Thomas A. Wetzel

Department of Theology
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EDUCATION

TH.D., BIBLICAL STUDIES, HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL (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

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

B.A., SUMMA CUM LAUDE, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE (1990)
Major: philosophy

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO
Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, Department of Theology (2016–present)
Adjunct Instructor, Department of Theology (2008–2011)

MOUNT MERCY UNIVERSITY (CEDAR RAPIDS, IA)
Assistant Professor of Religious Studies (2012–2016)

CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL UNION (CHICAGO, IL)
Adjunct Instructor, Biblical Studies (2009–2011)

LAY AND DEACON FORMATION PROGRAM (DIOCESE OF GARY, INDIANA)
Adjunct Instructor, Theology and Biblical Studies (2010–2011)

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)
Assistant Professor of English (1999–2003)

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE
Graduate Instructor of English and Literary Studies (1994–1999)
Associate Lecturer, Department of Learning Skills and Educational Opportunity (1993–1994)

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

- Weekly spiritual direction with directees in Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (SEEL)* program [the formal Spiritual Exercises offered under the Nineteenth Annotation] (2025–present; two directees each annual cycle)
- Currently accompanying six directees in monthly spiritual direction

- Regular rotation director for multi-day silent retreats at the Jesuit Retreat House in Oshkosh, WI (2025–present)
- "Advanced Internship in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola" through Bellarmine Jesuit Retreat House (2025–2026)
- Completed IPS 420 and 421, "Ignatian Spiritual Direction Practicum" (2024–2025)

ADMINISTRATIVE/LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

Member, CAS Academic Council	(2020–present)
Department Advisory Committee, Department of Theology	(2017–2019; 2021–2024)
Undergraduate Program Director, Department of Theology	(2017–2020)
Search Committee, University Core Curriculum Director	(2020)
Undergraduate Program Committee, Department of Theology	(2017–2024; *chair, 2017–2019*)
Director, Interfaith-Interreligious Studies Program	(2016–2023)
University Interfaith Committee	(2017–2019)
University Committee to Review Course Evaluation Software	(2018–2019)
Ad Hoc Committee on Teaching and Learning, Department of Theology	(2016–2017)

MOUNT MERCY UNIVERSITY (CEDAR RAPIDS, IA)

Religious Studies Program Coordinator	(2012–2016)
Established and Chaired Religious Studies Program Revision Committee	(2012–2016)
Campus Ministry Faculty Liaison	(2014–2016)
Graduate Policy Committee	(2013–2015)
Faculty Leadership Team (Faculty Senate)	(2013–2016)

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY (RIVER FOREST, IL)

Writing Center Director	(1999–2003)
Faculty Senate	(2000–2003)

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE

Graduate Program Policy Committee	(1995–1998)

PARISH- AND DIOCESE-RELATED LEADERSHIP

Adult Formation Steering Group, St. Juliana Parish, Chicago	(2022–2023)
Member of the Parish Pastoral Council, Our Lady of Hope, Rosemont, IL	(2020–2022)
Coordinator for various adult formation programs, Our Lady of Hope	(2019–2022)
Archdiocesan *Renew My Church* planning group, O'Hare Neighborhood Grouping	(2020–2021)

PUBLICATIONS

- *The Prophet We Deserve: Prophetic Spirituality in the Book of Jonah* (working title for manuscript in progress; projected completion in summer 2027)
- *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 summer 2027)
- *Violence and Divine Victory in the Book of Esther* (Mohr Seibeck; July 1, 2022)
- "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

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

- "Esther in the Academy" (invited paper presented to *Megilloth* Section at the Annual Meeting of Society of Biblical Literature/Denver, 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, Catholic Theological Union, 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)

MAJOR CHURCH-RELATED PRESENTATIONS

- "A Pumpkin-Headed God: The Theology and Spirituality of Linus Van Pelt" (a four-week seminar on Charles Schulz's *Peanuts* comic strip, presented in the Sunday Forum series of the Adult Education Program at Christ Church Oak Brook, July 2026)
- "Jonah: On the Run, In the Boat, Through the City, and Out of Mercy" (four-week seminar presented in Sunday Forum series of Adult Education Program at Christ Church Oak Brook, July 2025)
- "Spirituality and the Bible" (six-week seminar presented in the Thursday Adult Formation series of the Adult Education Program at Christ Church Oak Brook, July–August 2024)
- "Understanding and Praying with the Lenten Psalms at Mass" (six-week adult formation program offer at St. Juliana Parish, Lent 2023)
- "The Book(s) of Esther: Finding Meaning in Multiplicity" (five-week seminar presented in the Sunday Forum series of the Adult Education Program at Christ Church Oak Brook, July 2022)
- "Is the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament?" (invited series of three lectures offered at Summer Scripture Institute/Mundelein Seminary, summer 2018)

AWARDS, GRANTS, AND GRANT APPLICATIONS

Louisville Institute Grant for Researchers ($55,000 grant application under review) (2026)
Co-Lead Writer for $1.25 million Lilly *Thriving Congregations* Grant [award not received] (2023)
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)

REFERENCES

Available on request