

Rachel Toombs, Ph.D.

racheltoombs.net

EDUCATION

- 2013 – 2018 **Baylor University, Ph.D. in Religion (Theology)**
Dissertation: “Blessed Wounding: The Theological Import of Paratactic Style in Flannery O’Connor’s Fiction and Hebrew Narrative”
Supervisor: Ralph C. Wood, Ph.D.
- 2009 – 2013 **Regent College, M.A in Theological Studies (Old Testament/Hebrew Bible)**
Thesis: “Reading Exodus 12:1–13:16 with the Church: The Implications of Gadamer’s Philosophical Hermeneutics for Biblical Interpretation”
Supervisor: Iain W. Provan, Ph.D.
- 2003 – 2006 **Bethel University, B.A. in Youth Ministry**

WORK HISTORY & EXPERIENCE

- Beginning* May 25 Assistant Professor of Old Testament, Church Divinity School of the Pacific
- July 24 – *present* Director of Formation, Ascension Episcopal Church, Stillwater, MN
- May 21 – June 24 Director of Formation & Connection, St. Alban’s Episcopal Church, Waco, TX
- Aug 19 – May 24 Baylor University, Baylor Interdisciplinary Core, Religion
Part-Time Lecturer
- BIC 1212 – The Examined Life, *Fall 2020*
 - BIC 2330 – Social World I, *Fall 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023*
 - BIC 2340 – Social World II, *Spring 2021*
 - BIC 2344 – World Cultures IV, *Spring 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024*
- Full-Time Temporary Lecturer*
- BIC 2330 – Social World I, *Fall 2019*
 - REL 1310 – Introduction to Christian Scriptures (2 sections), *Fall 2019*
- Jun 19 – Apr 21 Spiritual Formation Director, Holy Spirit Episcopal Church, Waco, TX
- Aug 18 – Jun 19 Christian Education Director, St. James Episcopal Church, Bozeman, MT
- Jun 17 – Apr 19 Professor of Theology and Old Testament, Yellowstone Theological Institute
- Oct 16 – Mar 17 Wabash Center Doctoral Student Teaching Seminar Participant
- Aug 13 – May 17 Graduate Assistant, Baylor University
- Sep 12 – Jun 13 Academic Secretary, Regent College
- Dec 10 – May 13 Old Testament Foundations Distance Ed Teaching Assistant, Regent College

Sep 10 – Oct 12 Teaching Assistant, Research Assistant, and Grader, Regent College

LEADERSHIP & SERVICE

Editor, Reviews in Depth & Essay-Length Reviews, *Anglican Theological Review* (2022 – present)

American Academy of Religion:

- *Academic Labor and Contingent Faculty Committee Member* (2021 – 2024)
- *Regional Southwest Unit Chair for “Arts, Literature, and Religion”* (2019 – 2024)
- *National Student Director and Board Member* (2017– 2019)
- *Regional Southwest Student Director* (2015– 2018)
- *Graduate Student Committee Member* (2015– 2019)

MEMBERSHIPS

- American Academy of Religion
- Society of Biblical Literature
- Society of Scholar Priests, Affiliate Member
- Forum for Theological Exploration

PUBLICATIONS

Reading the First Five Books: The Invitation of the Pentateuch’s Stories (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2024).

Editor and Contributor. *Good News Resounding: Essays on Theology and Literature in Honor of Ralph C. Wood*. Baylor University Press. *Forthcoming, April 2025*.

Flannery O’Connor and Stylistic Asceticism (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2022).

“‘Almost Imperceptible Intrusions of Grace:’ On Flannery O’Connor’s Fiction and Readerly Entanglement,” *The Heythrop Journal* 62, no. 5 (September 2021): 900–915.

Sidebar Editor, *Connections: A Lectionary Commentary for Preaching and Worship, Year B*, vols. 1–3 (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2020, 2021).

BOOK REVIEWS

Review of *I Want You to Be: On the God of Love* by Tomáš Halík, *Anglican Theological Review* (Fall 2020): 690–692.

Review of *Being Human in God’s World: An Old Testament Theology of Humanity* by J. Gordon McConville, *Trinity Journal* (Fall 2018): 237–238.

Review of *The Bible in a Disenchanted Age: The Enduring Possibility of Christian Faith* by R.W.L. Moberly, *Anglican Theological Review* 100 (Fall 2018): 833.

Review of *The Mystery of God: Theology for Knowing the Unknowable* by Steven D. Boyer and Christopher A. Hall, *Trinity Journal* 36 (Fall 2015): 310—12.

INVITED & PUBLIC SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

“Mission in the New Reality”

April 29, 2024. Gathering of Leaders, Memphis.

“Mortally Wounded: A Reading of Jacob’s Blessing in Genesis 32”

March 20, 2024. St. John the Divine Episcopal Church, Houston. Lenten Teaching Series.

“Learning to Love Leviticus”

March 11–14, 2019. Yellowstone Theological Institute Lecture Series.

“The Stories of Flannery O’Connor: Narrating the Terrifying Reality of Grace”

April 19, 2018. Yellowstone Theological Institute Public Lecture.

“Blessed Wounding: Theological Implications of Flannery O’Connor’s Spare Narrative Style”

February 16, 2018. University of St. Andrews, Scotland; Institute for Theology, Imagination, and the Arts (ITIA) Research Seminar.

PAPERS PRESENTED

“A Pew-Shaped Theology: Reflection on Teaching Theology as Adult Formation”

June 5, 2022. *Society of Scholar Priests Annual Meeting*. Denver, CO.

“On Flannery O’Connor’s Difficult Language” in panel “Forgiveness in the Public Sphere: Confronting the (Supposed?) Errors of Thought, Word and Deed of Literary Icons”

March 5, 2022. *Southwest Commission on Religious Studies*. Irving, TX.

“Returning Home: Readerly Indwelling in Flannery O’Connor’s ‘The Enduring Chill’”

August 3, 2021. *Flannery O’Connor International Conference*. Online.

“Songs of Heaven: Hildegard of Bingen’s Use of Biblical Allusions in Her *Symphonia*’s Marian Hymns”

December 7, 2020. *Society of Biblical Literature*. Online.

“‘Almost Imperceptible Intrusions of Grace:’ Flannery O’Connor’s Spare Stories and Her Readers”

November 23, 2019. *American Academy of Religion*. San Diego, CA.

“A Modern Man, A Machine, and An Improbable Martyr: On Flannery O’Connor’s ‘A View of the Woods’ and the Distorted Vision of Technological Progress”

October 25, 2018. *Baylor Symposium on Faith and Culture*. Waco, TX.

“The Naked Voice and The Wounded Word: Jean-Louis Chrétien on the Vulnerability of Prayer”

March 10, 2018. *Southwest Commission on Religious Studies*. Irving, TX.

“Hildegard of Bingen: Exegete and Theologian in ‘Solution to Thirty-Eight Questions’”

November 18, 2017. *Society of Biblical Literature*. Boston, MA.

“The Murky Waters of the Tragic and Comic in Flannery O'Connor's 'The River'”
April 1, 2017. Upper Midwest American Academy of Religion. Saint Paul, MN.

Panelist, “Engaging Across Disciplines: An Interdisciplinary Response to ‘Who is Mary of Nazareth?’”
March 13, 2017. Southwest Commission on Religious Studies. Irving, TX.

“Sarah Coakley and the Distorted Self in Walker Percy’s *Lancelot*”
April 2, 2016. Upper Midwest American Academy of Religion. Saint Paul, MN.

“A Crippled Victor and a Blinded Convert: Narrative Style in Jacob’s Wrestling in Gen 22:22–33 and Flannery O’Connor’s *Wise Blood*”
November 4, 2016. South Central Modern Language Association. Dallas, TX.

“A Closer Kinship? David’s Prayer in 2 Sam 7 and 1 Chr 17”
November 24, 2015. Society of Biblical Literature. Atlanta, GA.

“As a ‘White Cloud’: Hildegard of Bingen's Reading of the Temptation of Eve”
April 18, 2015. American Society of Church History. Minneapolis, MN.

“From Precept to Testimony: Augustine, Faustus the Manichee and the Testimony of the Hebrews”
March 28, 2015. Pacific Northwest American Academy of Religion. Portland, OR.

“Reinhold Niebuhr and the Old Testament”
March 8, 2014. Southwest Commission on Religious Studies. Irving, TX.

“On the Value of a Good Question: Reading Exodus 12:29-36 with Gregory of Nyssa and Brevard Childs”
April 6, 2013. Upper Midwest Society of Biblical Literature. Saint Paul, MN.

AWARDED

- Forum for Theological Exploration Young Adult Discernment Grant, 2023–2024
- Baylor University Dean’s Scholarship, 2013–2018
- Baylor University Department of Religion Tuition Scholarship, 2013–2018
- Glenn O. and Martell B. Hilburn Endowed Graduate Research Scholarship, 2016
- Institute for Religion and Culture Scholarship (Canada), 2013