

CARE BEYOND *Tradition*

2025 Annual Study Conference
VIRTUAL | June 4-6, 2025

Greetings from the Steering Committee

Greetings!

Our 2025 Annual Study Conference is coming soon!

From June 4-6, 2025 we'll meet virtually, around the theme: ***Care Beyond Tradition***. Sessions will meet on June 5-6, with the pre-conference gathering on June 4th.

This conference promises to be yet another extraordinary experience, intentionally focusing on care beyond tradition in a world crying for recognition, restoration, and justice.

The conference registration is now open! Please visit our [SPT website](#) for more information.

SPT Steering Committee

NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

SPT Membership Information	2
2025 Annual Study Conference Theme	2
Conference Panels	3
Work in Progress	6
Conference Workshops	7
Study Groups	8
Pre-Conference for Scholars & Practitioners of Color	10
Conference Schedule	11
Conference Registration	12
Additional Information	12

Click below to register for the Virtual
2025 Annual Study Conference!

REGISTER NOW



SPT MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

The Society welcomes to the membership any person with professional interests in the field of Pastoral Theology. Visit our website at www.societyforpastoraltheology.org and read the Mission Statement for the Society for Pastoral Theology which includes a definition of Pastoral Theology, and the Journal of Pastoral Theology's Statement of Purpose. One joins the Society and remains in good standing by paying annual dues.

If you have not renewed your membership, you will need to do so before registering for the conference. Society for Pastoral Theology membership can be renewed online by [clicking here](#). Annual dues for international members are waived; however, the registration fee for Society Annual Conferences is not waived. Canadian members are not regarded as international members.

SPT Membership Fees

Regular Member	\$100	Student Member	\$50
Fixed/Retired	\$50	International	\$0

2025 ANNUAL STUDY CONFERENCE: "CARE BEYOND TRADITION"

In our contemporary world, spiritual care is increasingly practiced in spaces and through means that fall outside the "traditional" channels of religious institutions. Today's caregivers operate through such diverse practices as online engagement, art, music, climate activism, social justice advocacy, indigenous and community-based approaches, and more. This year's conference theme is an invitation to explore these emerging care spaces, asking: Who are our modern-day "priests" and in what spheres do they operate? How might we, as pastoral theologians, expand the boundaries of our discipline so that we may both learn from and speak into these spaces? And, how might we re-imagine classical understandings of care for a world that is growing evermore secularized and pluralistic? We hope you will join us for this important conversation.

The 2025 virtual Society for Pastoral Theology Annual Meeting aims at quickening the Society's recognized history of exposing, challenging, and resisting the powers that render us vulnerable and disempowered.

Courageous conversations, just care, and community-building, infused by wisdom and new research and wisdom, are required. We can be(come) a compassionate, caring people.

Join us in this charge.

CONFERENCE PANELS

Panel 1: Pastoral Theology and Care with Black Women & Girls



Kishundra D. King, Ph.D. Candice M. NunnTelfort, M.T.S. Bridget L. Piggue, Th.D.

Kishundra D. King, Ph.D., is a womanist pastoral and practical theologian committed to the intersections of religion, psychology, and culture. Her interests in contextual theological reflection and social action invites critical methodological interpretations of lived experiences as it explores various relational aspects and intrapsychic responses to the world. Dr. King's commitments stem from her experiences as a clinical psychotherapist focused on youth and families as well as her work as a registered yoga instructor. Dr. King's research focuses on Womanist pastoral theology grounded in Black girlhood experiences. She asserts the value of Black girl voices and regards their unique ways of knowing as a valuable and necessary source for epistemology in research, writing, and practice. Toward that end, Dr. King's research project, *Black and Womanish* (funded by the Louisville Institute's Project Grant for Researchers) centered Black girlhood experiences as sources for pastoral theological reflection and utilized a womanist mixed-methods approach to qualitative research towards a Womanish pastoral theology. Dr. King will join the faculty of Union Theological Seminary as Assistant Professor of Psychology & Religion in July 2025. Her forthcoming book, *Black Girls and their Childhoods: Toward a Womanish Pastoral Theology*, is expected to be released later this year by Lexington Press.

Candice M. NunnTelfort (They/She) is a doctoral candidate at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Pastoral Theology, Personality, and Culture - Clinical Track at the Center for Religion and Psychotherapy of Chicago. They hold a Bachelor of Science in Religious Studies and Political Science from Lincoln University, a Historically Black College and University (HBCU), and a Master of Theological Studies in Religion, Psychology, and Culture from Vanderbilt Divinity School, bringing a rich interdisciplinary approach to their research. They currently work at Openings, a clinic for Psychosis and Extreme States at Depth Counseling in Chicago, Illinois. In addition, they serve on several community and nonprofit boards focused on addressing care gaps for individuals experiencing psychosis and other extreme states. Their dissertation, *The Black Psychotic: Anti-Blackness, Psychosis, and Psychoanalysis*, examines the intersections between Blackness and psychosis within the social link.

Bridget L. Piggue, Th.D., is a leader and educator in the field of Pastoral Theology, Care & Counseling. Her focus and passion have centered on accompanying spiritual leaders in the development of greater self-awareness and mental health. Through the disciplines of

psychology, theology, spirituality and the sciences she has devoted her vocational call to educating and empowering those committed to growth and transformative healing. Dr. Piggue is an ordained pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and an ACPE Clinical Pastoral Educator. With over twenty-seven years of tenure as the Director of Spiritual Health at Emory University Hospital Midtown she leads a staff of chaplains in the spiritual care of those who encounter trauma and crisis within and beyond the clinical setting. Dr. Piggue also serves as Director of Operations for Emory Spiritual Health system wide.

Panel 2: Pastoral Theology, Creativity, and the Arts



Arelis Benítez, Ph.D.

Myron Kryz Florence, Ph.D.

Amina S. McIntyre, M.F.A.

Arelis Benítez, Ph.D., is the Assistant Professor of the Practice of Religion, Psychology, and Culture, and Director of Field Education at Vanderbilt Divinity School. Prior to joining Vanderbilt faculty, she served as an instructor at Loma Linda University School of Religion where she was Director of the Master of Science in Chaplaincy program and the former Lead Chaplain at Loma Linda University Medical Center – Murrieta where she developed a volunteer chaplaincy program. Her research interests center Chicana feminist perspectives on spirituality and Mesoamerican thought. Through this lens, she proposes alternative philosophies that redefine approaches to social, psychological, and spiritual-religious transformation in pastoral theology. As a pastoral theologian, she anchors her methodological approaches in the works of Gloria Anzaldúa towards the inclusion of Latinx communities and development of Latinx spiritual care responses. Clinically trained as a healthcare chaplain, she integrates over a decade of experiences in pastoral ministry with vocational commitments to social justice that extend beyond the academy and into the public and private spheres. Currently, she also serves as a member of the CPE Professional Advisory Group at Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

Myron Kryz Florence, Ph.D., serves as Visiting Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology and 2023-2025 Louisville Institute Postdoctoral Fellow at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. His passions lie at the intersection of psychology, theology, sexuality, and the arts. His dissertation is entitled, “Between Lyrics and Lives: How Lyrical Theologies of Brokenness Impact the Lived Expression of Same Gender Loving Male Gospel Singers.” Dr. Florence is also psycho-dynamically trained, receiving an Advanced Certificate in Self Psychology and Religion from the Center for Religion and Psychotherapy of Chicago. Outside of the academy, he has served as interim pastor for different faith communities. With his extensive background in church and theological education, and as a practicing psychotherapist, Dr. Florence has a heart to help marginalized people who have been traumatized by fundamentalist theologies deconstruct and heal from theological trauma.

Amina S. McIntyre, M.F.A., is an artist scholar who uses psychodynamic theory, black feminist and womanist theology, and theatre to examine the connection between imagination, liberation, and healing in spiritual care experiences. She is an Elder in Full Connection with the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church and a Co-Founder of Hush Harbor Lab, a new play development company for Black artists in the Atlanta community. McIntyre is a Ph.D Candidate at in Religion at Vanderbilt University and the Assistant Director of the Sun-Walking Fellowship and Visiting Assistant Professor of Practical Theology.

Panel 3: Pastoral Theology, Climate Change, and the Environment



Christine Tind Johannessen, Ph.D.



Ryan LaMothe, Ph.D.



Pamela McCarroll, Ph.D.

Christine Tind Johannessen, Ph.D., is the associate professor of pastoral care at Centre for Education and Research, Church of Denmark. She obtained her doctorate from The Faculty of Theology, University of Copenhagen. Previous research positions and affiliations at the Department of Systematic Theology, University of Copenhagen, at the Department of Theology, Aarhus University, and at the Unit of Survivorship, Danish Cancer Society Research Center. Besides her research and teaching of chaplains and students, she serves as supervisor and counsellor and as honorary university chaplain in the Diocese of Copenhagen.

Ryan LaMothe, Ph.D., is professor of pastoral care and counseling at St. Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology. Ryan has published ten books, including *The Coming Jesus and the Anthropocene Age* (2024), *Pastoral Care in the Anthropocene Age: Facing a Dire Future Now* (2023) and *Heresies of the Heart: Developing Emotional Wisdom* (2017). He has also published over 200 articles and book reviews and two edited volumes addressing topics in psychoanalysis, psychology of religion, pastoral counseling, pastoral theology, and pastoral political theology. He has served on three editorial boards of peer-reviewed journals and as president of the Society for Pastoral Theology.

Pamela McCarroll, Ph.D., is Vice Principal and Jane & Geoffrey Martin Chair of Practical Theology at Emmanuel College of Victoria University at the University of Toronto. She is a Certified CPE Supervisor-Educator with the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care (CASC/ACSS). Her primary area of research focuses on the climate crisis and hope in relation to decolonizing theologies and practices within Christian and other communities. She also does research on spiritual care/chaplaincy theory, practice and education.

WORK IN PROGRESS



A Practical Theology of Pediatric Chaplaincy: Critical Contexts for Care

Josh Morris, Ph.D.

About the Presenter: Josh Morris is Assistant Professor of Practical Theology at Union Presbyterian Seminary, Charlotte, North Carolina. Dr. Morris is an ordained minister with the United Church of Christ and a Board-Certified Chaplain through the Association of Professional Chaplains. Before joining the UPSem faculty, Dr. Morris served in pediatric healthcare for 11 years. Dr. Morris also brings seventeen years of experience as an army chaplain in the United States Army Reserve. In previous army chaplain assignments, he served at various echelons throughout the United States and deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He is the author of *Moral Injury Among Returning Veterans: From “Thank You for Your Service” to a Liberative Solidarity* and numerous peer-reviewed articles in *Journal of Pastoral Theology*, *Pastoral Psychology*, and *Reflective Practice*.

Describing his work in progress, Dr. Morris writes: “I am currently under contract with Orbis Books for a manuscript tentatively titled *A Practical Theology of Pediatric Chaplaincy: Critical Contexts for Care*. The text empowers chaplains and religious leaders to stand in liminal spaces to provide spiritual care. Pediatric spiritual care in complex medical contexts requires the ability to shift perspectives rapidly; care with a child must be age appropriate; while care to the family is also grounded in sociocultural perspectives; and the care upholds the commitment to support the interdisciplinary staff that cares for children. Therefore, first, I tell the primer version of pediatric chaplaincy. I unpack how much of the work is about life cycles: how might a chaplain provide care to a seven-year-old acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) patient, their fourteen-year-old sister, their divorced parents, and a grandparent present at each treatment? Each member of that family is grieving in specific ways, and the provision of spiritual care needs to speak to those needs. I also highlight the liberative dimensions to the work, as they are arguably just as difficult to navigate. For example, I note how this care takes place within a broader morally injurious healthcare system that takes, mangles, and returns a medical team beat down and hanging on by threads. Care is provided in these vacuums. I write this book with many of our SPT community in mind. I am looking for feedback on the coherence and teachability of the text. It is written in a way that students and practitioners can pick it up at any point and enter the conversation. As writing is a social process, I am sharing my work to make it stronger to benefit the discipline.”

CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

Where the Mic Drops: The Creative Arts as Third Space for Spiritual Care

Facilitators: Cedric Johnson and Jamar Turner

In an increasingly secularized world, the locus for spiritual care is shifting beyond traditional institutional boundaries. The creative arts have emerged as vibrant transformative platforms for addressing the spiritual and emotional needs of diverse communities. This workshop explores how open mics, poetry slams, and other arts-based gatherings serve as "third spaces" where spiritual care is enacted in innovative and impactful ways. Co-led by Cedric Johnson, Associate Professor and founder of the Kinetic Center—a NYC-based missional initiative integrating creativity, spirituality, wellness, and justice—and Jamar Turner, a chaplain, spoken word artist, and doctoral candidate researching Critical Artist Interventions, Spiritual Wellness Curation, and the care of souls, this session examines the evolving intersections of art and spiritual care in secular contexts.

The Pastoral Landscape: Caring for Humans and Humus

Facilitator: Konnie Vissers

Spiritual care takes place in myriad places and ways today. This workshop focuses on the garden as pastoral landscape, where we can care for both humans and humus in the face of climate change. Participants will explore the garden as a sacred space, highlighting embodied activities that address climate trauma and eco-anxiety. This pastoral landscape provides resonance for the spiritual struggles individuals are facing because of eco-anxiety—like guilt, condemnation, and a sense of radical futurelessness. Drawing on research from the fields of psychology, practical theology, and environmental education, the workshop will offer three pastoral care activities that can be implemented in both congregations and/or secular community spaces that address the spiritual impacts of eco-anxiety and help us reconnect to the Earth. These practices include Earth lament, collective nature psalms, and story-integrated planting. This workshop will be led by Konnie Vissers, a minister in the Presbyterian Church of Canada and the founder of the Children's Garden Collective.

Spiritual Advisor at the Time of Execution

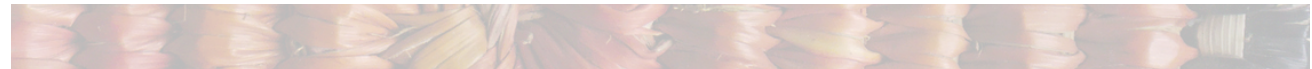
Facilitator: Kristen Leslie

At the end of 2024, Dr. Kristen Leslie served as the spiritual advisor for a man executed by the state of Missouri. Some of the work required skills of any well-equipped spiritually caring person: listening, affirming, helping someone make meaning, hearing confessions, and being a non-anxious presence. Some skills were specific to the work of spiritual care in this particular public arena. In this workshop, participants will explore what it means to accompany someone to their death by the state.

The Moral Injury Certificate Program (MICP): A Peer Support Model of Online Adult Education and Collective Care for Moral Injury Practitioners

Facilitators: Jeeyoung Kim and Kristine Chong

The Shay Moral Injury Center at Volunteers of America offers various programs to alleviate moral distress/injury and to strengthen resilience. Since Spring 2023, the center has been offering the Moral Injury Certificate Program (MICP), which has attracted participation from over 150 professionals. MICP is an online adult education course with a communal care approach extending beyond traditional frameworks of academia. Kristine, MICP program director, and Jeeyoung, MICP faculty member, will share practical knowledge and lived experiences from the program, facilitating group discussion on a peer support model and decolonial pedagogies.



STUDY GROUPS

Pastoral Theology and Climate Change

Christine Tind Johanssen (ctj@km.dk)

Pamela McCarroll (pam.mccarroll@utoronto.ca)

The Pastoral Theology and Climate Change Study Group will meet to share our works-in-progress, share resources, connect about the forthcoming special issue of JPT and discuss other possibilities for upcoming collective projects. This study group is focused on building a sustained conversation within the discipline of pastoral theology about climate change – the implications and challenges of climate change for pastoral theology; the call for earth-centered decolonial pedagogies, justice-making and transformed practice. All are welcome!

Pastoral Care and the Therapies

Phillis Sheppard (phillis.i.sheppard@vanderbilt.edu)

Candice NunnTelfort (candice.nunn@garrett.edu)

This study group aims to curate a conversation between pastoral theology and therapeutic practices. In today's complex socio-cultural landscape, individuals often grapple with multifaceted issues that intertwine spiritual, psychological, and emotional dimensions. The study group seeks to explore the ways in which pastoral care and therapy can benefit from one another, ensuring a comprehensive approach to holistic well-being.

Religious Practices and Pastoral Research

Mary Moschella (mary.moschella@yale.edu)

Eileen Campbell-Reed (eileen.campbellreed@gmail.com)

FIVE x FIVE x FIVE

We invite SPT members engaged in qualitative pastoral research and/or research about religious practices to present your work. We have 75 minutes so we will take just 5 participants in this format. Grad students, this is a great opportunity to practice giving a summary of your research!

Spend FIVE minutes (timed). Share FIVE slides (you can use fewer or none). Answer FIVE questions:

- 1) Who or what you are studying?
- 2) What questions does your research seek to answer?
- 3) Where have you been challenged or pulled up short in your study?
- 4) What is one surprising finding or discovery so far?
- 5) Ask one question for group discussion/feedback.

After each lightning round presentation, we will take a few minutes for clarifications and group responses to the question you pose. To participate in FIVE x FIVE x FIVE, please write to Eileen Campbell-Reed by April 30. Put FIVE x FIVE x FIVE in the subject line. We will let you know the line up by May 15.

Postcolonialism, Globalization, and Pastoral Care

Fulgence Nyengele (fnyengele@mtso.edu)

Cedric Johnson (cedcjohnson@gmail.com)

Hee-Kyu Heidi Park (heidi.park@me.com)

In recognition of Frantz Fanon's centenary, the "Postcolonialism, Globalization, and Pastoral Care" Study Group invites paper proposals that creatively engage Fanon's theoretical contributions within the realms of pastoral theology, pastoral care, and pastoral psychology. We seek presentations that explore intersections between Fanon's analyses of decolonization, identity, and systemic oppression and contemporary practices in pastoral care and counseling. Potential themes include, but are not limited to:

- Integrating Fanon's insights on mental health and oppression into therapeutic approaches.
- Reevaluating theological frameworks to include diverse cultural narratives, aligning with Fanon's advocacy for recognizing indigenous knowledge systems.
- Investigating how Fanon's revolutionary ideas can inform pastoral responses to contemporary geopolitical issues and social justice movements.
- Analyzing intersections between Fanon's work and postcolonial feminist thought to develop pastoral care practices that address gendered dimensions of oppression and liberation.
- Examining the relevance of Fanon's theories on alienation to understand and address the challenges posed by neoliberal globalization.

We welcome proposals that offer innovative perspectives on how Fanon's legacy can inform and enrich pastoral care in our globalized, postcolonial context. Submit proposals via email to the study group coordinators by Monday, April 30.

Embodiment Study Group: Responding to Trauma in Theological Education

Felicity Kelcourse (fkelcourse@cts.edu)

Chanequa Walker-Barnes (Walker-BarnesC@CTSnet.edu)

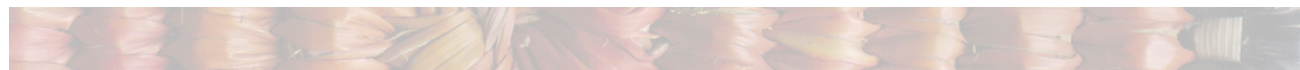
ATS has identified a link between trauma and theological education.

What practices support and nurture your capacity to work with students who are seeking healing from trauma?

Did you come to theological education to be healed yourself? What practices of healing have you discovered?

We invite workshop participants to respond to a call for brief 500-750 word reflection papers designed to prompt group discussion.

Please send advance reflection papers with "SPT Embodiment 2025" in the subject line to the groups' co-leaders.



PRE-CONFERENCE FOR SCHOLARS AND PRACTITIONERS OF COLOR

Community Care Across Spaces: Our Work Continues from Below

"Community Care Across Spaces: Our Work Continues from Below" explores the ways in which marginalized communities connect, sustain and reclaim care beyond institutional boundaries.

We will highlight the ongoing labor of pastoral and spiritual care practitioners, scholars, and activists who cultivate stability, healing, conviviality, justice, and solidarity in communities of color. We hope to curate a space where our tools and dialogue can reimagine various paths forward.

Join the conversation with the Scholars of Color Pre-Conference Wednesday, June 4, 2-5 pm.

Pre-Conference for Scholars and Practitioners of Color will meet virtually on Wednesday, June 4, 2025 from 2 pm to 5 pm (EST).

The organizing committee will be comprised of Candice Nunn (candice.nunn@garrett.edu), April Bristow (revbristow@gmail.com), Hee Jin Lee (dr.heejin.lee@gmail.com), Kenya Tuttle (kenya.tuttle@garrett.edu), Jeeyoung Kim (Jeeyoung_kim@iliff.edu).

SPT 2025 ANNUAL CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Please note: All times listed are U.S. Eastern Time Zone

Wednesday, June 4	
2:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Pre-Conference for Scholars and Practitioners of Color
Thursday, June 5	
11:00 AM - 11:15 AM	Welcome, Announcements, and Opening Liturgy
11:15 AM - 12:30 PM	Panel 1: Pastoral Theology and Care with Black Women and Girls
12:30 PM - 1:00 PM	Break
1:00 PM - 2:15 PM	Panel 2: Pastoral Theology, Creativity, and the Arts
2:15 PM - 3:30 PM	Workshops
3:30 PM - 3:45 PM	Break
3:45 PM - 5:00 PM	Society Conversation
Friday, June 6	
10:45 AM - 11:00 AM	Morning Devotion
11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Work In Progress Presentation
12:15 PM - 12:30 PM	Break
12:30 PM - 1:30 PM	Special Interest Groups Meet
1:30 PM - 2:45 PM	Panel 3: Pastoral Theology, Climate Change, and the Environment
2:45 PM - 4:00 PM	Study Groups
4:00 PM - 4:15 PM	Break
4:15 PM - 5:00 PM	Business Meeting and Closing

2025 STUDY CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Conference Registration Information

Please visit our website to register for the conference. Conference registration opens on April 1. If you are a current SPT Member, you must login to the SPT website to receive the discounted members-only rate. You will have to hit the button for registering again. If your membership expired, renew your membership for 2025 now by logging into the website and selecting 'Join/Renew' under 'Membership.' If you are not an SPT member, join today and save on your SPT 2025 registration!

More information can be found online at <https://societyforpastoraltheology.org/join/>

Conference Registration Fees

	Early Bird Rate (through May 14)	Regular Rate (May 15-June 6)
SPT Members	\$75	\$100
Student Members	\$50	\$50
Non-members	\$125	\$150

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Continuing Education (CEUs)

The Steering Committee cannot provide CEUs for those who attend our Society meetings. A certificate confirming one's attendance at the meeting can be made available upon request. Please be sure to indicate your request on the registration form. The certificate will be made available at the conference registration desk.

Society Journal

The Journal of Pastoral Theology (JPT) is the Society's journal of record, publishing annual (and later bi-annual) journals since 1990. The journal is currently co-edited by Eunil David Cho (eunilcho@bu.edu) and Mary Clark Moschella (mary.moschella@yale.edu).

2024-2025 SPT Steering Committee

Chair: Leanna Fuller (lfuller@pts.edu)

Vice-Chair: Jessica Chapman Lape (revchapmanlape@gmail.com)

Corresponding Secretary: Jaco J. Hamman (jaco.hamman@vanderbilt.edu)

Recording Secretary: Sophia Park (parks@neumann.edu)

Treasurer: Beverly Wallace (revbwallace@gmail.com)