

Rebecca F. Spurrier
Columbia Theological Seminary
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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Columbia Theological Seminary

Associate Dean for Worship Life and Assistant Professor of Worship,
2016 – Present

EDUCATION

Emory University, Graduate Division of Religion

Ph.D., Theological Studies, 2016

Dissertation: *Works of Love: Beauty and Fragility in a Community of Difference*

Committee: Wendy Farley (advisor, Professor of Religion and Ethics)

Joyce Burkhalter Flueckiger

Rosemarie Garland-Thomson

Don E. Saliers

Andrea C. White

Emory University, Candler School of Theology

M.Div., 2009

Calvin College

B.A., Major in English Literature and Minor in Communications, 1996

PUBLICATIONS

The Disabled Church: Human Difference and the Art of Communal Worship, Fordham University Press, 2019

“For What and for Whom Do You Pray?: Coercion, Consent, and the Healing of Ableism,” *The Yale ISM Review* (forthcoming)

“Worship as Intervention?: Breaking Silence on Word Suicide Prevention Day,” *Proceedings of the North American Academy of Liturgy*, (forthcoming)

“Review of *The Holy No: Worship as a Subversive Act*,” by Adam Hearlson, *Homiletic* Vol. 43, No. 2 (2018)

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“Unfolding Space: Human Difference in Common Worship,” *Call to Worship* 51.3 (2018)

“Remembering the Neighborhood: Church, Disability, and Religious Memory,” *Religions*, 2017, 8, 219 (2017)

“Review of *Fieldwork in Theology*,” by Christian Scharen, *Practical Matters Journal*, (April 17, 2017)

“Disabling Eschatology: Time for the Table of Our Common Pleasure,” *Liturgy* 30 (2016)

“Review of *Ethnographic Theology: An Inquiry into the Production of Theological Knowledge* by Natalie Wigg-Stevenson,” *Interpretation*, Volume 70, Issue 4 (2016)

“The Disabled Church: Desiring Difference within Congregational Life,” *Studying Congregations* (blog), August 19, 2015, <http://studyingcongregations.org/blog/the-disabled-church>

“Presences and Absences: An Introduction to ‘Engaging Religious Experience: A Return to Ethnography and Theology,’” *Practical Matters* 6 (2013), with Susannah Laramee Kidd

COURSES

“Disability and the Church,” Instructor, Columbia Theological Seminary, 2019

“Christian Worship, Human Difference, and Divine Justice,” Instructor, Columbia Theological Seminary, 2018

“Introduction to Christian Worship,” Instructor, Columbia Theological Seminary, 2017, 2018, 2019

“Sacred Space, Time, and Liturgical Imagination,” Instructor, Columbia Theological Seminary, 2017

“Christian Systematic Theology,” Instructor, Candler School of Theology, Emory University, 2015

“Religious Ritual, the Body, and Disability,” Instructor, Emory College of Arts and Sciences, Emory University, 2014

“Women, Religion, and Ethnography,” Teaching Associate, Emory College of Arts and Sciences, Emory University, 2012

“Transforming Mind: Classic Religious Texts,” Teaching Assistant, Emory College of Arts and Sciences, Emory University, 2011

“Sacred Space in World Religions,” Teaching Assistant, Candler School of Theology, Emory University, 2011

PRESENTATIONS

“Twenty-Five Years after ‘The Disabled God’: Confronting Ableism, Transforming Religious Symbols,” Summer Institute on Theology and Disability, Holland, MI, May 2019

“Worship as Intervention?: Breaking Silence on World Suicide Prevention Day,” North American Academy of Liturgy, Denver, CO, January 2019

“Liturgy and Interdisciplinary Methods,” Panel Presentation at Emerging Scholars Meeting, North American Academy of Liturgy, Denver, CO, January 2019

“Naming: Aesthetics of Healing and Claiming,” North American Academy of Liturgy, Vancouver, BC, January 2018

“The Mouth of a Labyrinth: Beauty, Theology, and Disability Justice,” Summer Institute on Theology and Disability, Azusa, CA, June 2017

“Take My Hand: The Reading and Touching of Common Prayer,” American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, GA, November 2015

“The Disabled Church: Arts of Naming Human and Divine Presence,” Society for Disability Studies, Atlanta, GA, June 2015

“The Artworks of a Disabled Church: A Frame for Difference within Common Prayer,” Summer Institute on Theology and Disability, Atlanta, GA, May 2015

“Touching the Distant Other: Revisiting Spivak’s ‘Harlem,’ Recalling Absalom Jones,” North American Academy of Liturgy, Minneapolis, MN, January 2015

“Artistries of Difference: Disrupting Ritual, Disabling Liturgy,” American Academy of Religion, San Diego, CA, November, 2014

“From Funky Fingernails to Faith Claims: Beauty and the Works of Disability,” American Academy of Religion, San Diego, CA, November, 2014

“Arts of Becoming Church: Disrupting and Weaving Bodies through Difference,” International Conference on Religion, Illness, and Disability, Stavanger, Norway, May, 2014

“Disregarding Charity, Desiring Difference: Disabling the Works of the People,”

“Theological Research and the Church,” Graduate Conference-Workshop, Boston University School of Theology, Boston, MA, March 2014

“Hiding and Holding Community: The Poetics of Seeking Real Presence,” North American Academy of Liturgy, Albuquerque, NM, January, 2013

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Academy of Religion
North American Academy of Liturgy

SERVICE

Friendship Center Board Member, Holy Comforter Church, 2019 - Present
Spiritual Life Committee Member, L’Arche Atlanta, 2015-2019
Committee for Selection of New Members, North American Academy of Liturgy, 2019
Local Planning Committee, North American Academy of Liturgy Annual Meeting, 2019
Consultant, The Louisville Institute, Spring 2019

HONORS AND AWARDS

Dissertation Fellowship, The Louisville Institute, 2015
Academic Excellence Award, Candler School of Theology, 2009
Hoyt L. Hickman Award for Liturgical Scholarship and Practice, 2009
Ministry Fellow, Fund for Theological Education, 2007
Robert W. Woodruff Fellowship, Candler School of Theology, 2006-2009
James E. Smith Presidential Scholarship, Calvin College, 1992-1996

EDITORIAL EXPERIENCE

Practical Matters (www.practicalmattersjournal.org)
Issue Co-Editor, “Engaging Religious Experience: A Return to Ethnography and Theology,” 2012-2013

ADDITIONAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Jones Program in Ethics, Emory University

Graduate Workshop Co-Facilitator with Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, “Access as Ethical Path to Diversity,” 2015

Youth Theological Initiative

Instructor, “Divine Love, Disability, and Beautiful Bodies,” 2012

Donetsk Christian University (Ukraine)

Instructor, “English as a Foreign Language for Theology Students,” 1997-2000

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Candler School of Theology, Emory University

Acting Director of Student Life and Spiritual Formation, 2009-2010

Interim Director of International Initiatives, 2010

Office of Worship staff, 2006-2009

Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship

Interim Pastor, 2009

Elder, 2009-2011

Worship Committee Co-Chair, 2008-2011

Worship Committee Member and Worship Leader, 2007-2019

Institute for Cultural Partnerships

Program Manager, 2007-2009

Mennonite Central Committee

Community Building Partner in Zaporozhye, Ukraine, 2001-2004

LANGUAGES

Reading Competency: Russian, Ukrainian

Speaking Competency: Russian