

**Herbert Robinson Marbury**  
Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible

Vanderbilt Divinity School  
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**Education**

Vanderbilt University, The Graduate School, Nashville, TN, M.A. (1999), Ph.D. (2003)  
Hebrew Bible (major), Ethics (minor)

Dissertation:

“The Separatist Rhetoric of the Ezra-Nehemiah Corpus: Its Imperial, Aristocratic, and Cultic Significations” (2003).

Adviser, Renita J. Weems

Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, GA, M.Div. with honors (1994),  
Concentration: Old Testament

Emory University, Atlanta, GA, B.A. (1991), Majors: English Literature; African American Studies

**Academic Experience**

Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, 12/2013-present

Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, 8/2006-12/2013

Research Professor of Hebrew Bible, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, 8/2005-5/2006

University Chaplain/Director of Religious Life, Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta, GA, 8/2001-5/2006

Assistant Professor of Religion, Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta, GA 08/2001-5/2005

Instructor for *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* course for M.T.S./M.Div. students, Vanderbilt University Divinity School, Fall Semester, 2000

Visiting Instructor in Old Testament, American Baptist College, Nashville, TN, 1999-2001

Instructor for *Biblical Criticism* course for M.T.S./M.Div. program, Vanderbilt University, 1999

Teaching Assistant, *Literature, Religion, and Faith of Ancient Israel* course for M.T.S./M.Div. students, Vanderbilt University Divinity School, Fall, 1998 for Prof. Renita J. Weems

### **Academic Publications:**

#### Books:

*Imperial Dominion and Priestly Genius: Coercion, Accommodation, and Resistance in the Divorce Rhetoric of Ezra-Nehemiah*, (Upland, CA: Sopher Press, 2012). 141 pages.

*Pillars of Cloud and Fire: The Politics of Exodus in the African American Quest for Freedom*, a single-authored volume. (New York: New York University Press, 2015). 272 pages.

#### Chapters in Books:

“Reading Persian Dominion in Nehemiah: Multivalent Language, Co-Option, Resistance, and Cultural Survival” in *Focusing Biblical Studies: The Crucial Nature of the Persian and Hellenistic Periods: Essays in Honor of Douglas A. Knight*. Jon L. Berquist and Alice W. Hunt (eds.), New York: T&T Clark, 2012: 159-176.

“The Strange Woman in Persian Yehud: A Reading of Proverbs 7,” in *Approaching Yehud: New Approaches to the Persian Period*. Jon L. Berquist (ed.), Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007: 167-182.

#### Articles, Essays, and Other Academic Writing:

“Race, Class, and Ethnicity: Hebrew Bible” in *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Gender Studies*. Julia O’Brien and Ken Stone (eds.), New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.

“Ezra-Nehemiah.” in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*. Daniel Patte (ed.), New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010: 404-405.

“Ezra and Nehemiah,” in *The Africana Bible: Reading Israel’s Scriptures from Africa and the African Diaspora*. Hugh R. Page (ed.), Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010: 280-285.

“Ezra,” in *The Wesley Study Bible*. Joel B. Green and William H. Willimon (eds.), Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2009: 569-582.

“Nehemiah,” in *The Wesley Study Bible*. Joel B. Green and William H. Willimon (eds.), Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2009: 583-600.

“Wisdom in the Ancient World,” *Contemporary American Religion*. Co-authored with Renita J. Weems. Wade Clark Roof (ed.), Contemporary American Religion. New York: Macmillan Library Reference USA, 2000.

“Herod,” “Herod Antipas,” “John the Baptist,” in *From Polis to Empire: c. 800 B.C.-500 A.D.* Andrew G. Traver (ed.), Greenwood Press, 2000.

Reviews:

*Character Ethics and the Old Testament: Moral Dimensions of Scripture.* M. Daniel Carroll R. and Jacqueline E. Lapsley. (eds.), *Biblical Interpretation* 16 (2008): 383-385.

**Works in Progress:**

*The Word Made Flesh: Biblical Rhetoric in the Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.* an edited volume with Lewis V. Baldwin.

*African American Biblical Interpretation: Theory and Practice.* Under review for Abingdon Press.

**Occasional Writing:**

Online Lectionary entries for the African American Lectionary:

<http://www.theafricanamericanlectionary.org/>

“Single’s Sunday,” August, 2009

“Earth Day,” April, 2009

“Children’s Day,” August, 2008

“Martin Luther King Day,” August, 2008

“God’s Affirming and Subversive Word to the Marginalized,” *The Circuit Rider*, The United Methodist Publishing House, May/June 2007

**Named Academic Lectures:**

“Reading Joshua’s Generation: Hermeneutics and Counter-History,” Bishop E.T. Dixon Lecture, Huston-Tillotson University, Austin, TX, January, 2012

“Amos: Merging the Horizons of Eighth and Twenty-First Centuries in the Public Square,” Thirkield Jones Lecture, Gammon Theological Seminary, Atlanta, GA, October, 2010

## **Papers and Presentations:**

### International Presentations:

"The Question of Faith-Based Funding: Reading Church and State Engagement in Nehemiah 13," Oxford Institute for Methodist Theological Studies, Oxford, UK, July, 2007

"Five Loaves and Two Fish, The Power of a Child: Rethinking The Role of Youth in the Zimbabwean AIDS Crisis," HIV/AIDS Youth Education and Awareness Conference of The General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church in Chinoyhi, Zimbabwe, August 2000

"Sorry Comforters: The Friends of Job and the Church's Response to the HIV/AIDS Crisis in Southern Africa," HIV/AIDS Education and Action Conference of The General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church in Kadoma, Zimbabwe, January 2000

### National and Regional Professional Conferences:

"When the Waters Recede: Reading Exile and Return in Ezra after Katrina," Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, New Orleans, November, 2009

"Nehemiah, Jerusalem, and the Economic Exigencies of Persian Dominion," Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion Annual Meeting, Greensboro, NC, March, 2009

"The Play of Multivalent Rhetoric: The Political and Priestly Significations of Ezra 9," Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA November, 2003

"Double Duty Discourse: Priestly Rhetoric and Economic Policy in Nehemiah and Persian Yehud," Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Toronto, ON, November, 2002

"Regulating Boundaries and Bodies in Colonial Judah: A Reading of the Curses of Deuteronomy 27," Southeastern Regional SBL (SECSOR), Atlanta, GA, March, 2000

### Other Presentations:

"Teaching Bible and Constructing Hermeneutical Identity," Life Abundant: A Conference in Christian Practical Theology, Valparaiso Project on the Education and Formation of People in Faith, Lilly Endowment, February, 2009

"Prophetic Spirituality and the Black Church," Kelly Miller Smith Institute on Black Church, Studies, Vanderbilt Divinity School, Nashville, TN, October, 2007

"Situating the Self and Finding a Common Horizon: 'Other' Voices in Biblical Interpretation," Relevant Religion Series, Scarritt-Bennett Center, Nashville, TN, February, 2007

"The Black Church: What's Going on with Class, Gender and Freedom?" Kelly Miller Smith Institute on Black Church Studies, Nashville, TN, October, 2006

"African American Biblical Interpretation: Discourses in Resistance," Community Breakfast, Vanderbilt Divinity School, Nashville TN, February, 2006

"Engaging Sexual Violence in the Bible: Hermeneutic for the Black Church," Black Church and Human Sexuality conference sponsored by the Kelly Miller Smith Institute, Vanderbilt University, November, 2000

"The Seams of Job: Weaving Together Prose and Poetry in the Skeptical Corpus of Israel's Wisdom Literature," Interdenominational Theological Center, November, 1997

"From the J Writer to Jamnia: A History of the Pentateuch," Interdenominational Theological Center, November, 1996

#### **Fellowships and Honors:**

The Louisville Institute, Book Grant. \$40,000 awarded for the book project, *Pillars of Cloud and Fire: The Politics of African American Biblical Interpretation*, 2012

Vanderbilt University, The Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities. Faculty Fellow, 2012-2013

The United Methodist Church, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Dempster Fellow, 1998-1999 and 1999-2000

Vanderbilt University, Dean's Graduate Fellow, 1997, 1998, 1999

The Fund for Theological Education, Dissertation Fellow, 2000-2001

The United Methodist Higher Education Foundation, Chaplain of the Year, 2004

#### **Academic Consultations:**

Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Religion and Theology, Wabash Consultation for Pre-tenured Faculty in Theological Schools, Crawfordsville, IN, 2009-2010

#### **Professional Affiliations:**

Society of Biblical Literature (1994-present)  
American Academy of Religion (1998-present)  
American Schools of Oriental Research (2002-present)  
Society for the Study of Black Religion (2005-present)

**Courses:**

Hebrew (Fall 2000)  
Intro to Hebrew Bible/Old Testament (Fall 2006, Fall 2007, Fall 2010, Fall 2013)  
Biblical Criticism (Fall 1999, Spring 2000)  
History of Ancient Israel (Fall 2003)  
Amos and Justice (Spring 2006)  
Minor Prophets (Fall 2000, Fall 2014)  
African American Biblical Hermeneutics I (Fall 2006, Fall 2008, Summer 2010, Fall 2010, Fall 2014)  
African American Biblical Hermeneutics II (Spring 2011, Spring 2015)  
Ezra-Nehemiah (Spring 2008, Spring 2016)  
Core Seminar for Theology and Practice (Fall 2007, Spring 2008)  
Senior Seminar (Fall 2008, Spring 2009)  
Empire and Canon (Spring 2007, Fall 2009, Spring 2014, Fall 2015)  
Bible in Black and Womanist Theologies (Fall 2009)  
Intermediate Hebrew (Spring 2011)  
Old Testament Theology (Spring 2011)  
Exodus in African American Popular Interpretation (Spring 2012, Fall 2015)  
Song of Songs (Spring 2005, Spring 2015)

**Academic Service:***Service to the Guild:*

Society of Biblical Literature, African American Biblical Hermeneutics Section.  
member 1997-present, Section Co-Chair 2012-present

Society of Biblical Literature, Steering Committee, Social Scientific Criticism of the  
Second Temple Period section, 2001-2006

Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion Steering Committee, Hebrew  
Bible Section, 2000-2009

*Vanderbilt:*

Faculty Chair, Vanderbilt Divinity School, 2014-2015, 2015-2016

Director, Hebrew Bible Area and representative for Graduate Policy and Admissions  
Committee, Vanderbilt Divinity School, 2010-2011, 2014-2015

Committee for Institutional Advancement, Vanderbilt Divinity School, 2014-2015

Steering Committee, Theology and Practice Program, Vanderbilt Divinity School,  
2014-2015, 2015-2016

Search Committees at Vanderbilt Divinity School: for senior position in Hebrew  
Bible, 2014; for senior position in Practical Theology, 2012; for senior position in  
Homiletics, 2009; for position in Historical Studies, 2006

Colloquy Leader, Theology and Practice Program, Vanderbilt Divinity School, 2006-2007, 2009-2010

Wabash Seminar on Race and Diversity: Educating for a Multicultural Institution, Vanderbilt University, 2007-2008

Board Member, The Carpenter Program for Gender and Sexuality, Vanderbilt Divinity School, 2007-present

Admissions Committee, Vanderbilt Divinity School, 2006-2007, 2007-2008

Academic Programs Committee, Vanderbilt Divinity School, 2006-2007, 2013-2014

Institutional Planning Committee, Vanderbilt Divinity School, 2014-2015, 2015-2016

*Service to the Profession:*

Oxford Institute for Methodist Studies, Vanderbilt Faculty Representative, Steering Committee, Oxford, UK, 2007-2012

The Fund for Theological Education, Conference Faculty, 2009 Doctoral Conference

The Fund for Theological Education, Fellowship Selection Committee, 2003-2006

**Graduate Service:**

Search committee member for theology, Vanderbilt Divinity School, Nashville, TN, 2001

Graduate Assistant Steering Committee, Electronic Tools and Ancient Near Eastern Archives (ETANA) project

Bibliographer, Hebrew Bible Area, Vanderbilt Divinity Library, 1999-2001

**Community Involvement:**

*Lectures and Talks*

“Between Nashville and Harare: The Bible in Cross-Cultural Dialogue,”  
Second Presbyterian, Nashville, TN May 2007

Commencement Address, American Baptist College, Nashville, TN, May, 2006

*Regular Preaching Engagements*

Metropolitan Interdenominational Church, Nashville TN

Seay-Hubbard United Methodist Church, Nashville, TN

Ebenezer United Methodist Church, Nashville, TN

Hobson United Methodist Church, Nashville, TN

Kelley Chapel United Methodist Church, Decatur, GA

*Other Related Community Involvement*

Member, Board of Directors, Wesley-Canterbury Fellowship, Vanderbilt University

Faculty Consultant for the Thomas-Shockley Theological Academy of the General Board of Higher Education, The United Methodist Church

**Ongoing Projects:**

Participation in the Archaeological Excavations of the Megiddo Expedition, Megiddo, Israel

**Professional Credentials:**

Elder in Full Connection, North GA Conference, UMC 1997-present  
Probationary Member, North GA Conference, UMC 1995-1997

**Other Professional Experience:**

Faculty Mentor, Doctor of Ministry Program, United Theological Seminary (Dayton, OH), 2004-2007. Focus: The Black Church and Social and Civic Empowerment, with Prof. Victor Anderson

Pastor, Old National United Methodist Church (Riverdale, GA), 1992-1997

Refugee Resettlement Coordinator, The United Methodist Church, North Georgia Conference, 1995-1997