

Reimagining The Black Church

The Past Promise and Prophetic Potential
of Black Theology

JULY 14–18, 2025



BLACK THEOLOGY
AND
LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



CONTENTS

- 2** Welcome Letter
- 3** Hospitality & Accessibility
- 4** Schedule
- 6** Panels
- 8** Leadership
- 24** Participants
- 29** About Betsy Stockton Center for Black Church Studies
- 30** About Black Theology and Leadership Institute
- 31** Princeton Seminar Series & Farminary 10th Anniversary Celebration
- 32** Campus Map
- 33** What To Do / Where To Eat
- 34** BTLI 2026 Save the Date & Princeton Theological Seminary
- 35** Thank You & Volunteers



WELCOME

Welcome to the 2025 Black Theology and Leadership Institute (BTLI)! We are honored and delighted to welcome you into this beloved community of scholars, pastors, theologians, activists, and leaders. BTLI remains a sacred space where rigorous theological reflection, deep spiritual formation, and communal imagination converge. Your presence here affirms not only your commitment to the life and future of the Black Church but also your openness to being transformed and commissioned anew for the work ahead.

Our theme this year is *Reimagining the Black Church: The Past Promise and Prophetic Potential of Black Theology*. We gather at a critical moment—politically, culturally, and spiritually—for the Black Church and the communities it serves. As threats to democracy intensify, as disinformation and cultural division proliferate, and as state-sanctioned rollbacks of civil and human rights accelerate, we are reminded that the Black Church has always stood as a sanctuary of resistance, renewal, and radical hope. And yet, we also gather with full awareness that the Black Church itself is not immune to the ideological, economic, and theological pressures that seek to hollow out its prophetic core.

This year, we ask: What might it mean to recover the radical legacy of Black theology—not as an academic artifact, but as a living, liberating force capable of reanimating our preaching, our organizing, and our communal life? How do we resource our congregations and institutions to imagine beyond the constraints of neoliberalism, racial capitalism, Christian nationalism, and theological accommodation? And what new paradigms of leadership, worship, and witness must we cultivate for the Black Church to not merely survive this moment, but shape what comes next?

To guide us in this reflection, we are blessed to learn from an extraordinary slate of lecturers and practitioners. Together, this year's lecturers—Hopkins, Carter, Weems, Washington-Leapheart, and Williams—will set our imaginations ablaze with fresh theological vision, call us back to the Black Church's prophetic roots of liberation and justice, and push us to dream, strategize, and act beyond the boundaries of what we once thought possible. Our afternoon panels tackle urgent, real-world questions assessing the consequences and responses to environmental racism or probing how prophetic art reframes lament and hope for a new generation.

Beyond the lecture hall, formation will happen in intimate spaces where fellows wrestle with the day's insights and translate them into actionable ministry. Each evening, we will gather for worship services that blend ancestral rhythms and contemporary praise, reminding us that praise, protest, and prophetic proclamation share the same heartbeat.

May every plenary, panel, cohort conversation, and song kindle a fire that you carry home to your congregation, classroom, or community. Whether you have come seeking renewal, clarity, challenge, or connection, we believe this week holds something essential for you. Our prayer is that your time at BTLI 2025 will rekindle your sense of calling and sharpen your vision—not only for what the Church has been, but for what it can become.

May the Spirit stir your imagination, ignite your courage, and strengthen your hope.

Welcome home.

Rev. David G. Latimore, PhD, DMin

Director – Black Theology and Leadership Institute

Director – Betsey Stockton Center for Black Church Studies

Princeton Theological Seminary

HOSPITALITY & ACCESSIBILITY

Hospitality



QUIET SPACE

Need some space to breathe?
Enjoy the prayer garden
(next to the chapel on left).



INTERNET ACCESS

WiFi is available at
Seminary-Guests
Password is
SeminaryInternet1812



DIETARY NEEDS

Group meals and snacks are provided based on allergen and special diet information collected through registration. If you need assistance with a food concern, please don't hesitate to make a special request.

Building Accessibility

Mackay Campus Center

- Accessible entry ramp with rails located at the right exterior wall. Motorized door with button.
- Accessible parking available in the lot adjacent to and behind building along College road, with incline to building.
- Accessible, all-gender restroom located in the front lobby.
- Motorized lift available for access to auditorium. See student for assistance.

Seminary Chapel

- Accessible entrance with motorized lift behind left exterior staircase. Balcony has stair-only access.
- Limited accessible parking available along main Seminary quadrangle.
- Accessible restrooms on basement level across from motorized lift.
- In worship, chapel assistants can provide assisted-hearing devices, seat cushions.

Wright Library

- Accessible front main entrance facing
- Mercer Street, with motorized door button at far left.
- Accessible parking adjacent to library along right exterior wall.

- Accessible restrooms in left Entry Hallway.
- Lactation room available next to lower level restroom along right interior wall.
- All gender bathrooms – 2nd floor
When exiting the elevator or stairs, turn left and proceed to the end of the short hallway, then take an immediate left into a long hallway. These private, all-gender restrooms are located in this area on each floor of the building.

Stuart Hall

- Accessible entry ramp with rails located at right exterior wall, with motorized door button.
- Accessible parking along street in front of building.
- Accessible, all-gender restroom in basement level, along entry corridor.
- Elevator located to the left of central staircase (access to all levels).

Scheide Hall

- Accessible front main entrance with motorized door button on right hand wall.
- Accessible, all-gender restrooms adjacent to elevator (first and second floors).
- Elevator located on left wall past foyer (access to first and second floors).

SCHEDULE



Daily Schedule	Monday, July 14	Tuesday, July 15
8:00 a.m.	Breakfast	Breakfast
9:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. Theron Room, Wright Library	Morning Lecture: Dr. Dwight Hopkins	Morning Lecture: Dr. J. Kameron Carter
11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Theron Room, Wright Library	Panel: The Black Church and the Climate Crisis: Faith, Justice, and the Future of Our Communities	Panel: All Eyez on God: Tupac Shakur, Black Suffering, and the Theological Imagination of Hip-Hop
12:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. MacKay Cafeteria	Lunch	Lunch
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. TBD	Cohort Meetings	Cohort Meetings
4:00 p.m.	Period of Personal Reflection	Period of Personal Reflection
5:00 p.m. – 6:45 p.m.	Opening Reception At Erdman	Dinner: On Your Own
7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Princeton Chapel	Worship: Rev. Tamesha Mills	Worship: Rev. Dr. Brandon Crowley



Daily Schedule	Wednesday, July 16	Thursday, July 17	Friday, July 18
8:00 a.m.	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
9:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. Theron Room, Wright Library	Betsey Stockton Lecture: Dr. Renita Weems	Morning Lecture: Rev. Naomi Washington-Leapheart	Morning Lecture: Rev. Janiece Williams
11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Theron Room, Wright Library	Book Club Conversation: Rev Dr. Andrew Wilkes, Plenty Good Room	Workshop: Exploring Furthering Your Theological Education	Closing Session
12:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. MacKay Cafeteria	Lunch	Lunch	
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. TBD	Cohort Meetings	Cohort Meetings	
4:00 p.m.	Period of Personal Reflection	Period of Personal Reflection	
5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	Dinner: On Your Own	Dinner: On Your Own	
7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Princeton Chapel	Worship: Rev. Dr. Tremayne Johnso	Worship: Rev. Janeice Williams	

PANELS

The Black Church and the Climate Crisis: Faith, Justice, and the Future of Our Communities

As the realities of the climate crisis grow more urgent, so too does the need for faith communities—especially the Black Church—to respond with prophetic clarity and moral courage. This panel will examine the distinct role of the Black Church in addressing environmental injustice, climate vulnerability, and ecological resilience within Black communities. Featuring Derrick Weston, theologian, storyteller, and program director at Creation Justice Ministries, and moderated by Tammie Latimore, minister and community advocate, this conversation will highlight the theological, historical, and ethical imperatives for Black congregations to engage environmental justice as a core expression of discipleship and liberation.

Together, they will examine the disproportionate impact of climate change on African American communities, the spiritual dimensions of ecological care, and practical strategies for churches to become centers of sustainability, resistance, and hope. This panel invites us to consider: What does it mean to steward creation while standing in the legacy of Black prophetic witness? And how can the Black Church lead in the fight for a just and livable future for all?



Rev. Tammie Latimore



Rev. Derrick Weston

All Eyez on God: Tupac Shakur, Black Suffering, and the Theological Imagination of Hip-Hop

Join us for an unforgettable conversation at the intersection of theology, culture, and prophetic witness. This dynamic panel will offer a powerful and provocative exploration of Black suffering, resistance, and hope through the theological imagination of hip-hop. Grounded in the life, music, and enduring legacy of Tupac Shakur, we will examine how hip-hop operates as both lament and liturgy—a sacred soundtrack that names injustice, speaks truth to power, and dares to imagine liberation in the midst of despair.

Through Tupac's prophetic voice, this session will explore the ways in which hip-hop gives theological shape to Black experience: narrating pain, affirming dignity, confronting systems of oppression, and offering a vision of beloved community that is as urgent as it is poetic. Come hear what happens when the sacred meets the street—when the prophetic finds its rhythm in the poetry of pain and possibility.

Panelists



Rev. Nicole Duncan-Smith



**Rev. Dr. Christopher
Michael Jones**



Dr. Jamal Joseph



**Rev. Rashad Raymond Moore,
PhD**

Book Club Conversation – Rev. Dr. Andrew Wilkes, *Plenty Good Room*

Join us for a transformative conversation on building a more just and equitable society—one where everyone has access to what they need not merely to survive, but to flourish. This timely discussion will explore how economic justice can be reimaged through a theology of abundance rather than scarcity, and how communities of faith and conscience can collaborate to shape a future rooted in equity, dignity, and shared responsibility.

Featuring a leading voice at the intersection of economic justice, Christian faith, and community transformation, the event will offer deep insights and practical guidance for anyone seeking to engage these critical issues in meaningful ways. Participants will leave with a renewed vision of what is possible, along with the tools and inspiration to co-create an economy that centers fairness, inclusion, and sustainability for all. Whether you're a faith leader, activist, student, or someone passionate about social justice, this conversation will equip you to become a catalyst.



Rev. Dr. Andrew Wilkes

LEADERSHIP



Dr. J. Kameron Carter

Professor of African American Studies, Comparative Literature, and Religious Studies at the University of California, Irvine

J. Kameron Carter is a Professor of African American Studies, Comparative Literature, and Religion at the University of California at Irvine. He writes and thinks about religion and public life, or the social ecology of religion. He is particularly interested in the convergences of religion and race; religion, the environment, and climate change; and religion and the arts. On the arts, he has been especially interested in poetry and music as improvisational practices that entail what he calls a “poetics of faith,” where faith here means creative endurance under conditions of duress.

He is the author of *Race: A Theological Account* (Oxford UP, 2008). His latest book is *The Anarchy of Black Religion: A Mystic Song* (Duke University Press, 2023). The latter book, *The Anarchy of Black Religion*, inaugurates a 3-part set of books, a trilogy, that aims to recast how we think about religion by subjecting the very idea of religion to black study. He calls it “The Black Study of Religion” project.

Carter is finishing a book called “Whiteness: A Political Theology” that will be published by Yale University Press. This book explores whiteness not merely or flatly as the racial identity of those who’ve come “to believe themselves to be white” (as Ta-Nehisi Coates has put it after James Baldwin). Carter urges us in our efforts to make sense of the rise of late fascism and authoritarianism in the present to understand whiteness as a form of political theology, which itself is a term coined by the Nazi legal theorist and political philosopher Carl Schmitt.



The Reverend Brandon Thomas Crowley, PhD
Senior Pastor, Myrtle Baptist Church, Newton,
Massachusetts

The Reverend Dr. Brandon Thomas Crowley is an African-American pastor, preacher, author, and scholar in religion, theology, and queer theory. Since 2009, he has served as the Senior Pastor of the Historic Myrtle Baptist Church in Newton, Massachusetts, one of America's oldest Black congregations founded by formerly enslaved Africans at the end of Reconstruction and one of the few open and affirming historically Black churches in the United States of America.

In addition to his pastoral role, Dr. Crowley is a Lecturer in Ministry Studies at Harvard University's Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and the 2024-2026 Honorary Distinguished Fellow in the Department of Classics, Ancient History, Religion, and Theology at the University of Exeter in England. Dr. Crowley has taught courses on Theology, Race, Ethical Leadership, Queer Theory, and African American Religions at Boston University, Emory University, the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest, and the Meadville Lombard Theological Seminary in Chicago, Illinois. Reverend Crowley earned a Ph.D. in Church and Society and a Master of Sacred Theology with a certificate in social justice from Boston University's School of Theology. He also earned a Master of Divinity from Harvard Divinity School and a Bachelor of Arts in Religion with a moral cosmopolitan pastoral leadership certificate from Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia. Reverend Crowley's first manuscript is titled *Queering Black Churches: Dismantling Heteronormativity in African American Congregations* with Oxford University Press. Dr. Crowley's research and ministry have been featured in the Associated Press, The Boston Globe, The Washington Post, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, NBC, CBS, and The Griot. His work demonstrates a commitment to challenging societal norms within African American faith communities and forging innovative pathways for the future.

Beyond his pastoral and academic roles, Dr. Crowley also serves on various boards and is a leader in several communal organizations. He is an inaugural member of the Council of Religious Practitioners and Scholars for the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C., a member of The Greater Boston Salvation Army Advisory Board, a member of the Harvard Alumni Council and membership selection committee, a member of the Newton-Wellesley Hospital Community Benefits and Needs Assessment committees, and the new Owner and Curator of the Board of the African American Lectionary Inc. Ordained in the Progressive National Baptist Convention of America, Inc., and licensed in the National Baptist Convention of America, Dr. Crowley brings a wealth of wisdom and dedication to his work. He resides in New England with his husband, Tyrone Sutton, the Headmaster (principal) of Boston Arts Academy, a premier high school for the visual and performing arts in Suffolk County, Massachusetts. Together, they share a home with their beloved 15-year-old Maltese pup, Bishop.



Rev. Nicole Duncan-Smith
Founder of The Sunday School Dropout

Rev. Nicole Duncan-Smith is a dedicated bi-vocational minister whose theology is firmly rooted in the Baptist tradition and Hip-Hop culture. Embracing inclusivity akin to Jesus' universal love, she employs contemporary pop culture and technology to illuminate the path to spiritual enlightenment.

Founder of The Sunday School Dropout, Rev. Nikki, as she is affectionately called, champions a ministry dedicated to hearing personal faith testimonies, nurturing biblical literacy, and providing sanctuary for those who seek God outside traditional church settings.

Originally from West Philadelphia, she seamlessly integrates the dynamic influences of Hip-Hop into her spiritual practice, reflecting her upbringing immersed in its rich cultural tapestry.

In addition to her pastoral duties, Rev. Nikki has made significant contributions as an editor and writer for a diverse array of publications, including AtlantaBlackStar.com, OprahDaily.com, theGrio.com, BET.com, AllHipHop.com, Rap Pages, Vibe Magazine, The Source, Christian Science Monitor, among others.

Her career includes pivotal roles at various record labels, distribution companies, and entertainment firms, working alongside industry luminaries like Sheri Riley, Russell Simmons, Steve Stoute, and L. Londell McMillian.

Currently, she serves as the Director of Corporate Communications for the Ultimate Rap League and sits on the Advisory Board of The Hip Hop Museum.

An accomplished author and lecturer, Rev. Nikki holds degrees from Spelman College and New York Theological Seminary. Her scholarly pursuits have taken her to lecture halls at Drexel University, Virginia Tech, New York Theological Seminary, and globally in Nigeria and Japan, where she explores the intersection of religion, rap music, and cultural studies.

Her spiritual journey began at Resurrection Baptist Church under the guidance of Reverend Dr. C.L. Amaker and her grandparents, Deacon James Tindal and Deaconess Lucille Tindal, shaping her profound connection to faith and community.

Rev. Nicole Duncan-Smith's ministry starts at home, where her chief ministry is as wife to Gregory Smith, Jr., and mother to actor and physicist, Eden Duncan-Smith.



Rev. Dr. Dwight Hopkins

Laura Spelman Professor at the University of Chicago
Divinity School

Dwight N. Hopkins is the Laura Spelman Professor at the University of Chicago, with an office in the Divinity School. He researches the following theme. Faith + Wealth = Freedom as a practical way to broaden participation in material and spiritual resources. This has been a thread in his journey. Wealth means family ownership of earth, air, and water for at least three generations.

Hopkins seeks to help young people realize their dreams by accumulating wealth through innovations in education technology.

Some of his courses include: three classes on black ownership of wealth from 1619 to today; social entrepreneurship; can capitalism do good?; wealth and theology in the Third World; wealth for working class blacks in black theology (1st & 2nd generations); and contemporary models of theology.

Hopkins studied at Groton School (an all-boys boarding school); Harvard University; Union Theological Seminary (New York City); and the University of Cape Town (South Africa). Also, he has taken classes at the Kellogg School of Management (Northwestern University).

He is the descendent of 5 prior Hopkins generations of family businessmen and Christians born in Virginia.



Dr. Carlton David Johnson
Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA)
Associate Director of Theology, Formation and Evangelism

Carlton David Johnson is a native of Atlanta GA.

He received his undergraduate degree from Emory University in English with a concentration in literature from the African diaspora. Following a 25-year career in Project, Operation and Client Services Management, Carlton returned to the academy to receive the Master of Divinity at Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary and, more recently, the Master of Theology (Homiletics) from the Candler School of Theology at Emory University. His area of research is the impact of African American preaching on grief and mourning.

Throughout his life, he has maintained an intimate concern for the disenfranchised, especially young African-American males. He has worked in the outreach ministries of the church and given himself to mentorship with such organizations as the United States National Guard Youth Challenge Academy and his beloved Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

Carlton serves as the Associate Director of Theology, Formation and Evangelism for the Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA). Carlton also serves as a Chaplain for both Children's Hospital of Atlanta and Grady Health Systems. At Grady, he developed a specialty in Emergency and Trauma Initiated Palliative Pastoral Care. He previously served as Chief Operations Officer for Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary.

Carlton is an associate minister at the First Afrikan Presbyterian Church in Lithonia, GA. There he works with the Ujima Men's Fellowship, Kijana Boys Rites of Passage, Fawohodie Ministry to the Incarcerated and their families and serves in Music Ministry. He is a board member of the First Afrikan Presbyterian Church Community Development Corporation, the Presbyterian Pastoral Care Network and NEXT CHURCH (Strategic Planning Team). He is a regular contributor to the Presbyterian Outlook monthly magazine.

Carlton and his wife Cara split their time between Atlanta, GA and Louisville, KY.



Rev. Dr. Tremayne M. Johnson
Senior Pastor of Zion Baptist Church,
Newport News, Virginia

TREMAINE M. JOHNSON is a native of North Carolina and a graduate of Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville, NC, Duke University, Durham, NC, United Theological Seminary in Dayton, OH, receiving a Doctor of Ministry Degree and a scholar under the mentorship of Dr. William H. Curtis and Dr. Gina M. Stewart. Dr. Johnson successfully defended his dissertation entitled; *A Cause for Renewal; Preaching that Produces Liberation through the Understanding of the Spirit in Worship*. Johnson is currently a PhD student at the Regent University in Virginia Beach, Virginia, focusing on Cross Cultural Communications.

Dr. Tremayne Johnson currently serves as the Senior Pastor of Zion Baptist Church, Newport News, Virginia. Under the leadership of Dr. Johnson, the church has experience growth, spiritually, numerically and financially and has partnered with Hampton Roads Agriculture and the City of Newport News to produce a Community Garden. The Gardens at Zion serves as a resource to feed the homeless, the less fortunate and those who simply need fresh produce to eat.

Dr. Tremayne Johnson has served as a Pastor since the young age of 19. He has served the St. Paul Baptist Church Wilmington, NC, and the historic Browns Chapel Baptist Church in Clinton, NC. He is also a former Vice-Moderator of the Western Union Baptist Association of the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Johnson is the President of the Coalition of Concerned Clergy Inc and the Peninsula Pastors' Council of the Hampton Roads, Virginia. He is a distinguished brother of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.; A Board Member of HRCAP; the Peninsula C.A.R.E.S. Foundation, the Community Action Board of the Newport News Common Wealth's Attorney Office and the CNI Initiative for the City of Newport News, Virginia. Dr. Johnson is both passionate and committed to the call of God upon his life and ministry. His most beloved blessing is being the proud Father of two daughters, Taylor and TaKayla.



Rev. Dr. Christopher Michael Jones
Senior Pastor, First Church of Hillside, Hillside, NJ

An educator, practical theologian, grassroots organizer, multi-platinum record producer and columnist for magazines like *Ebony*, *Essence*, and *Life Magazine*, Dr. Christopher Michael Jones currently serves as Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church of Hillside in Hillside, NJ. Dr. Jones strives to remain committed to sharing a prophetic message of love, social uplift, self-empowerment, and economic justice. A true hybrid of Hip-Hop and the Christian Church, Dr. Jones leans into a communication methodology which reaches multiple generations by lovingly keeping it real and making the truth plain through powerful preaching, insightful teaching, lecturing, and creative writing.

A native of Queens, NY, Dr. Jones currently serves as Faculty Mentor of the inaugural “Building and Bridging: Transformational Approaches to Pastoral Leadership, Prophetic Preaching, and Spiritual Formation” Doctor of Ministry Degree Program at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, OH. Dr. Jones has also served as the Visiting Professor of Preaching and Worship at New Brunswick Theological Seminary. While serving at NBTS, Dr. Jones served as Adjunct Professor of Pastoral Administration and Co-Mentor to the Doctor of Ministry Degree Program in Pastoral Care and Counseling.

Dr. Jones has also served as Adjunct Professor of Pastoral Leadership at Pillar College and as Guest Lecturer at Long Island University-Brooklyn focusing on Faith and Public Policy. Dr. Jones was ongoing contributor to *The African American Pulpit* and *The African American Lectionary* offering sermons and theological commentary on sacred texts from a creative African American perspective. Firmly rooted in his commitment to the work of the church, empowering the local community, and teaching in the academy, Dr. Jones maintains a strong commitment to retooling and encouraging pastors, seminarians, organizational leaders, and volunteers in parish ministry as well as the public marketplace.

A graduate of Forest Hills High School, Dr. Jones graduated Summa Cum Laude from Rutgers University, earned his Master of Divinity Degree from Princeton Theological Seminary, and also earned his Doctor of Ministry degree from Memphis Theological Seminary with a concentration in Preaching as Pastoral Care in the African American tradition. Dr. Jones has studied at many other institutions of higher learning including the University of Oxford as a Graduate Fellow of Theology.

Most recently, Dr. Jones was appointed Chaplain of the Hillside Police and Fire Department in Hillside, NJ. He is the first African American to be appointed to serve as Chaplain to both departments in Hillside’s 104-year history.

Dr. Jones also recently published his second book *A Sacred Storm: When God Speaks through Radical Disruption* through The Pilgrim Press. His latest work focuses on his journey pivoting from being a multiplatinum record producer to serving as a pastor, professor, and community advocate. Through the lens of hip hop and the Christian faith, Dr. Jones offers timely life-lessons learned on how to navigate through life’s unexpected storms.

Dr. Jones is married to the former Nikki Michelle Etheridge and they share three children together: Jordan, Taylor, and Imani.



Dr. Jamal Joseph

Professor of Professional Practice at Columbia University School of the Arts in the Film Department.

Jamal Joseph is a writer, director, producer, educator and activist. His film and television writer/director credits include *Chapter & Verse* (theatrical and BET) which won the Pan African Film Festival's Audience Choice Award and was a New York Times Critic's pick, *Drive By* and *Da Zone* for STARZ in BLACK, *Hard Chorus* and *Hip Hop in the Promised Land* for Comedy Central, and *Hughes Dream Harlem* for PBS. Additional screenplay credits include *Knights of the South Bronx* for A&E and *Ali: An American Hero* for FOX. Joseph is an executive producer and is featured in the FX Docuseries *Dear Mama* about the life and legacy of Tupac and Afeni Shakur. Joseph is featured in the PBS documentary *Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution* and the EPIX docuseries *By Whatever Means Necessary*. He is the creator of dramatic series *Panther Baby* which is based on his critically-acclaimed memoir.

Joseph was a leader of the Harlem Chapter of the Black Panther Party and spent nine years in prison. He began writing and directing plays in prison and founded a groundbreaking multiracial theater ensemble while incarcerated at Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary. He has since written, directed and produced plays and theatrical events at National Black Theater, New Heritage Theatre, Riverside Theater, St. James Theater, The Apollo, Theater at Madison Square Garden, Miller Theater and Carnegie Hall.

Joseph is the co-founder of Impact Youth Theatre. He is the Executive Artistic Director of New Heritage Theatre, the oldest Black non-profit theater in New York State.

Joseph has been a member of Columbia University's film faculty for 27 years. He is a full professor of professional practice in film and was the first African-American to serve as the head of the screen and television writing program and as Chair of the Graduate Film Division. He is the author of *Tupac Legacy*, an interactive biography of Tupac Shakur published by Atria Books, *Panther Baby* published by Algonquin Books and co-author of *Look For Me in The Whirlwind* published by PM Press.

Joseph's awards include an NAACP leadership award, Black Filmmakers' Hall of Fame Award, Paul Robeson Award from Actor's Equity Association, AUDELCO Leadership Award and Sundance Directing Fellowship. He is a three-time winner of the National Black Program Consortium Prized Pieces Award, a Cine Golden Eagle, an Encore Purpose Prize, and the Film Independent Spirit Award. He has been nominated for an Oscar, and Emmy and a Grammy.



Rev. Dr. David Latimore

Director for the Betsey Stockton Center for Black Church Studies at Princeton Theological Seminary

Rev. Dr. David G. Latimore serves as the Director for the Betsey Stockton Center for Black Church Studies at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Rev. Dr. Latimore has over twenty years of pastoral experience. He most recently served as the sixth Senior Pastor of the Fifteenth Avenue Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee. He has also served as Senior Pastor at the Mt. Zion Baptist Church (Joliet, IL), the Mt. Carmel Baptist Church (Gainesville, FL), the Southern Union Baptist Church (St. Louis, MO), and has also served the First Calvary Baptist Church (Durham, NC) as Senior Associate Minister. Rev. Dr. Latimore was licensed into ministry by Bishop Paul S. Morton at Greater St. Stephen Full Gospel Baptist Church (New Orleans, LA).

Rev. Dr. Latimore graduated from Harvard University with an A.B. in Economics and received his Master's of Divinity degree from Duke Divinity. He received his Doctorate of Ministry in Homiletics from McCormick Theological Seminary. His doctoral thesis, *Liberating Lazarus: The Homiletical Mediation of Liberation for Congregant and Community*, was awarded the John Randall Hunt Prize for Outstanding D.Min. Thesis and Academic Record. Additionally, Rev. Dr. Latimore received his Ph.D. in Theology from the University of Chicago Divinity School. His dissertation focused on the influence of the endogenous theology of neoliberalism on the ecclesiology and praxiology of African-American religious institutions.

Before seminary, Rev. Dr. Latimore enjoyed a successful career in investment management and economic development. Most recently, he served as President and CEO of the Initiative for A Competitive Inner City (ICIC), an economic research firm focused on economic development in America's inner cities. He has served in several executive management positions in investment management firms across the nation and began his career in management consulting with Bain and Company. Rev. Dr. Latimore has faithfully served his community, providing leadership to several organizations, including as a founding member of the African-American Clergy Coalition, former Chaplain of the River Valley Juvenile Detention Center, and Chair of a local chapter of the Black Chamber of Commerce. He has also served as an Adjunct Instructor at McCormick Theological Seminary, University of Toronto, Moody Bible Institute, Dominican University, University of Chicago, and a Faculty Fellow at Belmont University.

Rev. Dr. Latimore is blessed to be the husband of Min. Tammie Brown Latimore for over twenty-eight years and the father of Grace, Sydney, David, II, Lauren, and Nina.



Rev. Tammie Latimore
Princeton Seminary Alum

Tammie Brown Latimore is a 2025 graduate of Princeton University's Master of Theology and Ecology program, where her capstone project examined how faith-rooted environmental stewardship can redirect real-estate acquisition toward justice-centered development in North Carolina's communities of color. She holds a B.S. in Marketing from Xavier University of Louisiana and leverages that training to analyze the market forces that shape land use and housing policy.

Before entering the real-estate arena, Latimore spent more than twenty years in full-time ministry, serving congregations in St. Louis, Joliet, and Nashville. In each context she built coalitions that linked the pulpit to the neighborhood—advocating for affordable housing, green space preservation, and economic opportunities for under-resourced residents. Today, she integrates theological insight, marketing acumen, and grassroots experience to challenge development models that displace the poor and to champion sustainable, community-led alternatives.



Rev. Tamesha Mills

Senior Pastor, Saint James AME Church in Danbury, CT

Reverend Tamesha Mills is a Daughter, Pastor, Scholar, Community Organizer, and Lover of Justice. She is a woman after God's own heart and is passionate about preaching and teaching the liberating Gospel of Jesus Christ. Rev. Mills serves as the pastor of Saint James A.M.E. Church in Danbury, CT. She is a two-time graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary earning both an MDiv and ThM in Biblical Studies. She is a second career Minister having worked in Television before attending seminary and has a Master of Arts degree in Journalism from Hofstra University, as well as a Bachelor of Arts degree from Adelphi University in Communications.

Rev. Mills has been entrenched in advocacy work with her faith at the center as a guiding ethos. While in Danbury she has organized with community groups as well as fellow Black churches in the city. In addition, she serves on the Board for the Association of Religious Communities (ARC) an interfaith organization that advocates for and provides shelter to the homeless in Danbury as well as food to those in need. While at PTS, Rev. Mills served in Student Government as well as The Association of Black Seminarians (ABS) where she held the office of Moderator and Vice Moderator. As Moderator of ABS, Rev. Mills played an integral role in organizing the seminary community for the removal of Samuel Miller's name from the Seminary Chapel in the 2021-2022 academic year. In the A.M.E. Church, she is a member of the Women in Ministry, an advocacy group within the denomination where she has held the position of Technology Chair and District Financial Secretary.

Rev. Mills is an adjunct faculty member at Turner Theological Seminary where she teaches the *Introduction to Old Testament* course. She also teaches *Introduction to Preaching* for the New England Annual Conference Ministerial Institute. Her scholarly/ research interests are in the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible, Womanist Biblical Interpretation, Feminist Theory as well as the intersections of faith and the Black experience.

Rev. Tamesha Mills is a proud New Yorker born and raised in Queens. She is an 18 year-member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated where she has held the office of Chaplain, Parliamentarian, and Ivy Leaf Reporter. Rev. Mills has been blessed to preach, teach, and present research internationally. She continues to explore the intersection of scholarship and faith for the justice, equity, and thriving of all of God's people.



Rev. Rashad Raymond Moore, PhD
Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church of Crown Heights
in Brooklyn

The Rev. Rashad Raymond Moore, Ph.D., is the senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Crown Heights in Brooklyn. A native of Bedford-Stuyvesant, he leads one of the borough's historic Black congregations with a focus on tradition, justice, and intergenerational ministry. He holds degrees from Morehouse College, Union Theological Seminary, and a Ph.D. in Philosophy and Education from Columbia University. Before Crown Heights, he served as assistant minister at Abyssinian Baptist Church under the Rev. Dr. Calvin O. Butts III. His writing has been published by the *Huffington Post* and *Harvard Education Press*, and he researches and writes on themes of memory, protest, and imagination in Black educational and religious life. He has served on the boards of Sheltering Arms, the UNCF Faith Initiative, and the Shawn Carter Foundation. Currently, his passion is organizing with East Brooklyn Congregations to address Brooklyn's affordability crisis. Dr. Moore is distinguished by his ability to merge academic rigor, prophetic preaching, and grassroots organizing in service of Black institutions and collective hope.



Rev. Naomi Washington-Leapheart
Professor of African American Studies, Comparative
Literature, and Religious Studies at the University of
California, Irvine

Rev. Naomi Washington-Leapheart, a daughter of Detroit, is a Black queer preacher, teacher, strategist, and justice advocate. She is an adjunct professor of theology and religious studies at Villanova University, teaches in Eastern University's Prison Education Program, and recently completed a two year term as the Government Fellow for Religion and Public Life at Harvard Divinity School. Rev. Naomi also serves as the first-ever Strategic Partnerships Director at Political Research Associates (PRA), a social justice research and strategy center that provides strategic insights and actionable research that identifies, disrupts, and competes with movements and institutions that undermine democracy, justice, and human rights. In 2021, Rev. Naomi founded Salt | Yeast | Light, an organization that develops spaces of spiritual education, disruption, reflection, transformation, and public action. Most recently, she joined the national leadership team of Christians for a Free Palestine.



Rev. Dr. Renita J. Weems
Dean of Gammon Theological Seminary, Atlanta GA

Rev. Dr. Renita J. Weems is a biblical scholar, a minister, and an author whose scholarly insights into modern faith, biblical texts, and the role of spirituality in everyday lives has made her a highly sought-after writer and speaker for more than four decades. She has written widely for academics and general audiences on topics of Christian faith, prophetic religion, human rights, the black church, women's spirituality, biblical justice, and human sexuality. Rev. Dr. Renita Weems earned a Ph.D. degree at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1989 making her the first African American woman to earn a doctorate in Old Testament Studies. She is the first Black woman to deliver the Yale University Lyman Beecher Lecture (2008). Dr. Weems is featured in *"Black Stars: African American Religious Leaders"* (2008), a collection of biographies of some of the most important Black Religious Leaders over the last 200 hundred years, including such impressive figures as Adam Clayton Powell, Elijah Muhammad, Sojourner Truth, Howard Thurman, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

In addition to being a former professor at Vanderbilt Divinity School (1987–2004), Rev. Dr. Renita J. Weems, a scholar of Christian scriptures, has taught at Spelman College (Atlanta, GA), Howard University Divinity School (Washington, DC) and Memphis Theological Seminary (Memphis, TN). She grew up in Atlanta, GA where she attended Atlanta public schools. She obtained her B.A. degree from Wellesley College in Wellesley, MA. She worked for a brief time after college as a public accountant and a stockbroker for Merrill Lynch.

Rev. Dr. Renita J. Weems is currently (2024 academic year) the Crump Visiting Professor and Black Religious Scholars Group Scholar-in-Residence at Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, TX.

Ordained in 1985 Dr. Weems is an itinerant minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Rev. Dr. Renita J. Weems lives in Nashville with her family.



Rev. Derrick Weston

Director of Theological Education and Formation at Creation Justice Ministries

Rev. Derrick Weston is the Director of Theological Education and Formation at Creation Justice Ministries, an ecumenical organization helping Christians to live in right relationship with God's Creation. Derrick has spent over twenty years working in churches and faith based community organizations and has spent much of the last decade exploring the intersection of faith and food justice. His first book, *The Just Kitchen: Invitations to Sustainability, Cooking, Connection, and Celebration* was released 2023 and his next book *Food For All*, part of the *Building a Moral Economy* series will release in Spring of 2026. Derrick is married to Rev. Shannon Weston and they are the parents of four teenagers.



Rev. Dr. Andrew Wilkes

Co-pastor of the Double Love Experience Church, Brooklyn, NY

Rev. Andrew Wilkes, Ph.D, is a political scientist, the co-pastor of the Double Love Experience Church in Brooklyn and the former executive director of the Drum Major Institute. He is the coauthor, with spouse Rev. Dr. Gabby Cudjoe-Wilkes, of *Psalms for Black Lives* and the author of *Freedom Notes: Reflections on Faith, Justice, and the Possibility of Democracy*. His work and voice have appeared in the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, and *Sojourners*, among other outlets. He serves on boards for the Labor-Religion Coalition of New York, The Black Mountain School of Theology and Community, and the Institute for Christian Socialism. A graduate of Hampton University, Princeton Theological Seminary '10, and the Coro Foundation's Fellowship in Public Affairs, Dr. Wilkes recently completed his PhD in political science at the CUNY Graduate Center.



Rev. Janiece Williams

Ph.D. Candidate in Homiletics and Liturgics,
specializing in African American Preaching and Ethics at
Vanderbilt University

Reverend Janiece Renee Williams is a Ph.D. candidate in the Graduate Department of Religion at Vanderbilt University, specializing in Homiletics and Liturgics with a focus on African American preaching and ethics. As a distinguished Theology and Practice Fellow, a Russell G. Hamilton Scholar, and a Louisville Institute Doctoral Fellow, she is dedicated to advancing scholarship in her field. A native of Cleveland, Ohio, she was licensed to preach at Temple Baptist Church under the leadership of Reverend Dr. Sedric D. Veal Sr. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies from Nyack College and a Master of Divinity degree from Wake Forest University School of Divinity.

As a practitioner-scholar, Reverend Williams is a certified Homiletic Coach through the David G. Buttrick Homiletic Peer Coaching Program at Vanderbilt University. She is also the creator of *Sermon Development: A Workbook for Preachers*, which rapidly became a primary resource for pastors and preachers nationwide and is now recognized as a key tool at conferences across the country.

In addition to her academic pursuits, Reverend Williams has held various congregational roles, including digital ministry and executive ministerial leadership, most recently serving as the Interim Executive Minister at Watson Grove Baptist Church in Nashville, TN, under Reverend Dr. John R. Faison Sr. She has had the privilege of preaching, lecturing, and speaking in numerous churches, universities, and conferences, including The Hampton University Minister's Conference Late Night Service. Furthermore, in 2024 she made history as the first woman to serve on the leadership cabinet of the Pastors and Ministers Division of the National Baptist Convention USA. A proud member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, Reverend Williams is committed to service efforts that uplift underserved members of the community.



Rev. Dr. Oscar Williams, Jr.
Executive Leadership Team Member
Jakes Divinity School

Dr. Oscar Williams Jr, a musician, educator, speaker, and cultural ambassador has traveled the world spreading the message of love and life through the medium of music. Having obtained a Masters in Music Composition and a Doctorate in Education, Oscar has positioned himself to be at the cutting edge of innovation and change when it comes to challenging the status quo and cultivating change in all communities. His musical career has spanned 20+ years, traveling domestically and internationally with programs such as: Rhythm Road, American Music Abroad, The Golden Gospel Singers, and touring his own Cultural Music show entitled “Speak life”. Oscar is currently building a performing arts charter school in Dallas, TX that focuses on STEAM curriculum and using the performing arts to help students achieve higher academic success. Oscar is also involved in many international cultural exchange programs serving as a mentor to musicians in both Liberia and Ghana. He released his first music project in 2004 and landing on Billboards Top 40 charts. He currently has a new release out entitled, “Speak Life”, that charter #25 on iTunes in its first week. Oscar serves as the Executive Director of Music at the Potter’s House Church. He also is an adjunct professor at Trevecca University. He is the CEO and found of Speak Life Academy of Arts and Music, INC and the CEO of Speak Life, LLC – a music entertainment firm.

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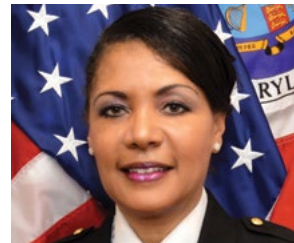
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**BETSEY STOCKTON
CENTER FOR BLACK
CHURCH STUDIES**
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

About Betsey Stockton Center for Black Church Studies

The Betsey Stockton Center for Black Church Studies exists to highlight the theological and religious witness, which arises out of the African American and African Diaspora Christian experience. The Center helps to prepare men and women for vocational ministry or scholarly pursuits shaped by a wider knowledge and deeper appreciation of Black life within American and global Christianity.



The Betsey Stockton Center aspires to be a national leader in research on the Black church through the collaborative creation of scholarship with leading scholars, community leaders, and pastors to address the critical issues confronting clergy, congregants, and communities served by the Black church.

← Scan for more information



About the Black Theology and Leadership Institute (BTLI)

The Black Theology and Leadership Institute (BTLI) is a transformative, week-long continuing education intensive designed to empower clergy and lay leaders through rigorous theological engagement, vibrant worship, and rich fellowship. Hosted on the historic campus of Princeton Theological Seminary, BTLI brings together emerging and seasoned leaders from across the country and around the world to explore the depth and breadth of Black theological traditions.

The Institute is ideal for those seeking to sharpen their leadership, deepen their theological imagination, and reflect critically and faithfully on the challenges facing the Black Church and the broader Black community. Participants will learn from and dialogue with preeminent scholars, pastors, and thought leaders working at the intersection of theology, justice, and Christian witness.

HOW CAN YOU BECOME A BTLI FELLOW?

BTLI welcomes applications from pastors, lay leaders, community organizers, chaplains, students, and activists, including those who may not have formal theological training but bring deep experience and commitment to ministry and justice. BTLI is limited to 50 fellows to ensure an intimate and engaged learning community. Applications can be found at: btli.ptsem.edu/ and are reviewed on a rolling basis beginning in October, so early submission is encouraged.

WHAT TO EXPECT

As a BTLI Fellow, you will join a dynamic and supportive community of learners committed to faith-informed leadership and social transformation. Fellows, faculty, and staff gather on the Princeton Theological Seminary campus for a week of:

- › Robust academic engagement with renowned scholars and practitioners
- › Spirit-filled worship that honors the depth and diversity of the Black Christian tradition
- › Intentional community and opportunities for rest, renewal, and vocational discernment
- › Practical workshops that explore theologies of leadership, justice, and the Black Church's future

BTLI is widely known for its thoughtful programming, inspiring liturgies, and the lifelong friendships it fosters among Fellows.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

BTLI 2026 will take place from Monday, July 13 to Friday, July 17, 2026 on the campus of Princeton Theological Seminary. We invite you to come, learn, and lead—rooted in faith, guided by tradition, and energized by a prophetic vision of the future.



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- /// Leadership Lessons from the Old Testament
- /// Preaching in Lent from the Lectionary: Matthew and John
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The Farminary's 10th Anniversary Celebration

September 24–27, 2025

We are excited to invite you to celebrate the **10th anniversary of The Farminary**, Princeton Theological Seminary's 21-acre sustainable farm.

The 10th anniversary celebration event from September 24–27, 2025 will include a line-up of workshops and conversations that reflect the core values of the Farminary and appeal to people in the church and beyond.

The event includes time on the farm, time with one another, and time with some of the brightest minds continuing to shape conversations related to ecology and theology, food justice, sabbath, and more.



Scan QR code to
access registration
for the celebration
















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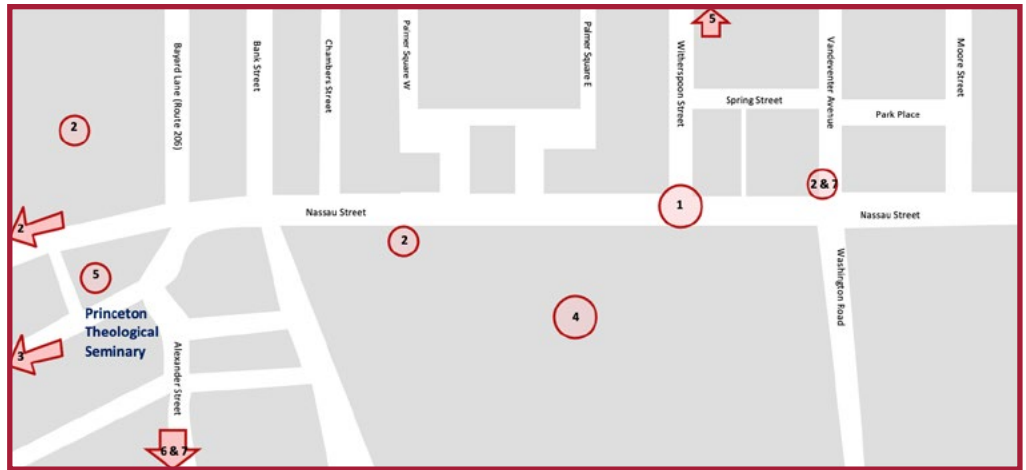
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| A Adams House | K Mackay Campus Center |
| B Administration Building | L Overseas Ministries Study Center |
| C Alexander Hall | M Payne Hall |
| D Athletic Field | N Seminary Chapel |
| E Brown Hall | O Scheide Hall |
| F Carriage House | P Springdale |
| G Corporation Yard | Q Stuart Hall |
| H Erdman Center | R Templeton Hall |
| I Hodge Hall | S Wright Library |
| J Lenox House | |

-  Visitor Parking
-  Faculty/Staff Parking
-  Student Parking
-  Admissions Guest Parking
-  Resident Parking
-  ADA Accessible Parking
-  Campus Buildings
-  PTS Private Residence
(Street addresses in italics)
-  ADA Accessible
Whiteley Gym and Payne Hall are not fully accessible.
-  Shuttle Stop
-  Weekend Shuttle Stop
-  Emergency Phones
-  Defibrillator

WHAT TO DO in Princeton



1. Downtown Princeton—A quaint, vibrant downtown with popular stores and independent shops, local restaurants, and coffee & dessert shops.

2. Historic Princeton—Visit one of the many historic buildings in town: The Bainbridge House, Nassau Presbyterian Church, Drumthwacket, Morven Museum & Gardens, and more. Visit www.princetonhistory.org.

3. Princeton Battlefield & Clarke House Museum—The site of the American Revolutionary War Battle of Princeton, this park has hiking trails and a museum. Walking distance from Seminary along Mercer Street.

4. Princeton University—Located a block away from the Seminary, explore the rich history of this famous Ivy League institution. Visit Nassau Hall, the gothic University Chapel, and the free University Art Museum.

5. Libraries—Looking for a quiet place? Visit the Princeton Public Library or tour the Seminary Library.

6. Tow Path Walking Trail—Down Alexander Street, a walking path for miles along the local canal provides a relaxing afternoon near Lake Carnegie.

7. Movie Theaters—Princeton Garden Theatre (local, independent), & AMC Market Fair (off Route 1).

WHERE TO EAT in Princeton



Yummy Cheap Eats (Avg. \$5–\$25)

1. Jammin' Crêpes, 20 Nassau St.
2. Mamoun's Falafel, 20 Witherspoon St.
3. Hoagie Haven, 242 Nassau St.
4. Tacoria, 110 Nassau St.
5. Tico's Juice Bar, 33 Witherspoon St.
6. Nassau Diner, 84 Nassau St.
7. Ayat Princeton, 15 Spring St.
8. P.J.'s Pancake House, 154 Nassau Street
9. Tiger Noodles, 252 Nassau St.
10. Olive's Deli, 22 Witherspoon St.

11. Small World Coffee, 14 Witherspoon St.

12. Sakrid Coffee, 20 Nassau Street

13. Diesel & Duke, 124 Nassau St.

14. The Bent Spoon, 35 Palmer Square W.

15. Halo Pub Ice Cream, 9 Hulfish St.

Worthy Splurges (Ave. \$25–\$50)

16. Agricola Eatery, 11 Witherspoon St.

17. Winberies Restaurant & Bar, 1 Palmer Square E.

18. Yankee Doodle Tap Room, Palmer Square

19. Mistral, 66 Witherspoon St.

20. Mediterra Restaurant, 29 Hulfish St.

21. Teresa's Pizza & Wine Bar, 23 Palmer Square E.

22. Alchemist & Barrister, 28 Witherspoon St.

23. Witherspoon Grill, 57 Witherspoon St.

24. Kristine's, 51 Witherspoon St.

25. Blue Point Grill, 258 Nassau St.

26. Tortuga's Mexican Village, 41 Leigh Ave.

27. Lan Ramen, 4 Hulfish St.

28. Metro North, 378 Alexander St.

29. The Dinky Bar & Kitchen, 94 University Place

30. Roots Ocean Prime, 98 University Place

Save the Date!



BLACK THEOLOGY
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PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

2026 BTLI | July 13–17 2026

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We are incredibly grateful to the financial support of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Their gracious grant of twenty-five thousand dollars enabled several of our participants to attend this year's conference and underwrote essential elements of this year's gathering. Through the leadership of Rev. Dr. Carlton Johnson, Associate Director for Theology, Formation and Evangelism and Coordinator for the Office of Vital Congregations of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and Laura Bryant, Coordinator, Financial Aid for Service Theology, Formation, and Evangelism, the Presbyterian Church has made an invaluable investment in their clergy, leaders and this Institute.

Institutional Partners

Hopefully, if you are attending this year's Institute, you have experienced our profound appreciation for your presence in your every encounter. We are truly blessed to have you here! However, I hope you also know how absolutely invaluable so many of our staff, institutional partners, and volunteers have been to this experience. Please join me in expressing our profound appreciation to those whose service, while sometimes invisible, has been essential to this Institute.

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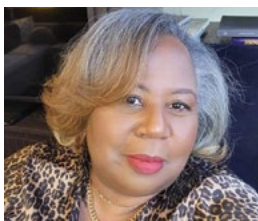
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