

**Dawn Ottoni-Wilhelm**

***Curriculum Vitae***

Alvin F. Brightbill Professor of Preaching and Worship  
Bethany Theological Seminary  
615 National Road West, Richmond, IN 47374  
765-983-1813  
wilheda@bethanyseminary.edu

**EDUCATION (including Fellowships and Awards)**

Certification in Spiritual Direction through Oasis Ministries, 2020  
Ph.D., 2004. Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ. Dissertation: *The Prophetic Voice in Preaching: The Witness of Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Luke*. Full merit scholarship and Fellowship for Scholastic Excellence.  
Goethe-Institut, summer 1999. Advanced German language intensive, Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Germany. Full merit scholarship.  
Clinical Pastoral Education, 1986-87. Lehigh Valley Hospital Center, Allentown PA. One basic and four advanced units.  
M.Div. , 1986. Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton NJ. Full merit scholarship.  
B.A. with honors, 1982. The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor MI. Hebrew and Old Testament Studies. Thesis: *A Theology of Warfare in the Old Testament*.  
Graduate course work in Jewish philosophy and worship (one semester), 1981. The Jewish Theological Seminary, New York. Full merit scholarship.

**ACADEMIC AND MINISTERIAL APPOINTMENTS**

2014-present Brightbill Professor of Preaching and Worship, Bethany Theological Seminary (BTS).  
2000-present Director of Chapel (supervising chapel services, with students)  
2008-2011 Professor of Preaching and Worship, BTS  
2004-2008 Associate Professor of Preaching and Worship, BTS  
1998-2004 Assistant Professor of Ministry Studies, BTS (I began teaching at Bethany on a half-time basis in '98, the same year I began doctoral studies at Princeton Theological Seminary.)  
2007-2015 Professor for the core curriculum of the D. Min. in Preaching Program, Association of Chicago Theological Schools, The University of Chicago. Upper level/Third-Year course: "Preaching as Social Transformation"  
2000 Teaching Fellow, Princeton Theological Seminary, Intro. to Preaching  
1992-1998 Coordinating (Senior) Pastor, Stone Church of the Brethren (CoB), Huntingdon, PA  
1990-1992 Ministry Associate, University Baptist and Brethren Church, State College, PA  
1987-1990 Pastor for Nurture, Mechanic Grove CoB, Quarryville, PA  
1986-1987 Resident Chaplain, Lehigh Valley Hospital Center, Allentown, PA  
1984-1985 Assistant Chaplain, Trenton State Psychiatric Hospital, Trenton, NJ

## AREAS OF GREATEST ACADEMIC INTEREST

Homiletics, theopoetics, spirituality, peace and justice studies, liturgical and ritual studies

## PUBLICATIONS

### Books

*Preaching the Fear of God in a Fear-Filled World*, contributing ed. Münster: LIT Verlag, 2020.

*Preaching Prophetic Care: Building Bridges to Justice*, contributing ed. and co-edited with Phillis-Isabella Sheppard and Ron Allen. Pickwick Pub., 2019.

*Preaching God's Transforming Justice: A Lectionary Commentary* (3 volumes), contributing ed. of three sections on International Women's Day, and co-edited with Ronald J. Allen and Dale P. Andrews. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press; Year A, 2013; Year C, 2012; Year B, 2011. Cited as a "Book Mark" (notable book) by *The Christian Century Magazine*, 2014.

*Preaching the Gospel of Mark: Proclaiming the Power of God*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008. Listed among the "Notable Books of 2008" by *Preaching Magazine*, Nov. 2009.

*Believing in Preaching: What Listeners Hear in Sermons*, co-authored with Mary Alice Mulligan, Diane Turner-Sharazz, and Ronald J. Allen. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2004.

### Book Chapters

"Preaching and Theopoetics." In *The Oxford Handbook of Christian Preaching*. Ed. by Carolyn Sharp. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, forthcoming 2026.

"The Spiritual Dimension of Homiletical Peer Coaching." In *Learning Together to Preach: How to Become an Effective Preaching Coach*. Ed. by John S. McClure and Allie Utley. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2023.

"Anabaptist Preaching Traditions." In *Preaching the Manifold Grace of God: Theologies of Preaching in Major Historical Theological Families*, Vol. I. Ed. by Ronald J. Allen. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2022)

"The Turn to the Listener: Developing an Ear for Listening and Preaching." In *What's Right with Preaching Today? Honoring the Legacy of Fred B. Craddock*. Ed. by Mike Graves and André Resner. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2021.

Four chapters on Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Mark, and 1-2-3 John. In *A Dunker Guide to the Bible*. Ed. by Wendy McFadden. Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 2010.

"New Hermeneutic, New Homiletic, New Directions: An U.S. American Perspective" in *Bibelwort und Kanzelsprache. Homiletik und Hermeneutik im Dialog*. Ed. by Alexander Deeg (based on lectures presented at the International Bugenhagen Symposium in München, October 2009; Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2010) Later published in the journal in *Homiletic*, Vol. 35, No.1 (see below).

Three essays for Proper 16, 17 and 18. In *Feasting on the Word: Lectionary Commentary Series* (Year B, Vols. 3 and 4). Ed. by David L. Bartlett and Barbara Brown Taylor. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009.

- “Questions for the Preacher.” In *Best Advice: Wisdom on Ministry from 30 Leading Pastors and Preachers*. Ed. by William J. Carl III. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009.
- “The Prophetic Voice in Preaching.” In *Lines, Places, and Heritage: Essays Commemorating the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Church of the Brethren*. Ed. by Stephen L. Longenecker. Bridgewater, VA: Penobscot Press, 2008.
- “God’s Word in the World: Prophetic Preaching and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” In *Anabaptist Preaching: A Conversation Between Pulpit, Pew and Bible*. Ed. by David B. Greiser and Michael A. King. Telford, PA: Cascadia Publishing House, 2003.
- “Sixth Sunday of Easter” and “Ascension Day.” In *The Abingdon Women’s Preaching Annual, Series 2 (Year B)*. Ed. by Leonora Tubbs Tisdale. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1999.
- “Understandings of Sin: Contemporary Applications and Prospects.” In *Anabaptist Currents: History in Conversation with the Present*. Ed. by Carl F. Bowman and Stephen L. Longenecker. Bridgewater, VA: Penobscot Press, 1995.
- “A Pastoral Testimony on the State of the Church.” In *Brethren in Transition: 20<sup>th</sup> Century Directions and Dilemmas*. Ed. by Emmert F. Bittinger. Camden, ME: Penobscot Press, 1993.
- “All Creation Waits.” In *Women at the Well: Expressions of Faith, Life and Worship*. Ed. by Betty Jo Buckingham. Elgin, IL: Womaen’s Caucus of the Church of the Brethren, 1987.

## Articles

- “Preaching the Gospel of Mark: The Power of Love among Us.” *Journal for Preachers* Vol. XLIV No.4 (Pentecost 2021): 54-60.
- “The Call Within a Call.” *Messenger Magazine* (December 2019).
- “Fearing God in a Fear-Filled World? Homiletical Explorations.” *International Journal of Homiletics*, Supplemental Issue 2019: 1-18.
- “Counting the Cost, Faith in the Future: Brethren at the End of the Civil War.” *Brethren Life and Thought* Vol.60 No.2 (Fall 2015): 89-101.
- “Forward in Worship and Faith: A Vision of Worship for the Church of the Brethren.” *Brethren Life and Thought* Vol.60 No.1 (Spring 2015): 48-56.
- “New Hermeneutic, New Homiletic, New Directions: an U.S.-North American Perspective.” *Homiletic*, Vol. 35, No.1: 17-31. (Adapted from lectures presented at the International Bugenhagen Symposium in München, October 2009; see above, book chapter.)
- “1-2-3 John: Love Letters and Lovers’ Quarrels.” *Messenger* (October 2009).
- “Brethren Ways of Worship.” *Messenger* (lead article), February 2009.
- “The Gospel of Mark: The Good News of God’s Power Alive among Us.” *Messenger* (March 2008).
- “Through Despair to Hope: Isaiah’s Prophetic Witness and Public Theology.” *Messenger* (December 2006).
- “Deuteronomy: God’s Teaching at the Boundaries of Life.” *Messenger* (May 2005).

“Giving Voice to God’s Word in the World: The Challenge and Promise of Prophetic Preaching.” *Messenger* (December 2001). Originally printed for On Earth Peace Assembly, *A Resource for Pastors and Preachers in Response to the Crisis of September 11, 2001*.

“Top Ten Books for Brethren.” *Brethren Life and Thought* Vol. 44 Nos. 1 and 2 (Winter and Spring 1999): 34-37

“Brothers and Sisters at God’s Table: Identifying the Ingredients of Our Faith.” *Brethren Life and Thought* Vol. XL Nos. 3 and 4 (Summer/Fall, 1995): 246-52.

### **Published Sermons**

Sermon on Num. 23: 11-20 (closing worship of Societas Homiletica in Wittenberg, Germany, 2012). In *Viva Vox Evangelii – Reforming Preaching*. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2013.

“Living Parables” in *Exiles in the Empire: Believers Church Perspectives on Politics*. Kitchner: Pandora Press, 2006.

“Blessed Are You.” *Brethren Life and Thought*, Spring 2005.

“Of Grapes and Other Wild Things.” *Brethren Life and Thought* (Fall 2000).

“In One Place.” *Brethren Life and Thought* (Spring 1998).

“The Gifts of Ministry.” *Brethren Life and Thought* (Fall 1993).

### **Book Reviews**

Debra Mumford, *Envisioning the Reign of God: Preaching for Tomorrow*, Valley Forge: Judson Press (2019). In *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology*, April 2021.

Joni Sancken, *Words That Heal: Preaching Hope to Wounded Souls*, Nashville: Abingdon Press (2019). In *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, winter 2019.

Marianne Gaarden, *The Third Room of Preaching*, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, Digital Series (2018). In *Homiletic*, winter 2018.

Charles Bobertz, *The Gospel of Mark: A Liturgical Reading*, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic (2016). In *Homiletic*, summer 2017.

Thomas G. Long, *Accompany Them with Singing: The Christian Funeral*, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press (2009). In *Brethren Life and Thought*, spring 2011.

Michael P. Graves, *Preaching the Inward Light: Early Quaker Rhetoric*, Texas: Baylor University Press (2009). In *Homiletic*, summer 2010.

Daniel Harrington, S.J., *The Synoptic Gospels Set Free*, New York: Paulist Press (2009) In *Homiletic*, winter 2009.

Greg Heisler, *Spirit-Led Preaching: The Holy Spirit’s Role in Sermon Presentation and Delivery*, Nashville: B&H Academic (2007). In *Homiletic*, summer 2009.

Alexander Deeg, Walter Homolka and Heinz-Güther Schöttler, eds. *Preaching in Judaism and Christianity: Encounters and Developments from Biblical Times to Modernity*. Studia Judaica. Berlin: Walter De Gruyter (2008). In *Homiletic*, winter 2008.

Sally A. Brown, *Cross Talks: Preaching Redemption Here and Now*, Westminster John Knox Press (2008). In *Brethren Life and Thought*, Vol. 53, Summer 2008, No. 3.

Barbara K. Lundblad, *Marking Time: Preaching Biblical Stories in Present Tense*, St Louis: Chalice Press (2007). In *Homiletic*, summer 2008

### **Book Endorsements**

Robert Hoch-Yidokodiltona, *Living with the Sermon*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2024.

Debra J. Bucher and Estella Horning, *Hebrews*. Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2024.

Charles L. Aaron Jr. and Jaime Clark-Soles, eds. *Shouting Above the Noisy Crowd: Biblical Wisdom and the Urgency of Preaching – Essays in Honor of Alyce M. McKenzie*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2021.

Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, *How Women Transform Preaching*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2021.

Johan Ciliers, *Grace upon Grace: Reflections on the Meaning of Life*. Stellenbosch, South Africa: African Sun Media Pub., 2020.

Frank A. Thomas, *The Practice of African American Preaching*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2016.

Stanley P. Saunders, *Preaching the Gospel of Matthew: Proclaiming God's Presence*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010.

Robert Reid, ed., *Slow of Speech and Unclean Lips*. Wipf and Stock Pub., 2010.

Gerald J. Mast and J. Denny Weaver, *Defenseless Christianity: Anabaptism for a Nonviolent Church*. Cascadia Pub. House and Herald Press, 2009.

June Alliman Yoder, Marlene Kropf, and Rebecca Slough, *Preparing Sunday Dinner: A Collaborative Approach to Worship and Preaching*. Herald Press, 2005.

### **NOTEWORTHY RECENT TEACHING, SERMONS, LECTURES, PRESENTATIONS IN THE U.S.**

Lecture, "Reimagining Preaching: Spirit and Imagination," Seattle School of Theology and Psychology, Center for Transforming Engagement, inaugural (annual) Reimagining Preaching Conference, May 2025.

Lecture, "Creating New Worlds with Words: Preaching with Metaphor, Poetics, Story, and Song," and two sermons (on Job 28 and Matt 6), Nazarene Theological Seminary Preaching Conference (Missouri), September 2023.

Presentation at the pastors' dinner, "Inklings of Joy," and sermon (on Phil.2 and Ps.25) at the Western Plains District Conference (CoB), July 2023.

Worship coordinator for 2022 Annual Conference of the CoB (5 services) in Omaha, NE.

Wardlaw lecture "Theopoetics of Preaching: Glimpses and Soundings of God Among Us" and sermon (on Job 28, "Glimpses and Soundings of Wonder") for the Association of Chicago Theological Schools at the University of Chicago and Lutheran School of Theology, July 2022.

Publishers Roundtable, "Publishing in the Field of Homiletics Today," the Academy of Homiletics, Annual Meeting 2021.

Planning Team and Colloquy Teacher for the David G. Buttrick Certificate Program in Homiletic Peer Coaching, Vanderbilt University, 2012-22.

Continuing Ed. course, "Preaching and Spiritual Care" for the South Central IN District CoB (October 2021) and Pacific Southwest District CoB, Nov. 2021.

Plenary Speaker, "Worship and Ritual Care in Times of Crisis" for Quakers in Pastoral

Care and Counseling, Annual Meeting, April 2021.

Occasional preacher in Nicarry Chapel, BTS; Northview CoB, Indianapolis, IN; West Richmond Friends, Richmond, IN.

Preacher for the National Older Adult Conference of the CoB and Continuing Education course for pastors, “Preaching and Spiritual Formation,” September 2019.

Continuing Education class, “Preaching as Spiritual Formation” Annual Conference of the CoB, July 2019.

Continuing Education courses for The Joe R. Engle Institute of Preaching, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton NJ (“Preaching as Spiritual Formation” and “Preaching as Theopoetics and Public Discourse”), June 2019.

Seminar, “Proclaiming the Book of Acts,” Episcopal Diocese of Dayton, OH, April 2019.

Bible study leader and preacher, MidAtlantic CoB District Meeting, Manassas VA, October 2018.

Lecture, “Preaching in Postmodernism: Visions and Voices for God’s Hope,” CoB Annual Conference (Equipping Session, continuing ed.), Grand Rapids MI, June 2017.

Sermon series on “Jesus’ Ways to Newness of Life,” Iowa District CoB, October 2017.

Preacher for the Annual Conference of the CoB, Greensboro NC, July 2017.

“Glimpses and Soundings of the Prophetic Voice: Preaching the Reign of God,” a three-lecture series for the IL/WI District of the CoB in Rockford, IL, April 2016.

“Proclaiming the Reign of God: in the World, for the World,” a five-lecture series for Northern Plains District of the CoB, April 2015.

“Counting the Cost, Faith in the Future: Brethren at the End of the Civil War,” for Bridgewater College and the John Kline sesquicentennial celebration of the end of the U.S. Civil War, May 2015.

Guest preacher, ACTS D. Min. chapel service (Assoc. of Chicago Theol. Schools, Chicago IL), June 2015.

### **INTERNATIONAL LECTURES, SERMONS, WORSHIP**

Lecture, “Your Kingdom Come: Has the Church Lost Its Revolutionary Nerve?” Sermon (Matt 6) and workshop (“Theopoetics and the Lectionary”) at The University of Copenhagen, September 2023.

Guest lecture (via Zoom), “De-centering Whiteness” at the University of Leipzig (Intro. to Preaching course), December 2022.

Lecture, “New Directions in U.S. Homiletics: Theopoetics in Preaching,” The University of Copenhagen (via Zoom), April 2020.

Presidential Address for bi-annual meeting of Societas Homiletica, Duke University Divinity School, Raleigh NC, August 2018.

Worship leader for closing worship of the Societas Homiletica meeting in Stellenbosch, South Africa, March 2016.

Preacher for the closing worship of the Societas Homiletica meeting in Wittenberg, Germany (part of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland’s decade-long celebration of Luther’s posting the 95 theses), Schlosskirche, August 2012.

Lecture, “The Reign of God and the Preaching of Jesus – Politics and Poetics,” the

University of Leipzig, Germany, May 2012.  
 Workshop, "Listening-Looking, Asking Questions, and Using Your Imagination,"  
 University of Leipzig, Germany, May 2012.  
 Workshop, "Listening to Listeners: A Review of Research Practices and an Empirical  
 Study of 27 U. S. Congregations, 2000-04," University of Leipzig, Germany, May  
 2012.  
 Sermon on Jeremiah 31, St. Thomas Kirche, Leipzig, Germany, May 2012.  
 Lectures, "The Preacher as Poet and Prophet: The Preaching of Jesus and the Reign of  
 God," Teologisk Pædagogisk Center, Løgumkloster and Copenhagen, Denmark,  
 May-June 2012.  
 Workshops, "Looking, Listening, and Proclaiming God's Reign" and "Performing  
 Scripture in Worship: New Forms of Proclamation," Teologisk Pædagogisk  
 Center, Løbumkloster and Copenhagen, Denmark, May-June 2012.  
 Lecture, "New Hermeneutics, New Homiletics, New Directions: An U.S.-North American  
 Perspective." International Bugenhagen Symposium, Munich, Germany, October  
 2009 (see Book Chapters, above).

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO PH.D. DISSERTATIONS AND D. MIN. THESES**

External Examiner for Ph. D. student Sharon Davis, The University of Stellenbosch, 2020  
 Faculty Advisor to third-year D. Min. students in the Assoc. of Chicago Theological  
 Schools D. Min. in Preaching Program, 2007-15  
 External Examiner for Ph. D. student Sarah Freeman, Toronto School of Theology, 2014  
 External Examiner for Ph.D. student Allan Rudy-Froese, Toronto School of Theology,  
 2012

#### **RECENT COURSES**

Preaching, Theopoetics, and Society – introductory course focusing on preaching as the  
 theopoetics of Scripture, arts, and social justice  
 Poet and Prophet: Building Bridges through Preaching and Public Discourse – upper-  
 level preaching course on how to build bridges while addressing divisive  
 topics and concerns in preaching, drawing on theopoetic practices of biblical and  
 current-day prophets  
 Preaching and Public Discourse – introductory course focusing on preaching and  
 speaking in diverse public contexts about religious values (including non-profit  
 organizations, reconciliation/peace ministries, public schools, other ecumenical  
 and interreligious settings)  
 Preaching the Gospel(s) – upper-level preaching course focusing on the canonical  
 Gospels and the theological meaning of "gospel" as the reign of God in and for  
 the church and world (cross-listed as an upper-level course in Ministry Studies,  
 Biblical Studies, and Theological Studies)  
 Patterns of Worship – introductory course in the theology and creative design of  
 worship gatherings for diverse settings, including study traditional and newly  
 emerging worship patterns (inc. those of Free Church traditions)  
 Ritual and Reflection in the Life of Faith – worship course focusing on theology,

practices, and design of religious rituals, ordinances, and sacraments  
Cross-cultural travel course to Iona, Scotland – including residency at the Iona Abbey (Hebrides), travel to the Holy Isle of Lindisfarne, and Edinburgh for worship, work, study, and to create and participate in ecumenical worship services  
Spiritual Direction – introductory course co-taught with Earlham School of Religion faculty member, preparing students for individual and group spiritual direction  
Spiritual Formation as Contemplation and Action – core course of Bethany’s (Professional) MA in Spiritual and Social Transformation  
M. Div. Review – capstone course in the M. Div. curriculum; including practical theology as interpretation, integration, communication, and anticipation of ministerial practice and theory

### **ACADEMIC AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, HONORS**

Appointed Alvin F. Brightbill Chair of Preaching and Worship, Bethany Theological Seminary, spring 2014  
Rohrer Book Award for *Preaching the Gospel of Mark: Proclaiming the Power of God*, Bethany Theological Seminary, May 2009  
Fellow in Residence, Cathedral College of Preachers, National Cathedral, Washington D.C., May-June 2006  
Rohrer Book Award for *Believing in Preaching*, Bethany Theological Sem., May 2005

### **SCHOLARLY AND RESEARCH ASSOCIATIONS AND SERVICE**

Academy of Homiletics, Executive Committee (1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, 2025; president, 2026), member since 1998  
Senior Editor, *Homiletic* (the journal of the Academy of Homiletics), 2020 – present  
Editorial Board (founding member), *International Journal of Homiletics*, 2008 – present  
Consultant and teaching faculty for the David Buttrick Certificate Program in Homiletic Peer Coaching, Vanderbilt University Divinity School, 2012-22  
President of Societas Homiletica 2016-18 (the international association of homileticians), Board Member 2010-2024 (including annual board meetings, rotating across five continents), member since 2007  
Society of Biblical Literature; steering committee member for the Homiletics and Biblical Studies Group 2006-2012, member since 2003  
Louisville Institute Sabbatical Grant Committee (reviewing and selecting project grants for researchers in religious studies), 2013-14  
Anabaptist-Mennonite Scholars Network, 2003-present  
Advisory board member, “Listening to Listeners Research Project” directed by Ronald J. Allen of Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis IN; funded by Lilly Research Project, 2000-05

### **ACADEMIC ASSIGNMENTS at Bethany Theological Seminary and for the CoB (recent)**

Director of Chapel, 2000-present (including supervision of Student Chapel Coordinators and campus worship services)  
ATS Self-Study Steering Committee, 2014-16

Faculty representative to the Committee to Revise and Update the *CoB Pastor's Manual*, 2013-16; Bethany's Multi-Ethnic Seminary Committee 2016-18; Educational Policies and Assessment Committee, 2012-14 and 2017-18; Presidential Forum Committee (coordinating all worship services), 2014; Presidential Inauguration Committee, 2014; Tenure Review Committees, 2010, 2012; rep. to Bethany Board of Trustees, 2010-14 and 2016-22; Search Committees for faculty positions in History of Christianity, Theology, Peace Studies, Ministry Studies, Spirituality

**LANGUAGES:**

Fluency in German; moderate fluency in Italian, biblical Hebrew, biblical Greek; familiarity with reading French and modern Hebrew

**RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION**

Ordained 1987, Church of the Brethren (an Anabaptist-Pietist tradition); member Northview CoB in Indianapolis, IN