

Shonda Nicole Gladden, M.Div., M.T.S.
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Professional Synopsis: An Americanist trained in Womanist methodologies whose research emerges at the intersections of philosophy, art, gender, and cultural studies and aims to explore an anti-colonial enterprise of deconstructing Black gendered identities and cultural productions.

Education:

- PhD, American Studies (*ADVANCED TO CANDIDACY, PROJECTED GRADUATION 2022*),
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis
Concentrations: American Studies, Womanism, Film Studies, Nonprofit Management (Individualized Minor)
- M.Div., Systematic Theology,
The Wesley Theological Seminary (2004)
Concentrations: Pneumatology, Jürgen Moltmann
- M.T.S., Black Studies,
The Wesley Theological Seminary (2004)
Concentrations: Martin Luther King, Jr., Negro Spirituals as Theological Works, Egypt
Thesis: *A Theological Quest for Truth Through an Examination of Egyptian Religious Symbols and Related Christian Symbols and Practices*
- B.A., Philosophy,
Morgan State University (2000)
Concentrations: Writings of Paul, Logic, Philosophy of Religion, Clergy Women.
- Diploma, University High School Program,
Suitland Senior High School (1995)
Concentrations: Behavioral and Social Sciences

Professional Affiliations and Service:

African Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC), Ordained Itinerant Elder
National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), General Member
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, Graduate Member (Chi Chi Omega Chapter)
American Academy of Religion, Queer Studies in Religion Steering Committee Member; Women's Caucus, Past Co-Convener
The District Theatre, Board Director
Faith in Indiana, Board Director
Connectional AME Church RAYAC (Immediate Past Treasurer)
Connectional AME Church Women in Ministry
Fourth Episcopal District Women in Ministry (Immediate Past Worship Leader)
Indiana Annual Conference Women in Ministry (Current Coordinator)

Skills, Certifications, and Qualifications:

Reading knowledge: Latin and French
Indiana Notary Public

Current Primary Employment:

Good to the SOUL (Indianapolis, IN)

Chief Executive Officer, September 2018- Present

Founded in 2016, following my transition from full-time ministry in 2018, I pivoted into full-time work as the CEO of this for-profit, social enterprise, registered in the State of Indiana as a domestic limited liability company. I supervise a team of four SOUL Stirrers and together we prioritize social impact over revenue profit, while being in the business of meeting unmet communal and institutional needs with iterative, innovative, and customized approaches. We provide culturally intuitive consultation to churches, nonprofits, institutions of higher education, and individuals who intersect these spaces. We coach clergy, congregational teams, faculty, researchers, and other individuals seeking to enhance professional and missional performance. We produce and manage social media, event and other marketing content for churches, nonprofits, institutions of higher education and individuals. We convene spaces where the spirit of universal liberation is central, and participants explore relevant subjects related to the cultivation of personal and communal wholeness.

www.GoodToTheSOUL.com

Research and Other Academic Employment Experience:

IUPUI Arts & Humanities Institute

Graduate Assistant, 2019-Present

Currently working as a graduate assistant to the Religion, Spirituality, and the Arts Seminar. Previously conducted oral histories for the COVID-19 Oral History Project, provided technical assistance to a National Endowment for the Arts grant, as well as provided thought partnership on a community engaged research project studying the racial justice, arts, and activism in Indianapolis.

Columbia University CARSS (Center on African American Religion, Sexual Politics & Social Justice)

Oral History Project Research Fellow, 2021-Present

Content Development Working Group Member, 2016-2018

Currently conducting research for an oral history project exploring the faith lives of Black LGBTQ+ congregations and denominational leadership. Previously worked as a consultant in the development of a culturally relevant, multi-faceted, and holistic toolkit on sexual and gender politics for use throughout the Black Church ecosystem.

Vibrant Faith

Coach Consultant, 2017- 2021

Worked as a coach consultant on the Creating a Culture of Vocation Initiative (funded by Lilly Endowment, Inc.) wherein I coached congregational teams as they created new resources and experiences centered on their understanding of calling. Provided research consultation in the compilation of final qualitative data reports.

Princeton Theological Seminary (Contractor)

Graduate Research Assistant, 2013- 2016

Served as the AME Research Assistant during the data collection process of “The Christian Youth: Learning and Living the Faith Project (CY: LLF), compiled oral interviews and documentary witness through onsite interviews.” Additional information about this position can be found here: <http://theconfirmationproject.com>

Reid Temple Christian Academy

Lead Teacher, 2009-2010

Instructed and managed classroom activities for twelve full day preschool students; held supervisory responsibility for one teaching assistant.

Morgan State University

Adjunct Instructor, 2005-2008

Course: Phil 109- Introduction to Logic

Instructor of record; developed and facilitated multiple semester-long sections of undergraduate level CORE Course in syllogistic Logic through lecture, seminar discussion and small group work.

Wesley Theological Seminary

Teaching Assistant, 2002-2005

Courses: Systematic Theology, Church History

Primary Instructors: Dr. Beverly Mitchell, Dr. Josiah U. Young

Assisted instructors of record in preparing small group sessions, graded papers, lectured and researched current trends in field to complement course syllabi.

Howard University (Contractor)

Departmental Assistant, 2002-2004

The Office of the Provost

Coordinated University-wide conferences and workshops; prepared dynamic presentations using PowerPoint; assisted in developing and editing University publications; and consistently met challenges associated with promotion to lead temporary employee with responsibility to train/oversee temporary staff.

Youth English School

Teacher, 2000-2001

Incheon United Methodist Church (Incheon South Korea)

Developed curriculum and taught introductory conversational English and basic grammar to grade school students for whom English was a secondary language.

Selected Academic Presentations and Publications

- These Stories Must Be Told: Preliminary Observations by a Black Scholar Practitioner on Silences in the Archive (published in Collections: A Journal for Museum and Archives Professionals, <https://doi-org/10.1177/1550190620981033>)
- The Plantation's Fall and the Nonprofit Sector's Rise: Addressing the Influence of the Antebellum Plantation on Today's Nonprofit Sector (first author, co-authored journal article, approved for publication effective July 31, 2021 in Administrative Theory & Praxis, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10841806.2021.1959167>)
- *Drag* Me to Church: Trans-Versing Black Church Performance Through Ball Culture (Paper presented in the Queer Studies in Religion Unit at American Academy of Religion, 2020)
- "Where Do We Go From Here: Trans-Versing the SOUL of Black Folx" (Paper presented in the Black Theology Unit and Theology of MLK, Jr. Unit at American Academy of Religion, 2020)
- Trans-versing Blackness: The Making of A Blues Homecoming. (Paper presented in Cone and Expressive Arts Session of Retrospect and Prospect Conference on the campus of Northwestern University, 2019)
- Becoming Spirit Led People: The Role of Confirmation and Equivalent Practices in Identity and Faith Formation in the 21st Century. (Performance lecture presented at The Confirmation Conference at Princeton Theological Seminary, 2018)
- Becoming: Reflections on Maximizing Failures and Living into My Best Self. Manuscript produced and published through Good to the SOUL (June 2016). ISBN-10: 0997559101.
- First AME Las Vegas Portrait. Research findings produced through The Confirmation Project utilizing the Portraiture methodology as explicated by Sarah Lawrence-Lightfoot. (2016) http://theconfirmationproject.com/portrait_gallery/the-first-ame-church-las-vegas/.
- Constructing A Womanist Philosophy of Religion: Examining Ultimate Concern and Mythic Nostalgic Imaginations. (Panel paper presented in Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion and Culture Group Panel Presentation at American Academy of Religion, 2015)
- Not Buying the Game: Commodification and The Limbo of The Wire. Paper presented in Black Theology Group Session the American Academy of Religion, 2013)
- Pneumatologically Speaking: Tongues, Dance and Spirit Workings in African American Religious Experience. Accepted paper presented in Black Theology Group Session at American Academy of Religion, 2011)

Awards, Honors, and International Experience:

- IUPUI Elite 50 Recipient, 2021
- IUPUI JAG Action Grant Recipient, 2020
- Do Good X Inaugural Fellow, 2017
- Wabash Pastoral Leadership Program Fellow, 2014-2016
- American Academy of Religion, Women's Caucus Co-Convener, 2011-2013
- AARAMA Kenyan Delegation Member/Youth Mission Coordinator, 2008
- South Africa Youth Mission Trip Coordinator, 2003 & 2006
- Bermuda Aids Outreach Missionary Immersion, 2004
- Wesley Theological Seminary Student Body President, 2002-2004
- Miss Black Maryland, USA 2003-2004
- Wesley Theological Seminary, Association of Black Seminarians President, 2001-2002
- National Capital Semester for Seminarians, 2001
- Czech Republic Choral Tour, 2000, Germany & Switzerland Choral Tour 1996
- Spokesman (MSU Campus Newspaper) Editor 1996-1999, Managing Editor, 1999-2000
- EF Maryland Educational Ambassador to UK, 1995

Congregational and Community Impact Employment Experience:

Crossroads AME Church (Indianapolis, IN)

Associate Pastor, January 2021-Present

Ministerial Staff Member, September 2018-December 2020

Currently serving as the Associate Pastor, on paid staff in a supporting role for this newly merged congregation that, through its two campuses, serves the Crown Hill and Meridian Kessler neighborhoods of Indianapolis. Responsibilities include ministerial staff training and supervision, worship planning and programmatic design, grant project implementation and oversight, regular worship leading, preaching, bible study facilitation, leadership development and congregational care.

St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church (Indianapolis, IN)

Senior Pastor, November 2017- September 2018

Served as the "Class A" pastor of this local congregation in the historic Martindale-Brightwood neighborhood of Indianapolis, IN. Responsible for performing regular ministerial duties of a pastor as well as representing the congregation in civic duties with the Indianapolis Public Schools, National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), NAACP Branch #3053, and Families Against Violence and Injustice, Inc.

Allen Temple African Methodist Episcopal Church (Marion, IN)

Senior Pastor, May 2013- November 2017

Served as the "Class A" pastor of this local congregation in the vicinity of Indiana Wesleyan University. Responsible for performing regular ministerial duties of a pastor as well as representing the congregation in civic duties with the Marion Community Schools, NAACP Branch #3059, and the Marion Christian Ministerial Association.

Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church (Lafayette, IN)

Senior Pastor, November 2012- May 2013

Served as the "Class B" pastor of this local congregation in the vicinity of Purdue University. Responsible for performing regular ministerial duties of a pastor, most notably, responsible for assisting in the restructuring and stabilization of the Lafayette Pastors Alliance during my brief time of service.

St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church (Glencoe, IL)

Assistant to the Pastor, November 2010- November 2012

Served on paid staff at this historic African American congregation in the heart of Glencoe, IL. Responsibilities included programmatic design, implementation and oversight, regular worship leading, preaching, bible study facilitation, leadership development and congregational care.

St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church (Aurora, IL)

Senior Minister to Young Adults, November 2011- November 2012

Hired to provide spiritual and administrative direction for the Ministries to Young Adults. Facilitated weekly worship service, taught monthly Church School, served as the ministerial staff liaison to all ministries related to young adults.

Brown Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Church (Washington, DC)

Senior Minister to Youth & Young Adults (Intern) 2008-2010

Hired to provide spiritual and administrative direction for the Collective Ministries to Youth and Young Adults. Taught weekly Bible study, served as the ministerial staff liaison to all ministries related to youth and young adults. Spearheaded "Back to School Power Jam," garnering sponsorship from three District of Columbia Councilpersons, provided school supplies and gifts to more than two hundred school aged children in Ward 6 of the District of Columbia: the first of its kind in the one hundred- and twenty-seven-year history of the church.

Reid Temple African Methodist Episcopal Church (Glenn Dale, MD)

Assistant to the Executive Assistant, 2007-2009

Commissioner of Youth and Young Adults, 2004-2007

Appointed by the Pastor and responsible for administrative oversight of eight ministries engaging in services to and/or with the congregation's youth and young adult membership population at that time of more than 2,800 individuals. Regularly preached, taught Bible classes, coordinated and led youth worker trainings and represented the church in regional youth ministry gatherings; trained as a Stephen Minister.