



AUSTIN COLLEGE

February 2019

JOHN D. WILLIAMS

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E-Mail: jwilliams@austincollege.edu
Born March 6, 1962

FAMILY

Married Linnea Shurtleff, August 26, 1989
Daughter, Emily Marie, born 1996
Son, Joseph David, born 2002

PRESENT POSITION

William E. Elliott, Jr. Chair in Christian Ministry, Austin College, Sherman, Texas.

ORDINATION

Ordained as a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 1988.

PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

William E. Elliott, Jr. Chair in Christian Ministry (Chaplain), Austin College, 2004-present
J.T. Stratton Brock Director of Church Relations, Austin College, 1993-present
Parish Associate, NorthPark Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas, 1987-93.
Seminary Intern, First Presbyterian Church, Amarillo, Texas, Summer 1986.
Clinical Pastoral Education Chaplain Intern, Brackenridge Hospital, Austin, Texas,
January 1986.

EDUCATION

B.A., History and Philosophy, 1984, Austin College
(Honors in History)
M.Div., 1987, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary
Ph.D., 2004, Southern Methodist University.
Religious Studies

Dissertation Title:

*Between the Labyrinth and the Abyss:
Presbyterians and Schism, 1837-1861*

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Sub-Field Examinations:

The History of Christian Doctrine
Christianity and Civil Authority
American Christianity in the Nineteenth Century
The Enlightenment
The History of Reformed Christianity in the United States

HONORS AND AWARDS

Austin Seminary Alumni Association Award for Distinguished Service to the Church, 2015
Presbyterian Communities and Services “Each Moment Matters” Award, 2012
Austin College Cindy Curtis Bean Service to Alumni Award, 2012
Homer P. Rainey Award for Outstanding Achievement and Service to Austin College, 2011

SERVICE TO THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Founder and Director of the ACTivators, a program which, since 1995, has involved 586 Austin College students who have traveled over 174,000 miles to help plan and lead 700 ministry events in 13 states involving over 54,000 Presbyterian children, youth, college students, young adults, adults, and senior citizens. Sixty-Five former ACTivators have attended seminary. Forty-seven former ACTivators currently serve as full-time clergy or educators in 29 Presbyterian congregations in 11 states. Twenty-five ACTivators have served as PCUSA Young Adult Volunteers., 1995-present.

Editor, publisher, and primary writer for the *AColyte*, a “journal of faith doubt, and other things at Austin College” that is produced 4-6 times per year and distributed to all Austin College students, faculty, and staff and an additional 300+ subscribers throughout the world, 1993-present

Grace Presbytery Council, 2017-18

Vice Moderator, Grace Presbytery Council, 2019

Grace Presbytery Committee on Preparation for Ministry, 1987-91, 2011-16

Presbyterian Church (USA) Sacramental Ethics Study Group, 2004-2008

ELI Steering Committee (A Vocational Discernment Project of Grace Presbytery and Austin Seminary), 2004-2008

Session Moderator, First Presbyterian Church (Bonham, Texas), March-October 2008

Grace Presbytery Evangelism Task Force, 2004-2006

Senior Friend, Presbyterian Student Strategy Team, 1999-2003

General Assembly Commissioner, Grace Presbytery, 2000

Contributing Editor, Presbyterian Outlook, 1997

Faculty Member, Grace Presbytery Polity Academy, 1996-2003

Grace Presbytery Design Task Force, 1996

Moderator, Grace Presbytery Examinations Committee, 1996

Grace Presbytery Council, 1996

Synod of the Sun Higher Education Task Force, 1996-2005
Small Group Leader, Presbyterian Youth Triennium, 1995
Grace Presbytery Examinations Committee, 1992-96

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Staff Member, Synod of the Sun Youth Workshop, 1989-90, 1992-96
Staff Member, Grace Presbytery Senior High Convention, 1983-85, 1989-Present
Director, Grace Presbytery Senior High Convention, 1991
Synod of the Sun Nominating Committee, 1986-87
Synod of the Sun Committee on Representation, 1985-87
Grace Presbytery Committee on Representation, 1985-87
Delegate, National Ecumenical Student Christian Conference, 1983
Youth Advisory Delegate, United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America
General Assembly, 1982
Youth Delegate, Synod of the Sun, 1980-82

PUBLICATIONS

“Walking the Labyrinth Together During Lent,” Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary
Lenten Devotional, March 2019
“‘PC(USA)-related college’—What’s that?,” *Presbyterian Outlook*, April 28, 2014
“Between the Labyrinth and the Abyss,” Insights: The Faculty Journal of Austin Seminary,
Spring 2012.
“Embracing Religious Diversity at Presbyterian-Related Schools,” *Presbyterian Outlook*,
October 5, 2009.
“A Different Way”, Austin Seminary Windows, Summer 2007
“Faith and Higher Education,” Horizons Magazine, July /August 2006.
“...and that is what we are: One Approach to Ministry with At-risk Youth,” Insights:
The Faculty Journal of Austin Seminary, Fall 2001
“Responses” (Response to an Interview with Harry Smith), Insights: The Faculty Journal of
Austin Seminary, Fall 1996
“Religious and Biblical Arguments for Church-State Separation,” Reflections on Religious
Liberty. Americans United for Separation of Church and State, 1995.

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Over 300 Youth Conferences and Church Retreats
“Deep Dives with Jonah, James, Jesus, and John,” St. Andrew Presbyterian Church
(Denton, TX) Fall Festival of Faith, October 2018
TEDx Talk: “Out of the Audience, Into the Story: Including Marginalized Persons,”
(<https://youtu.be/GR1jqXwAocg>), September 2018
“Deep Dives with Jonah, James, Jesus, and John,” St. Philip Presbyterian Church (Houston,
TX) Family Retreat, Mo-Ranch, July 2018
“Effective Church Relations Models,” Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities
Presidents Conference, March 2017
“Lessons from Chadwick’s Mill; Being Presbyterian Right Here and Right Now,”

Arkansas (2016), Mission (2016), and New Covenant (2017) Presbyteries, First Presbyterian Church, Dallas (2016 and 2017), East Dallas Cluster (2017), Mo-Ranch Men's Conference (2017), NorthPark Presbyterian Church, Dallas (2018)
"Zombies, Halitosis, and America," Mo-Ranch Men's Conference Communion Service (2016), Faith on Tap, Dallas, TX (2016)

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- "The First Blast of the Trumpet in Praise of the Blessed Regiment of Women," Canyon Creek Presbyterian Church (Richardson, TX) 50th Anniversary Dinner, February 23, 2014
- "Why Presbyterians Are Like That: Ten Things that All Presbyterians Believe," Grace Presbytery Leadership Conference, April 2011
- "Because, Not Although: Embracing Religious Pluralism on APCU Campuses," Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities Presidents Conference, April 2009
- "Humility, Hospitality, and Honesty", Interfaith Dialog Dinner, Austin College, September 2008
- "Standing on Lofty Places," Grace Presbytery ACT 2007 Keynote Address, September 2007.
- "Can You Hear Me Now?: Engaging Youth and Young Adults," San Jose Presbytery Meeting, September 2006.
- "Can You Hear Me Now?: Engaging Youth and Young Adults", Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Moderators Conference, November 2005
- "Kenotic Collegiate Ministry" Bible Study, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) PEER 1 Collegiate Ministry Conference, June 2005
- "The Gospel according to Tom Joad," Stewardship Dinner, Canyon Creek Presbyterian Church (Richardson, TX), February 2005
- "Lost and Found," Keynote Speaker, Presbyterian Church (USA) Montreat West Youth Conference, June-July 2004
- "The Challenge of the College Campuses," Episcopal Church Women National Triennial Gathering, August 2003.
- "Transformation in Community," Mo-Ranch College Conference, May 2003
- "Leadership from the Pew," Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Congregational Redevelopment Conference, January 2003
- "The Ecumenical Challenge of the College Campuses," National Workshop on Christian Unity, May 2002
- Ridgeview Presbyterian Church, Dallas, TX "Festival of Grace," April 2002.
- "Dogs and Meter Readers (John 20:19-29)," Presbyterian Collegiate Caucus, Louisville, KY, 2001
- "God's Speed-Dial (Luke 10:1-12, 17-20)," National Student Leaders Conference, Nashville, TN, 2000
- "Essential and Non-Negotiable Elements of Presbyterian Mission and Worship," Oklahoma Tri-Presbytery Meeting, 1997.
- "Creative Communication and Campus Ministry," United Campus Ministries of Texas and Oklahoma United Ministries in Higher Education Joint Conference, 1996.

"Religious and Biblical Arguments for Church/State Separation", Americans United for Separation of Church and State Madison/Jefferson Conference for Law and Theology Students, 1994.

"Five Documents that Shaped American Religious History", Elderhostel Course, 1992

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SELECTED PROFESSIONAL AND VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Co-Chair, Austin College President's Task Force on Inclusion and Diversity, 2016-17
Sherman Independent School District Citizens Advisory Committee and School Bond

Political Action Committee, 2016-17

Board President, Grayson County Crisis Center, 2014-2015

Board Member, Grayson County Crisis Center. 2012-2017

Austin College Strategic Planning Committee, 2009

Austin Seminary Alumni Association Board, 2007-10

Co-President, Grayson County Habitat for Humanity Board, 2001-2009

Faculty/Staff Advisory Committee, Austin College Leadership Institute, 2001-2009

Austin College Presidential Search Committee, 2008

Steering Committee, Austin College Lilly Program for the Theological Exploration of Vocation, 2002-2007

Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary Centennial Committee, 2001-2002

Chair, Austin College Sesquicentennial Committee, 1996-99

Board Member, Presbyterian Children's Services (Waxahachie, TX.), 1992-94

National Advisory Council, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, 1992-2001

Religious Advisory Committee, Planned Parenthood of Dallas and Northeast Texas, 1992-96

Board Chairman, Washington Street Presbyterian Mission, 1992-94

Board Member, Washington Street Presbyterian Mission, 1990-96

SELECTED COURSES AND SEMINARS TAUGHT

"Bible Stories, Liberal Arts Eyes," Austin College January Term, January 2019

"Castles, Crosses, Kilts, and Celts," Austin College January Term in Scotland, co-taught with Dr. Wayne Crannell, 2015, 2018.

"The Gospel according to Ray Wylie Hubbard," First Presbyterian Church (Dallas) 2014 Lenten Study

"The History and Practice of Passover Seder," with President Marjorie Hass, Spring 2012

"Why Presbyterians Are like That" and "Between the Labyrinth and the Abyss: The Structure and Value of Presbyterian Contentiousness," New Covenant Presbytery FOCUS Continuing Education Event, October 2009

"Why Presbyterians Are like That," Austin College January Term Course, 2008, 2011

"Who Are We?: Ten Things That All Presbyterians Believe" ACT 2007 Continuing Education Event

A discussion of ten Biblical ideas that all (or at least most) Presbyterians believe.

“Faith and Higher Education,” Highland Park Presbyterian Church Christian Growth Conference, January 2007
“The Nature and Blessing of Presbyterian Contentiousness,” Grace Presbytery ACT 2006 Continuing Education Event
A discussion of the common structure of controversies among American Presbyterians fro the last 300 years.

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“What to Tell Your Baptist Friends: Telling the Truth about Your Faith,” Grace Presbytery ACT 2004 Continuing Education Event
A discussion of the importance of respectful faith sharing.

“Telling the Truth about Our Faith: Appropriate, Non-Obnoxious Evangelism Strategies that You Already Know,” Grace Presbytery ACT 2004 Continuing Education Event
A discussion of the nature and importance of evangelism.

“Between the Labyrinth and the Abyss: The Structure and Value of Presbyterian Contentiousness”, various PC(USA) Congregations, 2004
A discussion of the historical pattern of controversies among American Presbyterians.

“No Glory, No Guts: The Blessing of Presbyterian Weirdness,” Grace Presbytery Continuing Education Event, 1999-2000
A study of four distinctive themes of the Reformed tradition.

"What to Tell Your Baptist Friends," Various PC(USA) Congregations and Presbyteries, 1996-97.
A discussion of significant doctrinal and ecclesiological differences between Presbyterian and Southern Baptists.

Celebrating Connections: Listening to the Reformed Tradition," Grace Presbytery Polity Academy, 1996-2003.
An introduction to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

"History, Hogs, and the Holy Spirit", Various PC (USA) Congregations, 1996.
A discussion of the concept of stewardship in the Reformed Tradition.

"Creative Communication and Campus Ministry," United Campus Ministries of Texas and Oklahoma United Ministries in Higher Education Joint Conference, 1996.

"Connecting with College Students," Grace Presbytery Continuing Education Event, 1995.
A discussion of models and guiding principles for parish-based ministry with college students.

"Religious and Biblical Arguments for Church/State Separation", Americans United for Separation of Church and State Madison/Jefferson Conference for Law and Theology Students, 1994.

"The Kingdom of Heaven and the Book of Order," Grace Presbytery ACT '93.
An introduction to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

“Presbyterian History, Doctrine, and Polity,” Perkins School of Theology (S.M.U.), Fall Semester, 1992.

"Five Documents that Shaped American Religious History", Elderhostel Course, 1992
A discussion of themes in the history of American Religion.

