledge About Practice to Practical Understanding: Feminist Pedagogy in the Homiletical Classroom"
Academy of Homiletics 2018
- "Preaching in an Age of Alternative Facts: Communally Embodying Paradigms of Truth"
Christian Scholar's Conference at Lipscomb University 2018

..... fellowships & awards

- Early Career Theological School Faculty Workshop** 2025
Wabash Center
A competitive one-year program where participants explore their vocations as theological educators to inform and enhance their teaching. The goals include nurturing an authentic identity that contributes to communal sustainability and flourishing.
- Bettye Ford Award** 2022
Vanderbilt University
This award goes each year to a Graduate Department of Religion student who has contributed to the common life of students in the graduate program, informally through personal and relational means of support and advocacy, or formally through coordinating student activities, or by service on committees or student government.
- Theology and Practice Fellowship** 2016–2022
Vanderbilt University
This multi-disciplinary program brought Ph.D. students together to equip them as scholars and teachers of people preparing for ministry in three modes: (1) two coursework seminars: *Practical Theology, Theological Education and Religion in a Global Context* and *Research in Theology and Practice*;

(2) monthly colloquy meetings where fellows discuss topics and listen to speakers to strengthen vocational skills; and (3) teaching as a visiting instructor at partnered theological schools.

Scholarships

Calvin Theological Seminary

- John & Grace Wagenveld Memorial Scholarship 2015
- Lisa VanderWal Scholarship 2014–2015
- Van Hamersveld Scholarship for Women 2013–2015

Biblical Scholar Award in Old Testament

2013

Western Theological Seminary

.....certificates & training

Homiletical Peer Coaching Certificate

2021

Vanderbilt University

A three-week intensive course which equips participants with co-operative coaching skills for homiletics. This method works on incorporating the preacher into the evaluative process of their own sermons in both one-on-one sessions with a coach as well as in groups. The certificate trains both in theory as well as in practice through sessions assessing coaching skills.

Building Racial Equity: Foundations Seminar

2019

Race Forward: The Center for Racial Justice Innovation

A two-day training workshop focused on building racial equity within institutions by creating common language, offering tools for internal analysis, differentiating levels of racial discourse and interaction, and identifying steps to move towards both justice and equality.

Teaching Humanities Certificate

2019

Vanderbilt University

A two-week intensive seminar that combined both pedagogical theory and practice aimed at equipping educators who teach within the humanities.

Women and Gender Studies Certificate

2018

Vanderbilt University

Core courses included feminist theory and feminist pedagogy and electives focused on religious-feminist themes.

.....affiliations

Ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament

2022

Reformed Church in America

Academic Organizations

- Academy of Homiletics
- North American Academy of Liturgy
- American Academy of Religion

.....ministry & service

Sermon Coach

2025–current

Compelling Preaching for a Climate-Changed World Project

In collaboration with The BTS Center, Creation Justice Ministries, and Lexington Theological Seminary, preachers gather monthly to discuss each other's ecologically focused sermons and receive coaching.

Leadership Development Team

2023–current

City Classis, Reformed Church in America

Itinerant Parish Preaching and Worship Leadership

2012–current

Worship Pastor

2006–2015

Westwood Christian Reformed Church

Planned all aspects of both a traditional and contemporary worship service each Sunday.

Recruited, organized, and led rehearsal for all musicians, audio-visual technicians, liturgists, dancers, actors, and any additional artists for each service. Additionally, oversaw the Worship Leadership Team, prepared devotionals, created and maintained all visual arts and displays, and acted as a liaison to guest preachers. Approximately one quarter of the time in this position was intentionally left open to provide flexibility to meet various needs of church ministry. This included developing prayer ministry, teaching adult education, leading youth ministry, designing the church's website, and directing mission trips.

Westwood Fine Arts Camp Creator and Director

2007–2013

Serving approximately 100 children over the course of two weeks, this camp provided instruction in dance, music, drama, and visual arts. Led the committee that advertised for, interviewed, hired, and managed four instructors, as well as developed the advertisement campaign for the camp itself, and managed the 40-person team of volunteers.

.....skills

Learning Management System Experience

- Brightspace
- Moodle
- Canvas
- Blackboard

Languages

- reading comprehension in French
- 6 M.Div credits in Koine Greek
- qualitative research
- 6 M.Div credits in Biblical Hebrew

Musicianship

- Grade 8 Piano (of 10) and Level 2 Music Theory (of 2) from the Royal Ontario Conservatory of Music
- private piano studio teacher: 6-8 students (2009-2013)
- studied flute and voice at university
- amateur guitar and ukulele strummer