**Rev. Michele E. Watkins, Ph.D.**

**Assistant Professor of Theology**

**St. John’s University, Queens NY 11439**

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**EDUCATION**

Ph.D. Theology and Ethics, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2017.

Dissertation Title: *A Sacralization to Be Fostered: Democratic Womanism as a Construal of the Doctrine of Theosis,* Ph.D. thesis, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2017.

M.Div. Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2010.

B.S. Phi Beta Kappa, *Summa Cum Laude*, Howard University, 2006.

Major: Psychology; Minors: Afro-American Studies & Spanish

CERT. Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, 2013.

Area: Non-Profit Management

CERT. Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, Harvard University, 2022.

Area: Higher Education Teaching

**PUBLICATIONS**

Books

*Deification of the Desacralized: Critical Correlations Among Womanist & Orthodox Theologies* (under review, Fordham University Press).

Co-authored: *Unmasking Racism: Coloring with Love* (Nashville: General Board of Higher Education & Ministry, 2023)

Chapters

“Even the Demons Believe and Shudder: A Conversation Between Paul Tillich and Delores Williams on the Political Nature of Evil, in *Paul Tillich and Political Theology,* ed. Rachel Baard, Lexington Press, 2024.

“Differentiation as Disfigurement: A Womanist Polemic on the Co-Option of Divinity,” in *Faith, Reason, and Theosis,* eds. George E. Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou, Fordham University Press, 2023.

*“*Does Suicide Exempt the Deceased from the Hope of Future Redemption?” in *Research and Writing in the Seminary,* Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2014.

Articles

“Andrew Prevot’s *The Mysticism of Ordinary Life: Theology, Philosophy, and Feminism,”* Syndicate, 2024

“Race and Gender Conscious Trauma Informed Pedagogy,” *The Wabash Center Journal on Teaching*

Vol. 3 No.1 (2022)

Work In-Progress

“The Legacy of Malcolm X in the Study of African American Religion and the Quest for Human Dignity,” in *Religion and Society in North America* (Bloomsbury Religion in North America, In progress.

Web-Based Articles (Non-peer reviewed)

“Divine Grace and the Problem of Suicide.” *Testamentum Imperium Vol. 3-*2011.

**PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS**

St. John’s University, Queens, NY

Assistant Professor of Theology

September 2023 – Present

*Courses:* Perspectives on Christianity (residential and asynchronous)

Feminist & Womanist Theologies (residential)

Black Liberation Theology (residential)

University of San Diego, San Diego CA

Assistant Professor of Theology and Religious Studies

September 2018- August 2023

*Courses:* Christianity & Its Practice (residential)

Black & Womanist Theologies (residential and online – synchronous)

Womanist Theology & Literature (residential)

Religion & Hip-Hop (residential and online – synchronous)

*Administrative Committees*:

COA Diversity Postdoctoral Faculty Committee (2022-23)

THRS Visiting Professor Search Committee (Spring 2021)

THRS Elections Committee (Spring 2019- Spring 2021)

THRS Curriculum Committee (Fall 2019- Spring 2021)

THRS Faculty Salon Organizer, “Teaching Race” (Summer 2020)

University-wide Black Faculty Committee (Summer 2020-Present)

University Curriculum Committee (Fall 2019- Spring 2021)

University All Faiths Service Planning Committee (Fall 2019- Spring 2021)

Iliff School of Theology, Denver CO

Assistant Professor of Theology and Gerald L. Schlessman Professorship of Methodist Studies,

January 2016- June 2018

*Courses:* Introduction to Christian Theology (residential)

Theology of Paul Tillich (residential)

Feminist & Womanist Theologies (residential)

Post-Theism in Moral Theology (hybrid)

United Methodist History (online – asynchronous)

United Methodist Doctrine (residential and online – asynchronous)

*Administrative Committees:*

Curriculum Committee (2016-2017)

Accreditation Self-Study Subcommittee on Curriculum (2017-2018)

Dir. of Office of Professional Formation Search Committee (2017-2018)

Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond VA

Summer Term, July 2021-August 2021

*Course:* “Womanist Theology: A Primer” (online, synchronous)

Chicago Theological Seminary, Chicago IL

Fall 2020 (residential) and Fall 2021 (online, asynchronous)

*Course*: “Augustine, Niebuhr, and Malcolm X on Salvation & Sin,”

Methodist Theological School in Ohio, Delaware, OH 43015

September 2018 – December 2018

*Course:*  United Methodist Doctrine (online, synchronous, and asynchronous)

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston IL

June 2020 – September 2021(online, asynchronous)

June 2014 – September 2015 (residential)

*Course:*  Introduction to Christian Theology (residential)

**SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION**

American Academy of Religion

Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture Unit

Co-Chair, Steering Committee, 2021- Present

Member, 2017-Present

Black Theology Unit

Member, Steering Committee, 2018-Present

Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Group

Member, Steering Committee, 2012-2019

Society for the Study of Black Religion

Executive Director, Fall 2020-Present

Induction, Spring 2017

Duke University, Divinity School, Black Pastoral Leadership Collaboration Workgroup

Research & Essay Contributor, June 2021-Present

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

Member of the Board of Visitors, Center for the Church and the Black Experience, 2009-Present

President’s Assessment Task Force, 2013- 2014

Consultant, Racial and Cultural Healing Task Force, 2011-2016

Member of the Board of Trustees, Academic Affairs & Development Committees, 2008-2010

Katie Geneva Cannon Center for Womanist Leadership, Union Presbyterian Theological SeminaryAdvisory Board Member, 2020- Present

1517 Media, Augsburg Fortress Press

Board Member, 2016- 2020

**FELLOWSHIPS, HONORS, AND AWARDS**

Fellowships and Grants

2022-23 Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning Peer Mentoring Grant

2022 University of San Diego, Center for Educational Excellence Professional Development Grant

2021-22 Fordham University, National Endowment for the Humanities Faculty Research Fellowship

2020-21 Wabash Center Early Career Religion Faculty Teaching Undergraduates Workshop Fellow

2019-20 Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning Workshop Fellowship Grant

2015-16 Louisville Institute Dissertation Fellowship

2014-15 The Fund for Theological Education Dissertation Fellowship

2014-15 John Dempster Graduate Fellowship, General Board of Higher Education & Ministry

2010-13 United Methodist General Board of Higher Education, Women of Color Scholar Program

2010-12 The Fund for Theological Education Doctoral Fellowship

Honors and Awards

2023 Center for Educational Excellence, Fostering Black Academic Excellence Award,

University of San Diego

2021 Martin Luther King, Jr. International Collegium of Scholars, Morehouse College

2017 Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Outstanding 45 Black Alums Honoree

**LECTURES** ♦ **PANELS** ♦ **PROFESSIONAL PAPERS**

Lecturer, “Within and Beyond: From Dichotomous Logics to a Quantum Mechanics of Being in

Decolonizing Authority,” Fides Quaerens Conference, Villanova University, Villanova PA,

16 March 2024.

Lecturer, “Unmasking Racism as Legion: White Supremacy, The Sin of Unworthiness and Co-

dependency in the Black Pastorate, Thirkield Jones Lecture, Gammon Theological Seminary,

Atlanta GA, 6 December 2023.

Panelist, “Review of Andrew Prevot’s The Mysticism of Ordinary Life and Critiques of

Normativity,” Theology and Religious Reflection Unit, American Academy of Religion, San

Antonio TX, 18 November 2023.

Presider, “Paul Tillich and Delores Williams in Dialogue,” Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and

Culture Unit, American Academy of Religion, San Antonio TX, 18 November 2023.

Lecturer, “On Encyclical Letter *Laudato si’* and what was missed: Ecowomanism and Indigenous

Spiritualities,” St. John’s University, Queens, NY, 4 April 2023.

Lecturer, “Is There Power in the Blood? Manifestations of Aje and Ancestral Spiritual Power

Among Nineteenth Century f*emmes de couleur libres:*Henriette DeLille and Marie Laveau,”

Xavier University, New Orleans LA, 16 March 2023.

Panelist, “Hearing Baldwin’s Call to Higher Unity and the Role of the Interreligious,” A Roundtable

on James Cone’s *Martin & Malcolm in America,*” Theology of Martin Luther King, Jr. Unit,

American Academy of Religion, DenverCO, 20 November 2022.

Lecturer, “The Politics of Virtue, Love and Suffering: Peter Abelard, Thomas Aquinas, and Delores

Williams in Conversation,” Aquinas Center, Catholic-Orthodox Lecture, Emory University,

Atlanta GA, 4 October 2022.

**ECCLESIAL ACTIVITIES**

Clergy, The United Methodist Church

Assistant Pastor, St. Mark UMC, Chicago, IL, 2009-2016

Dean, Maceo D. Pembroke Institute, Chicago Black Methodists for Church Renewal, 2008-2015

Youth Pastor, Morgan Park UMC, Chicago, IL, 2008-2009

Board Member, Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century, UM Board of Discipleship, 2007-2010

**ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

American Academy of Religion

Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations

Black Catholic Theological Symposium

North American Paul Tillich Society

North American Patristics Society

Society for the Study of Black Religion