

THOMAS A. WETZEL

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EDUCATION

- TH.D., THE DIVINITY SCHOOL/HARVARD UNIVERSITY** (2015)
Major field of concentration: Hebrew Bible
Dissertation: "Violence and the Survival of Israel in the Book of Esther"
Major advisor/Dissertation director: Jon D. Levenson
- PH.D., ENGLISH/LITERARY STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE** (2000)
Major field of concentration: American literature, 1865-present
Dissertation: "A Graveyard for the Midwest: Sherwood Anderson, Søren Kierkegaard, and the Sacred in Midwestern Literature"
Major advisor/Dissertation director: James Sappenfield (deceased)
- M.A., THEOLOGY, MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY** (2006)
Major field of concentration: biblical studies
Major advisor: Deirdre Dempsey
- M.A., ENGLISH/LITERARY STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE** (1994)
Thesis: "Eyes Full of the Land Dug out of His Skull: Finding Place in the Works of William Faulkner"
Major advisor: Robert B. Jones (deceased)
- B.A., SUMMA CUM LAUDE, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE** (1990)
Major: philosophy

WORK HISTORY

- LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO** (2016–present)
Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, Department of Theology
Director, Interfaith-Interreligious Studies Program
- MOUNT MERCY UNIVERSITY (CEDAR RAPIDS, IA)** (2012–2016)
Assistant Professor of Religious Studies
Religious Studies Program Coordinator
- CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL UNION (CHICAGO, IL)** (2009–2011)
Adjunct Instructor, Biblical Studies
- LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO** (2008–2011)
Adjunct Instructor, Department of Theology
- HARVARD THEOLOGICAL REVIEW/HARVARD THEOLOGICAL PRESS** (2006–2010)
Editorial Assistant and Book Manuscript Editor
- MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY (MILWAUKEE, WI)**
Adjunct Instructor, Department of Theology (2008)
Teaching Assistant and Graduate Instructor, Department of Theology (2003–2005)
- CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY (RIVER FOREST, IL)** (1999–2003)
Assistant Professor of English
Writing Center Director
- UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE**
Graduate Instructor of English and Literary Studies (1994–1999)
Associate Lecturer, Department of Learning Skills (1993–1994)

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Biblical theology in the life, practice, and prayer of Catholic communities
 Understanding the ongoing roles of Israel and the Church as covenant partners in the work of divine reconciliation of creation
 The role of visual arts and narrative as means for practicing theology and religious observance
 Deuteronomistic History, especially the Josianic crisis and its influence on New Testament thought
 Prophetic biblical literature and its interpretation (both Former and Latter Prophets)
 Violence and pacifism in the Bible and in the Jewish and Christian traditions
 Flannery O'Connor: her theology, narrative voice, and the influence of Scripture on her writing

PUBLICATIONS

- *The Hidden Covenant: Purim and the Observant Narrator in the Esther Story* (book manuscript in progress and under contract with Cascade Books; projected completion in March 2025)
- *Violence and Divine Victory in the Book of Esther* (Mohr Seibeck; July 1, 2022)
- “Keeping Secrets: Narrating Violence in the Esther Story” *Esther: Themes and Issues in Biblical Studies* ed. Kristin Joachimsen and Helge Bezold (Sheffield, United Kingdom: Equinox, 2025) [manuscript submitted]
- “An Unpleasant Little Jolt: Flannery O'Connor’s *Creation ex Chaos*” *Reading Flannery O'Connor in Spain: From Andalusia to Andalucía* ed. Mark Bosco, SJ and Beatriz Valverde. (Washington, DC: Catholic University Press of America, 2020). 191–212
- “War in the Bible.” *The SAGE Encyclopedia of War: Social Science Perspectives* ed. Paul Joseph. (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2017). 167–170
- Invited Review: David M. Carr’s *Holy Resilience: The Bible’s Traumatic Origins*. *Biblical Interpretation* 24. 2016. 559–561
- “On Jesse Bentley as Biblical Figure.” *Sherwood Anderson* (Volume 28 of *Bloom’s Major Short Story Writers*). ed. Harold Bloom. (Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2003)
- “A ‘Graveyard’ of the Midwest: Unearthing Søren Kierkegaard’s Influence in Midwestern Immigrant Communities.” *MidAmerica* XXVI. 2000. 10–24
- “Beyond Human Understanding’: Confusion and the Call in *Winesburg, Ohio*” *MidAmerica* XXIII. 1996. 11–27

CONFERENCE PAPERS AND ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

- “Spirituality and the Bible” (six-week, professional level seminar presented in the Thursday Adult Formation series of the Adult Education Program at Christ Church Oak Brook, July–August 2024)
- “The Book(s) of Esther: Finding Meaning in Multiplicity” (five-week, master’s level non-credit seminar presented in the Sunday Forum series of the Adult Education Program at Christ Church Oak Brook, July 2022)
- “Esther in the Academy” (invited paper presented to Megilloth Section at the Annual Meeting of Society of Biblical Literature/Denver, 2018)
- “Is The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament?” (invited series of academic presentations offered at Summer Scripture Institute/Mundelein Seminary, summer 2018)
- “Turning the Church toward Israel: A Biblical First Step of Reconciliation and Witness” (*The Scholar and the Pew: On Gaps and Bridges between Scholarship and Community in Judaism and Christianity*, Annual Perelmuter Conference, sponsored by Catholic Theological Union and University of Notre Dame, 2018)
- “*Creation ex Chaos*: Flannery O’Connor’s Revelation of the Hidden Divine Warrior” (*Andalusia in Andalucía: An International Conference on Flannery O’Connor/Seville*, Spain, 2017)
- “Armageddon Unfolding from an Unhealed Rupture: The Death of Josiah in the Deuteronomistic History” (Society of Biblical Literature/Midwest Region Annual Meeting, 2016)
- “The Divine Warrior in Hiding: Re-Creation in the Book of Esther” (Society of Biblical Literature/Midwest Region Annual Meeting, 2012)
- “They Shall Know a Prophet Has Been among Them: Flannery O’Connor and the Prophetic Writing Tradition” (Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association Annual Conference, 2009)
- “He Loved Rachel More than Leah: Genesis 26 and 34 as Covenantal Reminders” (*Epiphanies of Beauty: The Arts in a Post-Christian Culture*/University of Notre Dame, 2006)
- “‘Large and Startling Figures’: Flannery O’Connor’s Prophetic Voice and Formative Vision” (*Faith and Morality: Formation and Renewal*/University of Notre Dame, 2003)

AWARDS RECEIVED

Research Leave, Loyola University (Spring 2020)
Summer Scholarship Grant, Mount Mercy University (Summer 2013)
Dean's Dissertation Fellowship, Harvard Divinity School (2011–2012)
Faculty Research Grant, Concordia University (2000–2001)
Midwestern Heritage Essay Award, Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature (1997 & 1999)

ACADEMIC SERVICE

- Member, CAS Academic Council (Loyola, 2020–present)
- Department Advisory Committee, Department of Theology (Loyola, 2017–2019; 2021–2024)
- Undergraduate Program Director, Department of Theology (Loyola, 2017–2020)
- Member, Undergraduate Program Committee, Department of Theology (Loyola, 2017–present; *chair*, 2017–2019)
- Member, Search Committee: University Core Curriculum Director (Loyola, 2020)
- University Interfaith Committee (2017–2019)
- University Committee to Review Course Evaluation Software (Loyola, 2018–2019)
- Invited speaker, Adult Formation Program (St. Patrick's Parish, Lake Forest, 2018; 2020; 2024)
- Ad Hoc Committee on Teaching and Learning (Loyola, 2016–2017)
- Established and Chaired Religious Studies Program Revision Committee (Mount Mercy, 2012–2016)
- Graduate Policy Committee (Mount Mercy, 2013–2015)
- Faculty Leadership Team (Faculty Senate) (Mount Mercy, 2013–2016)
- Instructor, Lay and Deacon Formation Program (Diocese of Gary, Indiana (2010–2011))

OTHER SERVICE

- Serving on Adult Formation Steering Group, St. Juliana Parish, Chicago (2022–2023)
- Lector, Eucharistic Minister, and Prayer Group Leader, St. Juliana Parish (2022–2023)
- Member of the archdiocesan *Renew My Church* strategic planning group, representing Our Lady of Hope Parish, Rosemont (2020–2021)
- Member of the Parish Pastoral Council, Our Lady of Hope (2020–June 2022)
- Coordinator for various adult formation programs, Our Lady of Hope (2019–June 2022)

SOCIETY MEMBERSHIPS

Society of Biblical Literature
Flannery O'Connor Society

REFERENCES

- Available on request