

Dr. Joyce Ann Mercer
Virginia Theological Seminary
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Alexandria, VA 22304
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PRESENT TEACHING POSITION

Professor of Practical Theology, Virginia Theological Seminary, Alexandria, VA

Teaching (a selection of recently taught/upcoming courses):

- Introduction to Theology and Practice of Ministry
- Conflict and Congregational Leadership
- Muslim/Christian Dialogue & Religious Conflict
- Special Topics in Pastoral Care: Crisis Ministry
- Feminist Theologies: Christology
- Ministry and Addictions
- Theologies of Childhood
- Human Sexualities and Christian Faith: Interdisciplinary Seminar
- Practical Theology, Ministry, and Aging

Current Research Interests: Religious practices in contexts of conflict; Congregational studies and “everyday religion”; Churches and sexualities; Children’s religious practices; Girlhood studies and religious practices; Practical theology and class relations; Trauma theory; Pastoral care in emergent church life; Technology in religious experience

EDUCATION

Emory University, Atlanta, GA

Ph.D., Graduate Division of Religion (1997)

Department of Persons, Communities, and Religious Practices, and
Graduate Certificate in Women’s Studies

Dissertation: “Gender, Violence, and Faith: Adolescent Girls and a Theological Anthropology of Difference.”

McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL

D. Min., Urban Ministries Program (1991)

Thesis: “Father-Loss Among Adolescent Girls in Chemical Dependency Treatment: Theological and Psychological Perspectives.”

University of Connecticut, Hartford, CT

Graduate School of Social Work, M.S.W. (1985)

Group Work Major, Case Work Minor

Yale University School of Divinity, New Haven, CT

M.Div. (1984)

University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA
B.A. with Distinction (1979), Religious Studies

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND HONORS

Conant Grant, The Episcopal Church

Sabbatical summer writing and syllabus/course revision, Summer 2010

Peacemaking Grant, National Capital Presbytery

People's Election Observer Mission 2010, Philippine National Elections, May 2010

The Fund for Theological Education

"Greenhouses of Hope" Ethnography on congregational conflict in the "Calling Congregations and the Vocations of Youth" project 2008-2009

The Louisville Institute

Religious Institutions Grants, "Against Our Own Kind: Congregations in Conflict with their Own Denominations," August 2008-June 2009.

General Grants Program, "Congregational Practices with Children: Sharing Our Research," April-June 2003.

General Grants Program, "Children in Congregations: A Congregational Studies Research Project," January 2002-August 2003.

Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion

2004-2005 Wabash Faculty Study Leave (Sabbatical semester) Grant

2001 Workshop/Grant for Theological Faculty

2002 Summer Grant for Theological Faculty

Association of Theological Schools

2004-2005 Awardee, ATS-Lilly Faculty Sabbatical Grant

Youth Theology Initiative, Candler School of Theology

2004-2006 Research Fellow

American Association of University Women

1995-96 American Fellowship for Final Year of Dissertation Writing

Emory University

Graduate Division of Religion Fellowship, 1991-1995

Emory University Women's Studies Summer Research Grant, Summer 1992

For Archival Research at the University of Minnesota on Gisela Konopka's "Project Girl"

National Institute of Mental Health

Training Grant for Social Work With Under-Served Urban Populations
Hartford, CT, 1985-85

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Virginia Theological Seminary

Alexandria, VA

Professor of Practical Theology, 2008-present

Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology, 2006-2008

San Francisco Theological Seminary and The Graduate Theological Union

San Anselmo and Berkeley, CA, 2000-2006

Associate Professor of Practical Theology and Christian Education, and

GTU Core Doctoral Faculty Member in Interdisciplinary Studies,

Affiliated Faculty, University of California Berkeley Women's Studies

Faculty Liaison, SFTS International Feminist D. Min. Program

Union Theological Seminary in the Philippines

Dasmariñas and Manila. 1997-2000

Faculty member in Practical Theology; Faculty for M. Theol. program of Southeast Asia

Graduate School of Theology (SEAGAST)

Teen Age Medical Service and Children's Health Care, Minneapolis

Minneapolis, MN, 1994-1996

Clinical Social Work with adolescents; family therapy

Therapeutic group work with bereaved parents and parents of SIDS babies

Egleston Children's Hospital at Emory University

Atlanta, GA., 1991-1994

Part-time Medical & Psychiatric Social Worker with hospitalized children and families;

emergency room and in-patient child abuse assessment

Youth Theology Institute, Candler School of Theology

Research Coordinator, 1992-1995

Designing and implementing multi-modal research project to study faith development and

theological imagination of adolescents; in-depth interviewing

Mayflower Congregational Church, U.C.C.

Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1989-1991

Minister for Pastoral Care and New Member Nurture

Fairview Deaconess Hospital

Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1985-1989

Chaplain, Adolescent Chemical Dependency Program

Pastoral, educational and psychotherapeutic work with individuals, groups, and families.

Third World Church Leaders Center, Presbyterian Theological Seminary of Korea

Seoul, Korea, 1982-83

Volunteer in Mission Program, Presbyterian Church US

Teaching Internship

ADDITIONAL TEACHING EXPERIENCES

United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities

June 2012 Visiting Professor of Women's Studies

Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion

Faculty, 2007-2009 Workshop for Pre-Tenure Theology Faculty

Knox College, Toronto School of Theology

Visiting Professor, Summer Intensive course, "Theologies of Childhood," May 28-June 8, 2007

Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN

Summer Faculty, Hybrid Course "Theologies of Childhood." June 2006.

United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities

Adjunct faculty, 1995-1997. Courses in "Ministries with Youth," and "Feminism, Postmodernism, and Christian Education."

Macalester College, St. Paul, MN

Guest Lecturer, Women and Religion in undergraduate courses on Modern Christian Thought, 1994-1997

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Girl Talk, God Talk: Why Faith Matters to Adolescent Girls—and their Parents, San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2008.

Lives to Offer: Accompanying Youth on Their Vocational Quests, co-authored with Dori Baker. (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press), 2007.

Welcoming Children: A Practical Theology of Childhood (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press), 2005. Forward by Bonnie Miller-McLemore.

Book Chapters

"Attending to Children, Attending to God: Children with ADHD and Christian Spirituality," forthcoming in B. Roebben and K. Kammeyer (eds.), *Inclusive Religious Education. International Perspectives*, Leuven: Acco (Europe), 2012.

"Virtual Sex, Actual Infidelity: A Practical Theological Inquiry into (Dis)Embodied Desire and Cybersex," forthcoming in *International Academy of Practical Theology 2011 Conference volume*.

"Economics, Class Relations, and Classism," Chapter 41, pp. 432-442 in *The Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*, ed. Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore (Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell), 2011.

“Calling Amid Conflict: What Happens to the Vocations of Youth When Congregations Fight?” Chapter 7, pp. 165-190 in *Greenhouses of Hope: Congregations Growing Young Leaders Who Will Change the World*, Dori G. Baker, Ed. (Herndon, VA: Alban), 2010.

“Sometimes I Feel Like a Fatherless Child,” Ch. 5, pp. 78-91 in Mary Elizabeth Moore and Almeda M. Wright, eds., *Children, Youth, and Spirituality in a Troubling World* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press), 2008.

“Children in the Gospel of Mark,” Ch. 5, pp. 44-61 in Jan Grajczonek and Maurice Ryan, eds., *Religious Education in Early Childhood: A Reader* (Brisbane, Australia: Lumino Press), 2007.

“Capitalizing on Children’s Spirituality: Parental Anxiety, Children as Consumers, and the Marketing of Spirituality,” Chapter 3 in *Perspectives on Children’s Spirituality*, Cathy Ota and Mark Chater, eds. (New York: Routledge), 2006.

“Spiritual Economies of Childhood: Christian Perspectives on Global Market Forces and Young People’s Spirituality,” Chapter 36, pp. 458-471 in *Nurturing Child and Adolescent Spirituality: Perspectives from the World’s Religious on Spirituality in Childhood and Adolescence* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), Karen-Marie Yust, Aostre N. Johnson, Rabbi Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, and Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, general editors.

“Children in Congregations: Congregations as Contexts for Children’s Spiritual Growth,” co-authored with Deborah L. Matthews and Scott Walz. Chapter 16 in *Children’s Spirituality: Christian Perspectives, Research, and Applications*, Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2004. 249-265.

“Iris Cully: Imparting the Word”, Chapter 5 in *Faith of Our Foremothers: Women Changing Religious Education*. Ed. By Barbara Anne Keely (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press), 1997.

“Liberation” and “Faith”, in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies* ed. by Letty M. Russell and J. Shannon Clarkson (Westminster/John Knox: Louisville: 1996), pp. 96-97 & 168.

“Lucy Rider Meyer, Educator”; “Seattle, Chief of the Duwamish Confederacy”; and “Jennie Fowler Willing, Suffrage Worker,” *For All the Saints: A Calendar of Commemorations for United Methodists* (Order of St. Luke Publications: Akron, Ohio), 1995.

Journal Articles

“Theological Frameworks for Relationship Building,” *APCE Advocate*, Spring 2012, Vol. 37, No. 1: 4-7.

“Attending to Children, Attending to God: Children with ADHD and Christian Spirituality,” *Journal of Childhood and Religion*, Vol. 2, Issue 7 (November 2011): 1-38. Accessed online via www.childhoodandreligion.com.

“Early Childhood Religious Education and Attention Deficit Disorder,” in *Journal of Religious Education* (Australia), Special Themed Issue on Early Childhood. Vol. 59 (3): 2011: 13-22.

“Vampires, Desire, Girls and God: *Twilight* and the Spiritualities of Adolescent Girls,” in *Pastoral Psychology*, 60, No. 2, April 2011: 263-278.

“Children, Church, and the Problem of Boredom,” in *Interface: A Forum for Theology in the World* (Australasian Theological Forum: Adelaide, Australia). Vol. 10/2, 2008: 23-40.

“Europe: Just Do It! Recent Developments in European Religious Education Research,” co-authored with Bert Roebben in *Religious Education*, 102 No. 4, Fall 2007: 438-450.

“A Universally Particular Psychology? A Feminist Practical Theological Exploration of *Cultural and Indigenous Psychology*,” in *Pastoral Psychology* 56:1, September 2007: 81-94.

"Transformational Adult Learning in Congregations." *Journal of Adult Theological Education* 3 (2006): 163-178

“Capitalizing on Children’s Spirituality: Parental Anxiety, Children as Consumers, and the Marketing of Spirituality,” in *International Journal of Children’s Spirituality*, Vol. 11, No. 1, Spring 2006: 23-33.

"A Madness to Our Method: Congregational Studies as a Cross-Disciplinary Approach to Contextualizing Teaching and Learning in Theological Education," in *Teaching Theology and Religion* 9:3, July 2006: 148-155.

“A Sense of Call: How Parents Support the Vocational Quests of Adolescent Girls,” in *Journal of Youth and Theology*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Nov. 2005): 32-51.

“Who Do You Say That I Am? Children’s Identities, ‘Spiritual Capital,’ and Congregational Life,” *Family Ministry*, 19:4 Winter 2005: 11-27.

“Teaching the Bible in Congregation: A Congregational Studies Pedagogy for Contextual Education,” in *Religious Education*, Vol. 100, No. 3, Summer 2005: 280-295.

“The Child as Consumer: A North American Problem of Ambivalence Concerning the Spirituality of Childhood in Late Capitalist Consumer Culture,” in *Sewanee Theological Review*, Vol. 48, No. 1, Children and the Kingdom: Theology and Childhood. Christmas 2004: 65-86.

“The Protestant Child, Adolescent, and Family,” in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Clinics of North America, Allan M. Josephson and Mary Lynn Dell, Guest Editors. Saunders: Philadelphia. January 2004, Vol. 13, No. 1: 161-181.

“Liturgical Practices with Children in Congregations,” co-authored with Deborah L. Matthews in Liturgy: Journal of the Liturgical Conference, Vol. 19, No. 1, 2004: 27-33.

“Children in the Worshiping Community: Some New (And Not So New) Resources for Congregations,” co-authored with Larry A. Golemon, Liturgy: Journal of the Liturgical Conference, Vol. 19, No. 1, 2004: 11-19.

“The Idea of the Child in Freud and Jung: Psychological Sources for Divergent Spiritualities of Childhood,” International Journal of Children’s Spirituality, Vol. 8, No. 2: 115-132, August 2003.

“Call Forwarding: Putting Vocation in the Present Tense with Youth,” (pp. 29-44) and “Are We Going on a Vocation Now? Ministry with Youth as a Lifelong Vocation,” (pp. 45-56) in Compass Points: Navigating Vocation. The 2002 Princeton Lectures on Youth, Church, and Culture, Institute for Youth Ministry, Princeton Theological Seminary: 2002.

“Psychoanalysis, Parents and God: Julia Kristeva on the Imaginary Father and Subjectivity,” Pastoral Psychology Vol. 50, Number 4, March 2002: 243-258.

“Red Light Means Stop! Teaching Theology Through Exposure Learning in Manila’s Red Light District,” Teaching Theology and Religion Vol. 5, Number 2, April 2002: 90-100.

“How Clearly Must I See? Art and Ethics in Pedagogical Practice,” coauthored with Charles R. Foster, Teaching Theology and Religion Vol. 4 No. 3, October 2001: 124-132.

“Education For Subordination: Adolescent Girls, Gender Identity, and School Violence,” in Journal of Religion and Abuse, Vol. I (3) 1999: 19-48.

SELECTED SCHOLARLY PRESENTATIONS

“Virtual Sex, Actual Infidelity: A Practical Theological Inquiry into (Dis)Embodied Desire and Cybersex,” Presentation for the International Academy of Practical Theology, Amsterdam (The Netherlands), July 21, 2011.

“Automatic Weapons, Amens, and the Adhan: A Local Interfaith Peacebuilding Initiative and Election Violence in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (Philippines).” Presented at the Second Annual Emory University Conference on Religion, Conflict, and Peace, June 17-19, 2011, Atlanta, GA.

“Working with Religious Leaders: Mental Health and Spirituality,” Presentation for the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, New York, NY, October 26-28, 2010.

“Vampires, Desire, Girls and God: *Twilight* and the Spiritualities of Adolescent Girls,” Psychology, Culture and Religion Group of the AAR, pre-session meeting, November 2009, Montreal, Canada.

“The Church Against Itself: Congregations in Conflict with Their Denominations,” International Academy of Practical Theology, Chicago, IL, August 2009.

“Contentiously Faithful: Practical Theological Reflections on Religious Conflict and the Tenacity of Belief,” Inaugural Lecture, Virginia Theological Seminary, December 1, 2008.

“Show a Little Class: Putting Class Analysis into Congregational Studies,” Annual Meeting of the AAR, Practical Theology section, November 2006, Washington, DC.

“A Madness to Our Method: Congregational Studies as Pedagogical Method for Contextual Theological Education,” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, San Antonio Texas, November 2004.

“Teaching the Bible in Congregations: A Congregational Studies Pedagogy for Contextual Education,” Annual Meeting of the Association of Professors and Researchers in Religious Education/ Religious Education Association, November 5, 2004, Denver, CO.

“Constructing Children as Consumers: Globalized Capitalism and the Spirituality of Children,” annual meeting of the International Conference on Children’s Spirituality, Bishop Grosseteste College, Lincoln, UK, July 19-23, 2004.

SELECTED WORKSHOPS, LECTURES, AND WORKING GROUPS

Congregational Studies Project Team Member

A national working group of scholars who utilize and provide resources for faith communities and mentoring for scholars interested in the disciplined study of religious organizations and practices through congregational studies methods. Team member since 2009.

Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington DC

Leader, Faculty Retreat, August 24, 2011 Falls Church, VA. “Ecclesiologies in Motion”

St. John’s University, Collegeville, MN

Collegeville Institute Seminar on Vocation Across the Lifespan
June 6-8, 2011, Collegeville Institute

Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Williamson Distinguished Scholars Conference, April 8-10, 2010

“Attending to Children, Attending to God: Christian Spirituality and Children with ADD/ ADHD”

United Theological Seminary in the Twin Cities

The Susan Draper White Lectures

March 1 & 2, 2010

“Girls, God, and Vampires: The Spirituality of Adolescent Girls”

“Fighting Like Girls: Girlhood Religion and Church Conflict”

Hartford Institute for Religion Research, Hartford Seminary

Leadership group, “A Conversation on Theology in Congregational Life,” October 11 & 12, 2005, Hartford, CT

Princeton Theological Seminary

Keynote lecturer, 2002 Princeton Lectures on Youth, Church, and Culture, January 7-10, 2002.

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES AND ACCREDITATION

International Academy of Practical Theology, elected to membership 2007

Ordained Minister, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) since 1985 and Minister Member, National Capital Presbytery

The Association of Practical Theology, Member of the Executive Committee 2009-present

Religious Education Association/Association of Professors and Researchers in Religious Education (REA/APRRE), Board member and Chair, Call for Papers Committee/Publications Committee 2006-2008

Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Commonwealth of Virginia # 0904006820

The American Academy of Religion, Co-chair of steering committee for the Practical Theology Group of the AAR, 2009-2011, continuing committee member 2012-13

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I am married with three teenage children; favorite ways to relax include Rocky Mountain- and Blue Ridge- hiking, Irish fiddle music (see www.irishbreakfastband.com), beachcombing, listening to jazz, blue grass, and old time music, watching ballet, cooking with friends, big dogs, reading contemporary fiction and mysteries.