

**Marlena Graves, Ph.D.**

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**PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY**

Ph.D. in American Cultural Studies, assistant professor of spiritual formation at Northeastern Seminary, public scholar. Award-winning author with over 15 years of interdisciplinary teaching and leadership experience.

Specializes in U.S. social history; religion & politics; race, gender, & social identity in American history; Christian nationalism; public memory; political/public theology; and historical trauma. American religious history and Christian spirituality.

Experienced public speaker and published author in both academic and trade contexts.

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**EDUCATION**

**Bowling Green State University**, Bowling Green, OH

Ph.D. American Cultural Studies (2024)

Primary: Ethnicity, Gender & Social Identities | Secondary: American Social History

Presidential Diversity Scholar | Full-Tuition & Graduate Fellowship Recipient

**Northeastern Seminary**, Rochester, NY

Master of Divinity (2007)

Distinguished Alumni Award (2021)

**Cedarville University**, Cedarville, OH

B.A. History & Secondary Education (2001), with honors

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**ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS****Assistant Professor of Spiritual Formation**

Northeastern Seminary, Rochester, NY | 2022–Present

- Teach M.A., M.Div., and D.Min. students; supervise theses/dissertations
- Director, Spiritual Formation and *Familias Unidas* (Lilly Endowment Grant)

**Graduate Teaching Assistant – Women’s Studies**  
Bowling Green State University, OH | 2020–2022

- Sole instructor for “Introduction to Women’s Studies”

**Adjunct Professor – Theology & Spiritual Formation**  
Winebrenner Theological Seminary, Findlay, OH | 2015–2022

- Courses: Individual and Collective Formation

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**SELECTED NONPROFIT & MINISTRY LEADERSHIP POSITIONS**

**Director of Communications & Organizer**  
Farm Labor Organizing Committee, Toledo, OH | 2018–2020

- Spearheaded bilingual communications, organizing, and advocacy initiatives
- Partnered with NAACP and grassroots coalitions on labor justice and justice for immigrants
- Organizer

**Minister of Pastoral Care**  
St. Andrew’s UMC, Findlay, OH | 2014–2017

- Oversaw chaplaincy and pastoral care for elders
- Trained and equipped lay ministers and visitation teams

**Resident Director**  
Cedarville University, Cedarville, OH | 2008–2013

- Supervised residence life, mentored students, and academic advisor
- Served on the Diversity Committee and oversaw student programming

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**HONORS & AWARDS**

- Distinguished Alumni Award, Northeastern Seminary (2021)
- Christianity Today Award of Merit, *The Way Up Is Down* (2021)
- Outreach Magazine Recommended Resource (2021)
- Presidential Diversity Scholarship, BGSU (\$7,500, 2020)
- Hearts & Minds Best First Book on Spiritual Formation (2014)
- Christianity Today Her.meneutics Top Articles (2010–2012)

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## PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

### Books

- *The Gospel of Peace in a Violent World: Christian Nonviolence for Communal Flourishing* (IVP Academic, co-edited with Shawn Graves)
- Book proposal: invited by Oxford University Press (in process)

### Chapters and Articles

- “Conspiracy Theories and Meaning in Life,” in *Christianity and Conspiracy Theories*, Eerdmans
- “Immigration and the Church: Who Is My Neighbor?” in *The Gospel of Peace*
- “Introduction,” in *The Gospel of Peace*, with Shawn Graves

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## TRADE BOOKS

- *A Beautiful Disaster* (Brazos Press, 2014 - Award-winning)
- *Who's My Neighbor?* (Our Daily Bread, 2020)
- *The Way Up Is Down* (IVP, 2020 – Award-winning)
- *Forty Days On Being A Nine* (IVP, 2021)
- *Bearing Christ* (NavPress, 2023)
- *Grace for the Common Life* (IVP, forthcoming)

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## SELECTED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- “The Politics of Love,” Peace and Justice Studies Association, Niagara University (2024)
- “George Wallace’s Legacy,” Conference on Faith and History (2024)
- “White Evangelicals & Selective Compassion,” BGSU Latino/a/x Issues Conf. (2022)
- “Bless the Hands that Feed Us,” Vanguard University (2022)

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## SELECTED SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- Plenary Speaker, Ohio State University Carmen House of Christian Studies (Nov. 2025)
- Plenary Speaker, Abilene Christian University Clergy Retreat, Lake Dallas, TX (Sept. 2025)
- Plenary Speaker, Jesus Collective Regional Meeting, Newark, DE (Jun. 2025)
- Plenary Speaker, MTS Preaching Institute, Chicago, IL (May 2025)

- Plenary Speaker, Open Table Conference, Tyler, TX (Mar. 2025)
- Plenary Speaker, Free Methodist Justice Conference (June 2024)
- Plenary Speaker, Jesus Collective Unite Conference, St. Paul, MN (2024)
- Roberts Wesleyan University Chapel (2024)
- Urbana Conference, InterVarsity (2022)
- Tyndale College Doctor of Ministry Lecture (2024)

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## SELECTED MEDIA & ARTICLES

- Contributor: *Christianity Today*, *The Christian Century*, *Religion News Service*, *Sojourners*
- Interviewed by *Reuters* and *New York Magazine* about white evangelicals and Trump
- Walter Brueggemann interview: “It’s Not a Matter of Obeying the Bible. It’s About Obeying the Gospel,” *Faith Street* (2015)
- Contributor: *Our Daily Bread*, *Relevant Magazine*, *Missio Alliance*, *In Touch Magazine*
- 200+ published devotionals, interviews, and op-eds (full list available upon request)

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## SELECTED PODCASTS

Appeared on over fifty podcasts interviews as an invited guest

- Sacred Thoughts Podcast (Nov 2024)
- Englewood Review of Books (Jan 2024)
- CXMH: On Faith & Mental Health (Dec 2023)
- Jesus Collective Podcast (Oct 2023)
- The Two Cities Podcast (Jul 2023)

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## SKILLS & LANGUAGES

**Skills:** Organizational Leadership, Academic Mentorship, Public Speaking, Writing, Curriculum Design, Project Management

**Technology:** Various LMS like Canvas, Populi, Zoom, Top Hat, Microsoft Office, Google Suite

**Languages:** Native Spanish speaker (fluent)

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