

Presenters' Biographies (in alphabetical order)



Rev. Dr. Anthony Bailey serves as Lead Minister, Parkdale United Church, Ottawa. Originally from Barbados, Anthony Bailey has lived and served in various parts of Canada, in Kenya and Jamaica. A teacher at heart, Bailey taught at the McGill University joint theological colleges in Montreal and the Theological College of the University of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica. He is an occasional lecturer at the Ottawa School of Theology and Spirituality and has been a guest lecturer at Queen's University School of Religion. Bailey is a sought-after preacher, speaker and worship/workshop leader at North American and Caribbean conferences. His academic degrees are in the areas of social work, theology, philosophy of religion (liturgical language) and ethics and culture. Bailey has been awarded the Dreamkeepers' Martin Luther King Jr. Life Achievement Award for Racial Reconciliation and the Order of Ottawa. He wrote the biblical and theological study resource for "Sankofa: The Histories and Heritages of Black Peoples in the United Church of Canada," and was Chair of the United Church of Canada's Racial Justice Advisory Committee. He is an intercultural competence and anti-racism trainer, and comments on social and racial issues on local radio and television stations in his home city of Ottawa.



Rev. Dr. Ross Bartlett

After more than 35 years serving congregations in different settings in Nova Scotia and Ontario, in 2018 the Rev. Dr. Ross Bartlett was appointed United Church Formation Director at the Atlantic School of Theology. He has been involved in the education and training of ministry candidates and lay leaders for 25 years. He is the author of several books and articles, most recently, *Gathered for Preaching* (2021), a collection of articles from his regular preaching column in *Gathering Magazine*.



Rev. Dr. Kathy Black is an ordained United Methodist pastor who is the Gerald Kennedy Chair of Homiletics and Liturgics at the Claremont School of Theology. Dr. Black has served as a college chaplain at Gallaudet University (the only liberal arts college for deaf persons in the world), and as the founding pastor of Magothy United Methodist Church of the Deaf. Her research and teaching interests center on ministry with persons with disabilities, feminist liturgy, multicultural worship, comparative ritual practices and the role of art in worship. Dr. Black is the author of *A Healing Homiletic: Preaching and Disabilities*; *Worship Across Cultures: A Handbook of United Methodist Worship Practices*; *Culturally-Conscious Worship: Worship in Multicultural Contexts*. She is also the co-author of *Wising Up: Ritual Resources for Women of Faith in their Journey of Aging* with Heather Murray Elkins, *Art in Service of the Sacred* with Catherine Kapikian, and *Rhythms of Religious Ritual: The Yearly Cycles of Jews, Christians, and Muslims* with Jonathan Friedmann, Tamar Frankiel, Bishop Kyrillos, Hamid Mavani and Jihad Turk.



Rev. Richard Choe was born in South Korea and came to Canada in 1975. He is a Korean Canadian – a Canadian of Korean ancestry – whose life and ministry have been deeply rooted in his experience of being a racial ethnic minority living in Canada. Richard has been in ministry for over 30 years as an ordained minister within the United Church of Canada. He has been involved in organizing, educating and advancing ministry of mutual welcoming & inclusion by utilizing arts, including visual arts and music throughout his ministry. Richard has preached in Korean and in English across the globe. He has offered various workshops on Ministry of Mutual Welcoming & Inclusion (“intercultural ministry”) at the 8th and the 9th WCC Assemblies; as well as, at the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism in Athens, Greece. He received a Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders by the Louisville Institute in 2011 to work on utilizing visual arts and poetry in liturgy and preaching. Numerous workshops have been led by Richard on utilizing visual arts and poetry in worship based on his sabbatical work. Richard is currently ministering with College Street United Church in downtown Toronto as an intentional Interim Minister while offering coaching and mentoring to clergy across Canada.



Rev. Sadekie Lyttle-Forbes is an ordained minister serving among the people of Sharon-Hope United Church, a congregation in the United Church of Canada. She holds academic qualifications in Theology, Clinical Psychology and Education. Having served in both rural, urban and multipoint settings, she describes her 14 years of pastoral ministry experience as rewarding and humbling. In addition to her pastoral charge, Sadekie serves on a number of committees within her denomination.



Rev. Dr. J. Dorcas Gordon is Principal Emerita of Knox College at the University of Toronto, having previously served for 18 years as Principal and Associate Professor of Biblical Interpretation and Preaching. Prior to that, she was Director of the Doctor of Ministry program at the Toronto School of Theology. She is an ordained minister in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. A feminist, for over 40 years she has given numerous workshops on feminist interpretation of the New Testament. Dorcas has been active in international ecumenical agencies such as WARC (now WCRC) and WCC throughout her ministry. She has served as President of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) in the United States and Canada, as Chair of the ATS Women in Leadership Committee and on the ATS Board. Dorcas presently serves as Chair of the Foundation for Theological Education in South East Asia, as President of the International Association of Women Ministers, as a member of the Taiwan Ecumenical Forum and as an activist supporting Palestinian efforts to tell their story of violence and destruction under Israeli occupation. She is married to Noel and together they have four children and eight grandchildren.



Rev. Dr. Carolyn Helsel is Associate Professor in the Blair Monie Distinguished Chair in Homiletics at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, and is an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Dr. Helsel holds a PhD from Emory University and MDiv and ThM degrees from Princeton Theological Seminary, and a BA in Religion, summa cum laude, from Whitworth University. Her ThM thesis and PhD dissertation both focused on how white preachers can preach about racism. She is the author of *Anxious to Talk About It: Helping White People Talk Faithfully About Racism*, and *Preaching about Racism: A Guide for Faith Leaders*. Her first two books together won the Best Book(s) of the Year award from the Academy of Parish Clergy for 2018. She is the co-author with Dr. Joy Harris-Smith of *The ABCs of Diversity: Helping Kids (and Ourselves!) Embrace Our Differences*, and the co-author with Dr. Song-Mi Suzie Park of *The Flawed Family of God: Stories about the Imperfect Families in Genesis*. She has been interviewed for articles in CNN and *Newsweek*, as well as several radio shows and podcasts. She is married to Dr. Phil Browning Helsel with two children and is active in speaking about anti-racism in churches around the country, as well as in her local community in Austin, Texas.



Rev. Dr. David Kim-Cragg is a minister with 20 years' experience of ministry within the United Church. He has served in southwestern Ontario, South Korea and Saskatoon as congregational minister and as a university chaplain. When he was in grade 4, David ran into problems progressing with his reading and writing. A teacher took him out of class helped him to improve by getting him to write stories. Since then, he has had a special place in his heart for telling tales. In ministry, David has been inspired by Lois Miriam Wilson's book, *Stories Seldom Told*, and by Minjung theology, which teaches that stories, rather than expository prose, are how the gospel is found. David recently received his PhD in history with a dissertation telling the story of a Korean Canadian church relationship. He currently serves St. Matthew's United Church in Richmond Hill.



Rev. Hoeun Lee is a minister of St. Paul's United Church (Tisdale, SK). He is a PhD Candidate in Systematic-Cultural Theology at Yonsei University Graduate School. He is also a YouTube Creator (channels: Second Wind Archive, Tisdale: St. Paul's United Church, St. Andrew's College, and Korean Rainbow United).



Rev. Murray Pruden is Nehiyaw, Cree First Nations from the Goodfish Lake and Saddle Lake First Nations. He grew up in the rural community of Smoky Lake. And his family's history come from that area based on his ancestor Rev. Henry Bird Steinhauer. Rev. Pruden has studied theatre at the University of Alberta, received a theatre performance diploma from Keyano college in Fort McMurray and an undergrad BFA from the University of Lethbridge. He completed his Master of Divinity at the Vancouver School of Theology at UBC and studies at the Sandy Saulteaux Spiritual Centre in Manitoba. Rev. Pruden's path to ministry has taken him to many good uses of his talents and spiritual gifts - dramatic works on theological topics, workshop presentations on storytelling, ecumenical representation on Indigenous theology and sermon reflections to various communities of faith across Canada. Rev. Pruden is the current National Executive Minister for Indigenous Ministries and Justice for the United Church of Canada. His role as a leader and person of faith and spirituality has grown to a role of a storyteller and person of inspiration. This path he is taking is the foundation, the history and literature to help form a good sustenance of authority and community building for him and for the Indigenous communities. He likes to think that this all leads to him being a strong voice for Indigenous people on the level of religion and spirituality and the love of his communities. And a path of self-love and love for all of Creators creations.



Rev. Dr. Leah D. Schade is Assistant Professor of Preaching and Worship at Lexington Theological Seminary in Kentucky in the United States. An ordained minister in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America since 2000, Leah has served congregations in rural, urban, and suburban settings. She earned both her MDiv and PhD degrees from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (now United Lutheran Seminary). Her publications include: [*Creation-Crisis Preaching: Ecology, Theology, and the Pulpit*](#) (Chalice Press, 2015); [*Preaching in the Purple Zone: Ministry in the Red-Blue Divide*](#) (Rowman & Littlefield, 2019); and [*Rooted and Rising: Voices of Courage in a Time of Climate Crisis*](#), co-edited with Margaret Bullitt-Jonas with essays from a cross section of faith leaders and activists offering their spiritual wisdom and energy for facing the difficult days ahead (Rowman & Littlefield, 2019). She has also written a Creation-centered Lenten devotional, [*For the Beauty of the Earth*](#) (Chalice Press, 2020). Leah has served as an anti-fracking and climate activist, community organizer, and advocate for environmental justice issues and is the "EcoPreacher" blogger for Patheos.com: <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/ecopreacher/>.



Rev. Dr. Frank Thomas currently serves as the Director of the PhD Program in African American Preaching and Sacred Rhetoric and the Nettie Sweeney and Hugh Th. Miller Professor of Homiletics at Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, Indiana. A revised and updated version of *They Like to Never Quit Praisin' God: The Role of Celebration in Preaching* was released in August 2013. To complement this classic preaching book, Thomas published, in 2014, *Preaching as Celebration Digital Lecture Series and Workbook*. For many years, Thomas has also taught preaching to Doctoral and Master level students at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, Illinois, Memphis Theological Seminary in Memphis, Tennessee, and United Theological Seminary of Dayton, Ohio. He is the CEO of Hope for Life International, Inc., which formerly published *The African American Pulpit*. Thomas also serves as a member of the International Board of *Societas Homiletica*, an international society of teachers of preaching.

Thomas is the author of *The God of the Dangerous Sermon* (Fall 2021), *Surviving a Dangerous Sermon*, *How to Preach a Dangerous Sermon* and *Introduction to the Practice of African American Preaching*, released by Abingdon Press respectively, April 2020, February 2018, and November 2016. He also co-edited *Preaching with Sacred Fire: An Anthology of African American Sermons 1750 to the Present* with Martha Simmons, published by W. W. Norton & Company in 2010. This critically acclaimed book offers a rare view of the unheralded role of the African American preacher in American history. Thomas is also the author of several other books on subjects from matters of prayer to spiritual maturity. Thomas served with distinction as the senior pastor for two remarkable congregations: New Faith Baptist Church of Matteson, Illinois, and Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church of Memphis, Tennessee, for eighteen years and thirteen years, respectively. Thomas holds a PhD in Communications (Rhetoric) from the University of Memphis, a Doctor of Divinity from Christian Theological Seminary, Doctor of Ministry degrees from Chicago Theological Seminary and United Theological Seminary, a Master of Divinity from Chicago Theological Seminary, and a Master of Arts in African-Caribbean Studies from Northeastern Illinois University. Thomas and his wife Joyce Scott Thomas have two adult children, Anthony William and Rachel Dickerson (Milton) and one granddaughter, August Elise Dickerson.