

# JASON BYASSEE

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I work to discern the patterns of God's work in the world, from the intersection of the church, the academy, journalism, and the local neighborhood, hoping to grow from knowledge to wisdom.

## EXPERIENCE

**2015 - PRESENT**

**BUTLER CHAIR AND FULL PROFESSOR OF HOMILETICS & BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS, VANCOUVER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

I advise the principal at one of the top 10% of theological seminaries in North America in student body growth the last five years.

**2020 - PRESENT**

**PASTOR OF OUTREACH AND PREACHER TO THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING CONGREGATION, VANCOUVER CHINESE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**2011 - 2015**

**SENIOR PASTOR, BOONE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

Grew by 15% and raised \$500,000 in grants at a church of 1500 with a budget of \$1.4 million. We sent more than fifteen people to seminary in four years and I mentored a staff of eight pastors.

## EDUCATION

**2020**

**CERTIFICATE IN LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE, SAUDER SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**

**2005**

**PH.D. IN RELIGION, DUKE UNIVERSITY**

*Praise Seeking Understanding*, commending Augustine's Christological approach to the Psalms

**1999**

**MASTER OF DIVINITY, DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL**

*Summa cum Laude*, American Bible Society award in New Testament studies and Hickman award for Liturgics

1996

**AB IN HISTORY**, DAVIDSON COLLEGE

*Cum Laude*, with honors in history, Phi Beta Kappa and Omicron Delta Kappa, member of the college honor council

## MY WORK

**I teach**, because the classroom is a place of transformation and friendship

- At VST I teach across the curriculum, in history, bible, theology, and practical fields.
- Recent offerings: the nature and work of the Holy Spirit, learning preaching from the black church, introduction to public and pastoral ministry, the doctrine of the Trinity.
- I have evaluated or supervised doctoral dissertations at Garrett-Evangelical and Northern Seminaries (Illinois), Durham and Aberdeen Universities (UK), and the Toronto School of Theology (Canada).

**I notice**, since writing requires practice as a “first-rate noticer”

- I have written on faith and life for local outlets in Chicago IL (*Christian Century*), Durham NC (*Faith & Leadership*), Boone NC (*Watauga Democrat*), and Vancouver BC (*The Vancouver Sun*).
- Quoted in *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *Time*, and consulted by dozens of other venues.
- Northern Lights: Resurrecting Church in the North of England* (Cascade), a new book on growing churches from my sabbatical time in Durham, England.
- Regularly consulted for book endorsements and scholarly reviews of books and papers.

**I write** compulsively and collectively – to figure out what might be true

- 10 solo-authored volumes published by Eerdmans, Baker, Abingdon and Cascade. Foreworders include Martin Marty, Robert Jenson, Sam Wells, Joas Adiprasetya, and Will Willimon.
- Topics include scripture (*Surprised by Jesus Again*, *Psalms III*, *Praise Seeking Understanding*), church and life (*Trinity*, *Discerning the Body*), the new shape of ministry (*The Gifts of the Small Church*), recovering ancient practices (*The Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, *Reading Augustine*), and technology (*Following*).
- More than 350 articles for such venues as *Christianity Today*, *Religion News Service*, *Sojourners*, *Theology Today*, *Journal for Preachers*, and others.

**I preach**, because the gospel is not *for* us, but *through* us, *for* everybody else

- Interim pastorates at First Baptist Church, Vancouver, with the United Church of Canada’s campus ministry at UBC, and at Vancouver Chinese Presbyterian Church.
- Regular guest preacher at Tenth Church, a multi-site and multi-racial megachurch in Vancouver.
- Hundreds of guest preaching opportunities in eight Canadian provinces, 26 US states, and six other countries.
- Highlights include Durham Cathedral (UK), Duke Chapel (NC), Metropolitan AME (Washington DC), Christ Church United Methodist (New York City), Wycliffe College (Toronto), Jesus and Selwyn Colleges at Cambridge University (UK), Christ Commission

Fellowship (the Philippines), St. Andrew's and St. Paul's Presbyterian (Montreal), and the American Church in Paris (France).

**I learn**, since being a theologian, like being a disciple, is a never-settled practice

·Hundreds of interviews for *Christian Century* and *Faith & Leadership*, seeking the patterns of God's work in the church and the world.

·Curious about Pacific Rim Christianity, I have taught often at Vancouver Chinese Presbyterian, Vancouver Taiwanese Presbyterian, and Vancouver Chinese Evangelical Free Church.

·My Trinity book is forthcoming in Indonesian translation with BPK Gunung Mulia (Jakarta).

·Presentations in Jewish settings (Or Shalom Synagogue, Limmud Vancouver, and regularly in inter-faith programming at VST) undo easy patterns of thought and teach me to stammer again.

·New project afoot on the faith of Asian Canadian Christian immigrants to Vancouver emphasizing their contributions in medicine, law, engineering, government, teaching, and elsewhere.

**I collaborate**, because learning is a communal endeavor and power must be shared

·I have co-taught courses with Laura Duhan Kaplan (Jewish), Ross Lockhart & Richard Topping (Presbyterian), Paul Burns (Catholic at St. Mark's), and Jens Zimmerman (German evangelical at Regent College), Miroslav Volf and Tim Perry (Anglicans at Yale and Providence Seminary, respectively).

·I have taught as an adjunct at Persetia (Indonesia), Duke Divinity School, Wheaton College, Northern Seminary, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, and North Park Theological Seminary (the last four in Illinois).

·Co-written books with Andria Irwin, Ross Lockhart, Matt Miofsky, and Rae Jean Proeschold-Bell on technology, missional churches in Cascadia, growing Methodist church plants, and clergy health.

·Co-edited volumes with Roger Owens, Craig Kocher, James Howell, and John Buchanan on mentoring, the legacy of Eugene Peterson, and the history of the *Christian Century*. Forthcoming Festschrift for Jonathan R. Wilson coedited with Jeremy Kidwell (University of Birmingham, UK).

·Former Research fellow for the New Media Project at Union Theological Seminary in New York City and subsequently at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis.

·Visiting Fellow at St. John's College and in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, Durham University, UK, 2019-2022.

**I edit** with a particular love for giving new or overlooked writers a chance

·Editor of *Pastoring for Life*, a series with Baker Academic on what the life cycle teaches about God. Authors include Holly Taylor Coolman, Brian Brock, Aaron White, and Ed Searcy.

·Contributing editor to *Christian Century* magazine, soliciting hundreds of articles

·Past board member for the *Journal for Scriptural Reasoning*, *The Other Journal*, and *Pro Ecclesia*.

·I have consulted on some 25 books to get authors from brainstorming to publication.

**I administrate**, as a believer in thriving institutions

·At VST I direct summer school and our Ph.D. partnership with Durham University (UK)

·Current board membership with A Rocha Canada, *Theology and Ministry* (St. John's College, Durham UK), the Global Learning Consortium (Vancouver & Fukushima, Japan), the Centre for Missional Leadership at St. Andrew's Hall at the University of British Columbia, and Pacific Theatre (Vancouver BC).

·In Boone NC I served on the board for the Wesley Foundation at Appalachian State University and on the Western NC Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.

·In Durham NC I was a board member for Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove's School for Conversion, was an executive director of Leadership Education at Duke Divinity, and I directed the Center for Theology, Writing, and Media.

**I lecture**, in places where I'll be challenged

·Topics include biblical interpretation, new models of church (especially post-Covid), noticing Christ's work in the world.

·Frequent local guest lectures and presentations at Duke Divinity School, Appalachian State University, and institutions in Vancouver (UBC, St. Mark's College, Regent College, Carey Theological College, and St. Andrew's Hall) and Durham UK (Cranmer Hall, St. John's College, and Durham Cathedral).

·Highlights include Wesley House at Cambridge University, Cranmer Hall at Durham University, Asian Theological Seminary in Manila, the University of Victoria, the University of Virginia, the University of Richmond, Fuller Theological Seminary (WA), Princeton Theological Seminary, Western Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Hope College, Union Theological Seminary (NY & NC), Elon University, Queens University (ON), St. Olaf College, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Furman University, Mt. Olive College (NC), and more.

**I owe**, since we become what we receive

Grants from Presbyterian Innovative Ministries, Murdock, and MacMillan Foundations.

Grants in NC from The Duke Endowment and the Western NC Conference of the UMC.

·A dozen awards from the Associated Church Press and the AAR's newswriting award in 2007.

35 cover stories for *Christian Century*, *Sojourners*, *Books & Culture*, and *Christianity Today*

## EXTERNAL VALIDATION

·Ordained by the Western NC Conference of the United Methodist Church, 2007.

·References: Richard Topping (VST), Trygve Johnson (Hope College), Carol Zaleski (Smith College), Ellen Davis (Duke Divinity School), Willie Jennings (Yale Divinity School), John Kuykendall (Davidson College), Leighton Ford (Leighton Ford Ministries), Ken Shigematsu (Tenth Church), and David Wilkinson (St. John's College, Durham UK). Contact details upon request.

·Book endorsements include (see also [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) author page)

Fleming Rutledge "This is the best of the Wesleyan tradition."

Nadia Bolz-Weber "I describe Jason Byassee as a genius . . . the singular combination of a scholarly mind and a pastoral heart"

Andy Byers "the mind of a theologian, the heart of a pastor, and the eye of a journalist"

David Wilkinson *Following* is "essential reading both for those who . . . want to know what 21<sup>st</sup> century discipleship can be."

Tetsuro Shigematsu *Better than Brunch* is "a thrilling encounter with a new generation of insurgent pastors."

Janet Soskice on *Surprised by Jesus Again*: “delight in scripture dances off every page”

Jim Houston on *SBJA*: “a gripping and unique book”

Brad Jersak *SBJA* is “an instant classic,” his “first choice” text for teaching scripture.

Jacob Armstrong *Eight Virtues* “will give you hope for the future of the church”

Ken Shigematsu *EV* “will remind you of why you became a pastor in the first place”

Beth Felker Jones *Trinity* “In clear and startling prose . . . with pastoral sensibility and theological acumen, Byassee insists that the Trinity is for all of us.”

Robert Jenson *Praise Seeking Understanding* is “a ground-breaking study”

Eugene Peterson *Discerning the Body* is “a sane guide through what seem like the ruins”

Mark Noll *DTB* “unusually captivating (and bracingly edifying) reading”

Martin Marty in *DTB* “he has a voice, but he also has ears to hear the Gospel and those who listen to it”

Lauren Winner on *The Desert Fathers* is “beautiful, informative, probing, and wise”