

SARAH ANN BIXLER

Eastern Mennonite University | 1200 Park Road | Harrisonburg, VA 22802 | 540-432-4264
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EDUCATION

Princeton Theological Seminary Princeton, NJ

Doctor of Philosophy in Practical Theology | May 2021

- Specialization in Christian education and formation
- Certificate in digital pedagogy
- Dissertation title: Networks of Belonging: Envisioning Adolescent Attachment in Congregations, published in ProQuest UMI Dissertation database
- Dissertation committee: Dr. Kenda Creasy Dean (chair), Dr. Bo Karen Lee, Dr. Sonia Waters; External reader: Dr. Daniel Siegel

Princeton Theological Seminary Princeton, NJ

Master of Divinity | May 2016 | GPA: 3.974

- Emphasis on education and formation
- Church planting and revitalization cohort

Eastern Mennonite University Harrisonburg, VA

Bachelor of Arts | April 2002 | *Magna cum laude*

- Majors: English, Secondary Education
- Minors: Mathematics, Music

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

- Faith development and meaning-making throughout the life course
- Attachment theory and belonging
- Human and spiritual formation
- Anabaptist theology and ecclesiology
- Pedagogical practice

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

FACULTY APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Professor of Formation and Practical Theology; Associate Dean of the Seminary | Fall 2019 – present

- Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, VA
- Courses taught: Formation in God’s Story I and II, Formation in Ministry I and II, Formation in Missional Leadership I and II, Introduction to Youth Ministry, Pastoral Care, Seminar in Youth Ministry, Teaching for Christian Community, Theological Reflection on Trauma

Graduate Instructor for Teaching for Christian Community (3 credits, hybrid) | Spring 2020

- Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ

Adjunct Instructor for Introduction to Christian Education (3 credits, hybrid) | Spring 2019

- New Brunswick Theological Seminary, New Brunswick, NJ

ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION AND SERVICE

Anabaptist Course Collaborative contributor from Eastern Mennonite University | 2022-23

- Mennonite Higher Education Association (by presidential appointment)

Student Human Formation Study & Resource Group | 2022

- The Association of Theological Schools, Pittsburgh, PA

Steering Committee | 2020-present

- Religious Reflections on Friendship unit, American Academy of Religion

Start-up Program Coordinator | 2019

- Iron Sharpening Iron: Leadership Education for Women Clergy, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ

Assistant to the Director, Dr. Darrell L. Guder | 2016-present

- Center for Church Planting and Revitalization, Princeton Theological Seminary

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

“Religion Has No Bo(u)nds? Expanding the Dimensions of Religion to the Attachment of Spiritual Friendship.” In *Friends in this World: Multireligious Perspectives on Friendship*, ed. Anne-Marie Ellithorpe, Laura Duhan Kaplan and Hussam S. Timani. Religion and Borders series, ed. Alexander Y. Hwang. Minneapolis: Lexington Books/Fortress Academic. Forthcoming in 2023.

[Editor] *Collected Essays of Richard R. Osmer*. Seattle, WA: Kindle Direct Publishing. October 2022.

Sarah Ann Bixler

“The Self Unveiled: The Dis-integration of Mennonite Women’s Head Coverings.” In *Resistance: Confronting Violence, Power, and Abuse within Peace Churches*, ed. Cameron Altaras and Carol Penner. Elkhart, IN: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 2022: 221-37.

“Mission and Formation” issue, *Anabaptist Witness* 9, No. 1 (April 2022). Guest co-editor with Hyung Jin “Pablo” Kim Sun.

“Mission as Distraction? A Critical Twist on Formation and Mission in Anabaptist Communities on the Möbius Loop.” *Anabaptist Witness* 9, No. 1 (April 2022): 37-56.

“Anabaptist Mennonites in North America, 1683-2021.” Database of Religious History, Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia. February 7, 2021.
<https://religiondatabase.org/browse/968/>

“Searching for Self: Community as a Conduit for God’s Deepest Transformation,” in *Education with the Grain of the Universe: A Nonviolent Program for the Future of Mennonite Schools, Colleges, and Universities*, ed. J. Denny Weaver. Telford, PA: Cascadia, 2017: 194-207.

“Reframing the Self(ie).” *Journal of Youth and Theology* 16, No. 1 (2017): 25-45.

“The Violent Shadow: Considering John Howard Yoder’s Sexual Misconduct from a Jungian Psychological Perspective.” *Princeton Theological Review* 19, No. 1 (Spring 2016): 5-19.

GRANTS RECEIVED

External Resource Matching Grant for Eastern Mennonite Seminary | July 2022

- \$15,000, In Trust Center for Theological Schools, Wilmington, DE

Wabash Consulting Grant for Eastern Mennonite University | July 2022

- Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion, Crawfordsville, IN

Pathways for Tomorrow Phase 2 Grant for the Penuel Project at Eastern Mennonite Seminary | June 2022 (primary writer)

- \$998,606, Lilly Endowment Inc., Indianapolis, IN

Research Grant in Anabaptist-Mennonite Studies | July 2020

- \$1000, Mennonite Historical Society, Goshen, IN

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Academy of Religion
Anabaptist-Mennonite Scholars Network
Association of Practical Theology
International Association for the Study of Youth Ministry
Mennonite Historical Society

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS (selected)

- Friends in Crisis: Rediscovering Early Anabaptist Leaders within a Catholic Friendship Tradition* | Nov. 21, 2022
- American Academy of Religion annual meeting, Denver, CO
- Conversion as Bonding: Adolescent Attachment to God and Community in Anabaptist Perspective* | Nov. 20, 2022
- American Academy of Religion annual meeting, Denver, CO
- Networks of Belonging: Adolescent Attachment in Congregations* | July 13, 2022
- International Association for the Study of Youth Ministry biennial conference
- Investigating Adolescent Attachment in Congregations* | April 2, 2022
- Association of Practical Theology Biennial Meeting
- Networked Bonds: An Attachment-Informed Vision for Spiritual Friendship* | Nov. 22, 2021
- American Academy of Religion annual meeting, San Antonio, TX
- Reimagining Youth Ministry through an Attachment Ecclesiology* | April 21, 2021
- Institute for Youth Ministry Research Gathering, Princeton Theological Seminary
- “Musing on Cicero’s Thoughts”: Methodology in Aelred of Rievaulx’s Practical Theology of Spiritual Friendship* | December 10, 2020
- American Academy of Religion annual meeting (virtual)
- Adolescent Experiences of Relational Belonging in Mennonite Congregations* | Fall 2020
- Society for the Scientific Study of Religion and the Religious Research Association (accepted for presentation at 2020 annual meeting that was canceled due to COVID-19)
- Attachment and Spiritual Friendship: An Interdisciplinary Exploration* | November 25, 2019
- American Academy of Religion annual meeting, San Diego, CA
- Congregation as Safe Haven and Secure Base? Youth Ministry from An Attachment Perspective* | January 3, 2019
- International Association for the Study of Youth Ministry conference, Durham, UK
- Attachment to Religious Group: A New Interdisciplinary Conception of Adolescents in Congregations* | August 12, 2018
- Association for the Sociology of Religion annual conference, Philadelphia, PA

MINISTRY AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE (non-academic)

Associate Residence Director | 2012-13

Eastern Mennonite University

Harrisonburg, VA

- Overseer of a 75-student residence hall

Conference Coordinator | 2011-13

Virginia Mennonite Conference

Harrisonburg, VA

- Executive-level administrator and CFO of middle adjudicatory with 70 congregations

Curriculum Writer | 2008-10

Brethren Press

Elgin, IL

- Writer of interdenominational Sunday school curriculum for grades 6-12

Youth Minister | 2001-09

Zion Mennonite Church

Broadway, VA

- Minister with 40 youth annually in grades 6-12, congregational ministry staff member

Interim Conference Youth Minister | 2006-07

Virginia Mennonite Conference

Harrisonburg, VA

- Director of conference-wide youth retreats and resource provider for youth leaders

Classroom Teacher | 2002-07

Eastern Mennonite School

Harrisonburg, VA

- Teacher of grade 6 language arts, U.S. history and Bible; and grade 7 pre-algebra

GRADUATE HONORS AND SCHOLARSHIPS (selected)

Princeton Theological Seminary Doctoral Fellowship and Ph.D. Merit Tuition Scholarship | 2016-21

- Fully funded program with tuition and stipend for 5 years, awarded to 10 students annually

Louisville Institute Doctoral Fellowship | 2017-19

- Two-year fellowship awarded annually to 10 doctoral students showing promise for teaching and scholarship in theological education

Virtue, Happiness and Self-Transcendence summer session participant | 2017

- University of Chicago: Virtue, Happiness and the Meaning of Life project, funded by the John Templeton Foundation (by application)

Arthur Paul Rech Memorial Award in Theology and Pastoral Ministry | 2016

- Awarded annually to one Princeton Seminary senior demonstrating academic excellence in practical theology and a personal commitment to the practice of ministry in the church

Sarah Ann Bixler

William Tennent Scholarship | 2015

- Awarded annually to one rising senior at Princeton Seminary showing special interest and ability in the teaching aspects of the work of the church

Marguerite Young Endowment Fund Scholarship | 2015

- Scholarship for select Master of Divinity students, granted by the Pittsburgh Foundation

Calvary Foundation Scholarship | 2013-15

- Awarded annually to select students whose education supports the living out of their Christian faith, granted by Calvary United Methodist Foundation, Arlington, VA