**Kenneth N. Ngwa, Ph.D.**

Email: Kenneth.ngwa@garrett.edu

# EDUCATION

Ph.D., Princeton Theological Seminary, May 2005

Th. M, Princeton Theological Seminary, May 2000

Maîtrise en Théologie, Faculty of Protestant Theology, Cameroon (1995)

**ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT**

* Donald J. Casper Professor of Hebrew Bible and African Biblical Hermeneutics, Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary (July 2024-Present)
* John Fletcher Hurst Professor of Hebrew Bible, Drew Theological School (2023-2024)
* Professor of Hebrew Bible, Drew Theological School (2021-2023)
* Associate Professor, Hebrew Bible, Drew Theological School (2013-2021)
* Assistant Professor, Hebrew Bible, Drew Theological School (2007-2013)
* Assistant Professor, Hebrew Bible, Wabash College, Indiana (2005-2007)
* Visiting Professor, Biblical studies, Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma WA (2004-2005)

# PUBLICATIONS

**Single Authored Monographs**

*Let My People Live: An Africana Reading of Exodus*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox

Press, 2022.

*The Hermeneutics of the ‘Happy’ Ending in Job 42:7-17*. Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2005.

**Co-Editor**

*Life Under the Baobab Tree: Africana Studies and Religion in a Transitional Age*. New York:

Fordham University Press, 2023.

*World Christianity, Urbanization and Identity*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2020.

*Preparing for Parts Unknown: Global Health, International Travel and Missions*. Lulu: Global

Health Catalyst, 2019.

*Navigating African Biblical Hermeneutics: Trends and Themes from our Pots and Our*

*Calabashes*. Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018.

**Peer-Reviewed Articles**

Ngwa et al. ed., “A comprehensive cancer center in the cloud powered by AI can reduce health

disparities,” *Nature Medicine* (2024). <https://rdcu.be/dNOLD>

“Exodus as a Door of (No) Return” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 136/1 (2017), 213-220.

“The Making of Gershom’s Story: A Cameroonian Postwar Hermeneutics Reading of Exodus

2,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 134/4 (2015): 899-920. (Special Issue of JBL focusing

on African Biblical Hermeneutics)

“Using Bible Commentaries in the Classroom” Panel discussion published in *Teaching Theology*

*and Religion* 16/1 (2013), 52-65.

Ethnicity, Adoption, and Exodus: A Socio-Rhetorical Reading of Exodus 2:1-10,” *Journal for*

*the Study of the Old Testament* 38/2 (2013), 163-187.

“Did Job Suffer for Nothing? The Ethics of Piety, Presumption and the Reception of Disaster in

the Prologue of Job,” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 33/3 (2009), 359-380.

“What do People Say the Bible Says? And You, What do You Say?” *Teaching* *Theology and*

*Religion* 14/2 (April, 2011), 157.

**Book Reviews**

Jacob Onyumbe Wenyi, *Piles of Slain, Heaps of Corpses: Reading Prophetic Poetry and*

*Violence in African Context* (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2021), in *Journal of*

*Theology for Southern Africa* 172 (March, 2022), 79-81.

Jason A. Carter, *Inside the Whirlwind: The Book of Job through African Eyes* (African Christian

Studies Series. Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2017), in *Horizons in Biblical*

*Theology* 40 (2018), 93-98.

**Chapters/Essays in Edited Volumes**

“Context as Genre in African Biblical Hermeneutics.” Pages 11-24 in Madipoane Masenya

(Ngwan'a Mphahlele), Marta Høyland Lavik, and Tina Dykesteen Nilsen eds., *Context Matters: Interpreting the Old Testament in Africa and Beyond. Essays in Honor of Professor Knut Holter on His 65th Birthday*. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2023.

“Children in the Book of Proverbs.” Pages 131-154 in Sharon Betsworth and Julie Faith Parker

eds., *Handbook of Children and Childhood in the Biblical World*. Bloomsbury T&T,

2019.

“Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24”; and “Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18; Judges 4:1-7” in *Connections: A*

*Lectionary Commentary for Preaching and Worship*. Year A, Vol. 3. Eds., Joel B. Green et al. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2019. Pp. 475-481 and 493-497.

“Postwar Hermeneutics: Bible and Colony-Related Necropolitics.” Pages 43-74 and Tat-Siong

Benny Liew and Fernando F. Segovia eds., *Bible and Colonialism: Contemporary*

*Reflections from the Global South*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2018.

“Towards Healing the Whole Person and Community.” Pages 75-84 Wilfred Ngwa and Paul

Nguyen eds., *Global Oncology: Harvard Global Health Catalyst Summit Lecture*. (2017)

Ngwa et al., “Closing the Cancer Divide Through *Ubuntu*: Information and Communication

Technology-Powered Models for Global Radiation Oncology” in *Int. Journal of*

*Radiation Oncology* 94/3 (March, 2016), 440-449.

“The Story of Exodus and its Literary Kinships.” Pages 125-136 in Danna Nolan Fewell ed., *The*

*Oxford Handbook of Biblical Narrative*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Kenneth Ngwa and Gerald West, “African Art.” Pages 22-35 in ed. Timothy Beal, *The* *Oxford*

*Encyclopedia of the Bible and the Arts*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

“Knowledge.” Pages 13-19 in Samuel Balentine ed., *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and*

*Theology* (OEBT) Volume 2, KIN-WOR; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

“Superabundance,” *The* *Living Pulpit* 22 (Winter, 2013), 4-6.

**Online (Podcast and Blog Post)**

* "We Need a Teaching Movement." Conversation with Wabash Center Director, Dr. Lynne Westfield (Episode #33. Recorded on 04/27/2020) <https://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/resources/podcasts/>
* “Positively Outraged with COVID: An Open Letter to the Coronavirus,” https://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/2020/04/positively-outraged-with-covid-an-open-letter-to-the-coronavirus/
* “Ferguson, Bible, and the ‘Long Division’ of Race.” Posted 9/22/2014; <http://wabashcenter.typepad.com/antiracism_pedagogy/2014/09/fergusson-bible-and-the-long-division-of-race.html>

**Writing in Progress**

Monographs

1. *Follow the Raven: Africana Biblical Hermeneutics and the Quest for Flourishing*

Essays/Articles

“Follow the Raven: Hermeneutics Beyond the Ark” in Wongi Park ed., *Multiracial Biblical*

*Studies*. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2024.

“Postcolonial Dreams: An Afroecological Reading of Jacob’s Dream at Bethel (Gen. 28:10-22)”

in Department of Higher Education and Training Journal (University of South Africa).

Anticipated publication 2024.

“Triple Consciousness and the Challenge of Neopatriarchy: The Musings of an African Biblical

 Scholar.” Open Access Journal Religion Special Issue: African Biblical Hermeneutics

and the Decolonial Turn (Anticipated publication 2024).

“Preaching on Exodus” in Carolyn J. Sharp ed., *Oxford Handbook of Christian Homiletics*

(Tentative publication date 2026)

# PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

**Academic Audiences**:

* Invited Keynote Address on “Africana Hermeneutics and Biblical Interpretation” at the 25th Congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament (IOSOT) in Berlin, Germany. (Upcoming in August 2025).
* 2023. “Postcolonial Dreams: An Afroecological Reading of Jacob’s Dream at Bethel (Gen. 28:10-22).” General Keynote Address at the Second International Conference on Interpreting Sacred Texts in Africa. University of Ghana, Legon.
* 2019. “Climate Change and Postcolonial Transnationalism: An Afro-eco Reading of Exodus 7-11,” SBL Meeting in San Diego.
* 2019. Respondent on a Book Review panel (*Navigating African Biblical Hermeneutics: Themes and Trends from Our Pots and Our Calabashes.* Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018). SBL Meeting in San Diego
* 2018. Respondent and Panelist on Racism, Pedagogy and Biblical Studies; Theme: *Teaching about Racism in Biblical Studies in the Context of the Black Lives Matter Movement*. SBL Meeting in Denver CO.
* 2018. Book review Panelist on Robert S. Heaney’s *From Historical to Critical Post-Colonial Theology: The Contribution of John S. Mbiti and Jess N. K. Mugambi* (Eugene: Pickwick, 2015)*.* AAR Meeting in Denver, CO
* 2018. “African Biblical Hermeneutics in Global Christian Landscape: A Diasporic Approach.” Conference on World Christianity and Missions (Princeton Theological Seminary, Jan 2018)
* 2017. Panelist on The Book of Exodus: Emancipatory Potentials and Moral Problematics (SBL Meeting in Boston)
* 2017. “Exodus and Exile as Doors of (no) Return? Moses, Sundiata, and the Constructions of Afro-Spatial Genealogies,” SBL Meeting in Boston, MA.
* 2017. Plenary Address: "Rememory, Storytelling, and the (Un)explainable in Exodus 32." Mid-Atlantic AAR/SBL meeting.
* 2017. “Religion and Global Health” Global health Catalyst Panel (Dana Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard Medical School)
* 2016. Respondent to papers on Methodologies in African Biblical hermeneutics. SBL Meeting in San Antonio, TX.
* 2015. Respondent to papers on Islands, Islanders, and Scriptures: Biblical Coastlands, Coastal Readings.” SBL Meeting in Atlanta, GA
* 2015. Panel Discussion “God, Scripture, and the Colonized.” (Union Theological Seminary)
* 2014. “Bible after Gunshots: African Biblical Hermeneutics as Postwar Hermeneutics.” SBL Meeting in San Diego, CA.
* 2012. AAR Panel discussion: “The Bible and Colonialism: Africa and the Middle East.”
* 2012. SBL Presentation: “Political Transformation and Paradox in the Postcolony: A Reading of Exodus 2:11-15.”
* 2012. Paper presented at Old Testament Research Colloquium at Princeton Theological Seminary “Ethnicity and Identity Construction in Exodus 2:1-10.”
* 2011. Tipple Vosburgh Lectures, Drew Theological School: “Who Made You Ruler over us? Identity and the Construction of a Nation-State.”
* 2011. Guest Lecturer Princeton Theological Seminary: “Proverbs and Methods of Interpretation.”
* 2010. SBL Presentation: “Personification as Pedagogy in Proverbs 1-9.”
* 2010. SBL Presentation: “Hermeneutics of the Impossible: Interpreting Job through a Cameroonian Cultural Lens.”
* 2010. Wabash Center Panel discussion on teachings goals and methods using Bill Placher’s commentary on Mark. “Commentaries in the Classroom: Reading the Bible Theologically.”
* 2009. Tipple Vosburgh Lectures, Drew Theological School: “Struggling to Reconstruct: The Art of Samuel Bak and the Epilogue of Job.”
* 2008. Presentation at New York Theological Seminary. February: “Multiethnicity in the Bible: The Case of Hagar and Abraham.”

**Church Audience Presentations**

* “Let My People Live.” Presentation at the annual MAAFA celebrations at St. Paul Baptist Church in Brooklyn, New York (2022)
* “Juneteenth Conversation: Let My People Live” at Mount Teman AME, Elizabeth NJ (2022)
* “A Conversation on the Book of Job” at Mount Teman, AME, Elizabeth, NJ (2017)
* Ordained Presbyterian Minister of Word and Sacrament; member of PCUSA
* Full-time Pastor in the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (1995-1999). Activities included:
1. Preparing bulletin and leading worship
2. Preaching and Bible studies
3. Leadership training, counseling, and mentoring
* Part-time Pastor at South Presbyterian Church, Yonkers, NY (2018-2022).
* Part-time Pastor of Berkshire Valley Presbyterian Church, Berkshire, NJ (2022-present) Activities include the following:
1. Preparing bulletins and leading worship
2. Preaching
3. Leadership training, counseling, and mentoring
* Pulpit Supply:
1. Bethel Presbyterian Reformed Church in Brooklyn NY (2016)
2. Witherspoon Street Presbyterian Church in Princeton NJ (2016)
* Bible Studies
1. Witherspoon Street Presbyterian Church, Princeton NJ (2016, 2017)
2. Presbyterian Church in Morristown, NJ (2017)
3. Concord Baptist Church in Brooklyn NY (2010)

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

**Boards**:

* *Journal of Biblical Literature* Editorial Board Member (2017-Present)
* Co-Chair, African Biblical Hermeneutics Section, SBL (2014-2021)
* Board Member, International Meetings, SBL (2014-2017)
* Board Member, Mid Atlantic Regional SBL (2017-2020)
* Board Member, Global Health Catalysts organization
* Reviews of Journal submissions (*JTSA*, *JBL*) and Book (*Horizons*)
* External Reviewer of Dissertation (University of KwaZulu-Natal) and Faculty (University of South Africa)

**SAMPLE AREAS OF RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS**

Theory

* Trauma and Memory/Rememory Studies (Conjunctive, Disjunctive, and Adjunctive memories)
* Necropolitics, Biopolitics and Triple Consciousness (Erasure, Marginalization, and Singularization)
* Ecowomanism/Afro-ecology
* Ubuntu and Hope
* Critical Race Theory
* Postcolonial and Coloniality
* Badass womanism
* Afrofuturism
* Wholeness and Health

Methodology

* African/Africana Biblical Hermeneutics
* Contextual Bible Study (See-Hear-Remember-Act) Models
* Scripturalization and Exegesis
* Interlocution and intertextuality

Epistemology

* Decolonial Epistemologies
* Orality
* Wisdom and Parabolic imagination
* Dreams and dreaming

**Sample Courses**

* Theodicy in the Hebrew Bible
* Introduction to the Hebrew Bible
* Latter Prophets and the Quest for Justice
* Religion and Health in the Hebrew Bible
* Called to Preach in Public: Judgment, Healing, and Hope in Jeremiah
* Beyond Liberation: Africana Interpretations of Exodus
* Water and Survival in the (Hebrew) Bible

**OTHER LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE WORK**

**Organizations**

* Founder and Director of the Religion and Global Health Forum (RGHF) at Drew University ([www.drew.edu/rghf](http://www.drew.edu/rghf)). The Forum theorizes that religion, broadly defined, can be examined as part of the social determinants of health (SDOH), and therefore works at the interface of religion and global health concerns. The RGHF brings together theologians, scientists, activists, and healthcare professionals to educate, advocate, and strategize around wholistic health. The RGHF is associated with the Global Health Catalysts work begun at Harvard Medical School, but now a consortium of universities, including the Universities of Pennsylvania, Oxford, Heidelberg, Johns Hopkins, and Tanzania.
* Founder of the “Never Stop Breathing” organization. Launched in July 2020 after the killing of George Floyd, this organization seeks to mobilize churches and religious institutions to develop and implement concrete programs that enhance systemic racial and health justice ([www.neverstopbreathing.org)](http://www.neverstopbreathing.org))

# Events/Workshops

* “Healthy Churches Now”: Comprehensive Cancer Center in the Clouds (C-4) initiative between the Religion and Global Health Forum and Medical institutions (Johns Hopkins, UPenn, Global Health Catalyst) to collaborate with churches in community health work, including the use of telemedicine to overcome health disparities and build health equity. Churches function as “health hubs.” The initiative will develop a “CARE” App for patient use.
* Intercultural Committee (ICC) workshop at Drew Theological School. Development of intercultural capaciousness as part of antiracism work.
* Wabash Center Faculty of the African Diaspora Hybrid Workshop 2022 (Co-leaders: Kenneth Ngwa and Marcia Y. Riggs). The leadership team created a highly interactive workshop – one that included storytelling, good listening, and multimodal/multisensory participation. Participants drew on the wisdom, grace, humanity, and rigor of each session to reflect on underlying epistemologies and pedagogical praxes that enrich Africana well-being in the face of multiple pandemics. In other words, how should persons of African descent teach, do scholarship, and serve in ways that are healing (body, soul, spirit) for ourselves, for our students, for our communities, for the world, and for the planet? These reflections crystalized around what we called “The Life Cycles of Africana Healing Pedagogies”: Storytelling, Moral Advocacy, Contemplation, and Ritual (S-MA-C-R).
* Wabash Workshop on BIPOC Solidarity (January 12-15, 2022)
* Wabash Center workshop leader on “Peer Mentoring Cluster” for minority faculty (2015-2018). Responsibility: Design and facilitate 2 days of work for the cluster leaders as they consider the goals and designs of their cluster conversations, especially highlighting the value of relationship formation around storytelling, institutional presence, and renewal.

# ACADEMIC AWARDS/GRANTS

* Faith and Health (Health Equity) cohort workshop. Interfaith America Grant ($7,500). 2022.
* “Learning to Thrive: From Survival to Liberation and Flourishing” Wabash Center mini-grant ($5,000) for the Intercultural Committee’s (ICC, at Drew) work on antiracism (2022).
* Wabash Center, Minority Scholars Peer Mentoring Grant (7,500), 2016
* General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church Scholar/Teacher of the Year Award (2013).
* Wabash Center Research Grant (Topic: “The Spirituality of Critical Thinking: Exodus, Knowledge, and Theological Education”), 2010.
* Drew Theological School’s Center for Christianities in Global Contexts (funded by the Henry Luce Foundation) “Exodus” Course Development Grant, 2008.

# PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

* Society of Biblical Literature (SBL)
* American Academy of Religion (AAR)
* International Organization on Interpreting Sacred Texts (located in University of Ghana, Legon)

# DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION

Presbyterian

**LANGUAGES**

* Modern: English, French, German (reading knowledge)
* Ancient: Hebrew, Koine Greek, Syriac/Aramaic, and Ugaritic