

DUSTIN D. BENAC
Curriculum Vitae

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EDUCATION

Th.D., Duke University Divinity School, 2020

Dissertation: “Adaptive Church: A Practical Theology of Adaptive Work in the Pacific Northwest”

Advisor: Professors Craig Dykstra

M.Div., Duke University Divinity School, 2015 (*summa cum laude*)

B.A., Theology, Whitworth University, 2010 (*summa cum laude*)

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Baylor University, Waco, TX

Visiting Assistant Professor of Practical Theology, George W. Truett Theological Seminary, 2020

Duke University, Durham, NC

Postdoctoral Associate, Duke Divinity School, The Everything Happens Project, 2020

PUBLICATIONS

PEER REVIEWED BOOKS

Adaptive Church: A Practical Theology of Faith, Community, and Change in the Pacific Northwest. Waco: Baylor University Press, forthcoming 2022.

EDITED BOOKS

Crisis and Care: Meditations on Faith and Philanthropy. Edited by Dustin Benac and Erin Weber-Johnson. Eugene: Wipf & Stock, forthcoming 2021.

PEER REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

Benac, Dustin and Erin Weber-Johnson, “Ecclesial Imagination for Organizational Transformation: Hospice Care, Midwifery, and the Ordering of a Common Life,” *Practical Theology* 12.2 (2019): 158-174.

Benac, Dustin, "A Bonhoefferian Approach to Social Analysis: Life Together as *Communio*, Relation, and Possibility," *The Bonhoeffer Legacy: An International Journal* 5.2 (2019): 63-82.

Benac, Dustin, "Opposability: Unearthing Christianity's Opposable Inner Logic and its Capacity to Form Leaders for Adaptive Leadership in Contemporary Society," *Journal of Religious Leadership* 15.1 (Spring 2016): 101-32.

Benac, Dustin, "A Seat at the Table: Affective Formation and United Methodist Higher Education," *Christian Higher Education* 14.3 (2015): 127-41.

PEER REVIEWED BOOK CHAPTERS

Benac, Dustin, "Network-Based Christianity in the Pacific Northwest: Evolution of the Emerging Church or New Organizational Form?" in *The Emerging Church, Millennials, and Religion*, Vol. 2: Curation and Duration, eds. Terry Shoemaker, Xochitl Alvizo, and Rachel Schneider. Eugene: Wipf & Stock, expected 2021).

Benac, Dustin, "A Time of Rustling: Ecclesial Ecologies on the Edge of Uncertainty," in *Crisis and Care: Meditations on Faith and Philanthropy*, ed. Dustin Benac and Erin Weber-Johnson. Eugene: Wipf & Stock: forthcoming 2021)

Benac, Dustin and Erin Weber-Johnson, "Faith and Philanthropy: Where Crisis and Care Converge," in *Crisis and Care: Meditations on Faith and Philanthropy*, ed. Dustin Benac and Erin Weber-Johnson. Eugene: Wipf & Stock, forthcoming 2021.

Benac, Dustin and Erin Weber-Johnson, "What Do These Stones Mean?" in *Crisis and Care: Meditations on Faith and Philanthropy*, ed. Dustin Benac and Erin Weber-Johnson. Eugene: Wipf & Stock, forthcoming 2021).

ESSAYS

Benac, Dustin, "[How to Find Hope in an Ice Age](#)," *Sympara* (September 16, 2020)

Benac, Dustin, "[Theological Education for a New Age](#)," *The Presbyterian Outlook* (September 25, 2018).

Benac, Dustin and Erin Weber-Johnson, "[Organizational Imagination: The Practical Wisdom for Communities in Transition](#)," *The Presbyterian Outlook* (September 12, 2018).

Benac, Dustin, "Marilynne Robinson's Home and the Stories We Tell in Ordinary Time," *The Cresset* 80.1 (Michaelmas 2016): 4-8.

BOOK REVIEWS

Review of *The Rise of Network Christianity: How Independent Leaders are Changing the Religious Landscape* by Brad Christerson and Richard Flory, *International Bulletin of Mission Research* (forthcoming).

When the World is Changing: A Roundtable Review of *Church Planting in Post-Christian Soil* by Christopher James, *How Change Comes to Your Church* by Patrick Keifert and Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, and *First Expressions* by Steve Taylor, *Ecclesial Futures* 1.2 (2020): 117-23.

Theology as Interdisciplinary Inquiry: Learning with and from the Natural and Human Sciences, edited by Joshua Mauldin and Robin Lovin, *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 30.1/2 (2018): 205-06.

Augustine: Conversions to Confessions, by Robin Lane Fox, *Christian Scholar's Review* 46.4 (Summer 2017), 412-14.

Christian Practical Wisdom: What It Is, Why It Matters, by Dorothy Bass, Kathleen Cahalan, Bonnie Miller-McLemore, James Nieman, and Christian Scharen, *Reading Religion* (September 17, 2016), <http://readingreligion.org/books/christian-practical-wisdom>.

Journey Toward Justice, by Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Wesleyan Theological Journal* (Spring 2016): 273-75.

PROFESSIONAL PUBLICATIONS

Benac, Dustin, "[Local Wisdom for a Time of Change](#)," *The Lived Religion in a Digital Age Project at Saint Louis University* (July 2020).

Benac, Dustin, "[It's Always Better to Fish Together \(and Other Leadership Lessons from the River\)](#)," *Faith & Leadership* (April 2017).

Benac, Dustin, "[Andrew Forrest: 'Every Dying Church in America Has a Community Garden'](#)," *Faith & Leadership* (April 2017).

Benac, Dustin, "[Paul-Gordon Chandler: Peacebuilding through the Arts](#)," *Faith & Leadership* (March 2016).

Benac, Dustin, "[Performing in the Circus: Resources to Help Leaders \(and Followers\) Play Their Part with Excellence](#)," *Seedbed Blog* (August 2015).

Benac, Dustin, "[Revelation's City Without a Temple, a New Vision for Institutions](#)," *Faith & Leadership* (September 2013).

Benac, Dustin, "[From Columbine to the State Capitol: How the school shooting still shapes Kevin Parker's civic service](#)," *Christianity Today: This is Our City* (September 2013).

EDITORIAL EXPERIENCE

Book Reviews Editor, *Practical Theology*

INVITED SPEECHES & PRESENTATIONS

PROFESSIONAL

- “Crisis and Connection: Ecclesial-Organizational Adaptation on the Periphery of Christendom,” International Academy of Practical Theology (IAPT) Annual Conference, Leuven, Belgium, July 8-10, 2021 (invited).
- “Digital Community as Myth or Panacea: Research on Digital Ecologies,” Preaching and Culture: Engaging Societal Shifts in North America (Ph.D. Seminar), Baylor University, March 3, 2021.
- “Organizational Ecology and the Study of Ecclesial Ecologies,” The Sociology of Religious Organizations (Ph.D. Seminar), Baylor University, February 4, 2021.
- “The Evolution of Pastoral and Ecclesial Imagination: Ecclesial Ecology as Place and Prism for Adaptive Work,” American Academy of Religion (AAR) Annual Meeting: Practical Theology Session, Boston, MA, November 21-24, 2020.
- Moderator, “Accountability as a Theological Virtue,” American Academy of Religion (AAR) Annual Meeting: Ethics Session, Boston, MA, MA, November 21-24, 2020.
- “Practical Theology and a Theology of Money,” Duke Divinity School Course of Study: Theology of Money from a Wesleyan Perspective, Duke University Divinity School, September 1, 2020.
- “Reimagining Church: Ecclesial-Organizational Adaptation on the Periphery of Christendom,” 22nd Quinquennial World Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR), Dunedin, New Zealand, August 23-29, 2020 (canceled due to COVID-19).
- “Adaptive Church: A Practical Theology of Ecclesial Adaptation in the Pacific Northwest,” Princeton Theological Seminary Graduate Student Conference, Princeton, NJ, March 27-28, 2020 (canceled due to COVID-19).
- “Reimagining Church: Fields, Networks, and Ecclesial Ecologies in the Pacific Northwest,” Duke Network Analysis Center (DNAC), Durham, NC, January 13, 2020.
- “Network-Based Christianity in the Pacific Northwest: Evolution of the Emerging Church or New Organizational Form?” American Academy of Religion (AAR)

- Annual Meeting: The Emerging Church, Millennials, and Religion Session, San Diego, CA, November 23-26, 2019.
- “Life Together as *Communio*, Relation, and Possibility: A Bonhoefferian Alternative to Hauerwasian and Bourdieusian Approaches to Social Analysis,” American Academy of Religion (AAR) Annual Meeting: Bonhoeffer and Social Analysis Session, Denver, CO, November 17-20, 2018.
- “The Promise of Organizational Theory for the Study of Religion and Religious Organizations,” American Academy of Religion (AAR) Annual Meeting: Sociology of Religion Session, Denver, CO, November 17-20, 2018.
- “Other Duties as Assigned: The Craft of Fundraising for Research and Higher Education,” American Academy of Religion (AAR) Annual Meeting: Student Lounge Roundtable Series, Denver, CO, November 17-20, 2018.
- “Seeing the Field: Ecclesial Educational Institutions in the Pacific Northwest as an Organizational Field and Site for Adaptive Work,” American Academy of Religion (AAR) Pacific Northwest Annual Meeting: History of Christianity and North American Religion Session, Tacoma, WA, May 11-13, 2018.
- “Thinking Institutionally as a Christian Practice,” American Academy of Religion (AAR) Annual Meeting: Practical Theology Session, San Antonio, TX, November 19-22, 2016.
- “Playing the Grant Roulette: When and How to Play the Grant-Game in Higher Education,” American Academy of Religion (AAR) Annual Meeting: Student Lounge Roundtable Series, San Antonio, TX, November 19-22, 2016.
- “Affective Formation and United Methodist Higher Education,” Wesleyan Theological Society Annual Meeting, Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Mount Vernon, OH, March 6-7, 2015.
- “Dollars and Cents: Making Sense of Funding Education and Academic Research,” American Academy of Religion (AAR) Student Lounge Roundtable Series, San Diego, CA, November 24, 2014.
- “Opposability: Unearthing Christianity’s Opposable Inner Logic and its Capacity to Form Leaders for the Contemporary World,” Christian Scholars’ Conference, Lipscomb University, Nashville, TN, June 6, 2014.
- “Duke Divinity School Christian Educators Meeting,” Facilitator, Duke Divinity School, Durham, NC, February 27, 2014.

“Collaborative Disaster Planning Processes between Hospitals and Emergency Management State-Specific Webinars,” Moderator, American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), Irving, TX, June 2011-September 2011.

“Discipleship,” Jesus and the Kingdom of God: Whitworth University, Spokane, WA, November 2010.

“Mystery and Grace: Barth and Lewis on Biblical Inclusivism,” Spokane Intercollegiate Research Conference (SIRC), Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA, April 2010.

COMMUNITY

“Digital Media and Discipleship: The Promise and Limits of Technology in a New Media Age,” Duke University Chapel, Adult Form, May 23, 2021 (invited).

“Christian Leadership for a Post-Pandemic World: Tales from Field Work in the Pacific Northwest,” Duke University Chapel, Adult Forum, April 18, 2021 (invited).

“Nimble Networks and Community Transformation: From Antioch to #CovidChurch,” First Baptist Church Boerne Adult Sunday School, August 9 and 16, 2020.

“Ordinary Ground in Mark 9:2-9,” Duke Divinity School Summer Course of Study, Durham, NC, July 24, 2019.

“The Foundations of Relationships,” First Baptist Church Boerne Disciple Now My Session, Boerne, TX, February 2012.

“Fear Not,” Spring Valley Mennonite Church, Spring Valley, WA, January 2011.

MEDIA & INTERVIEWS

“[Connecting Communities in Times of Transition and Uncertainty \(Part 2\)](#),” *Rogue Ministry Podcast*, August 12, 2020.

“[Connecting Communities in Times of Transition and Uncertainty \(Part 1\)](#),” *Rogue Ministry Podcast*, July 22, 2020.

“[Afraid to preach and teach about money in your congregation? Don’t be.](#)” *Faith & Leadership*, October 19, 2020.

AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS (SELECT)

AWARDS

Louisville Institute Postdoctoral Fellowship	2020—Present
Duke Sanford School of Public Policy, Center for the Study of Philanthropy and Voluntarism Dissertation Support Fellowship	2019—2020
Saint Louis University Lived Religion in a Digital Age Research Fellowship	2019—2020

Duke Divinity School Th.D. Fellowship	2015—2020
John Wesley Fellowship	2015—2020
Duke Provost Graduate Student Fellowship	2017—2018
John Hope Franklin Humanities Institute Ph.D. Lab Fellow	2017—2018
Dempster Graduate Fellowship	2015—2016
Outstanding Theology Student, Whitworth University	2011
Whitworth Laureate Society (Honors Society)	2007, 2008, 2009, 2010

SCHOLARSHIPS

ESTARL Scholarship Recipient	2012—2018
Irene S. Wischer Foundation Scholarship Recipient	2012—2015
Generations Leaders Among Us Scholarship Recipient	2012
Duke Divinity Stange Full-Tuition Scholarship Recipient	2012—2015
Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Recipient	2007—2010
Whitworth University Mind and Heart Scholarship Recipient	2007—2010

PERSONAL GRANTS RECEIVED

Benac, Dustin. “Networks, Higher Education, and Social Imaginaries,” *Information Initiative @ Duke Data Expeditions* (\$1,500): granted July 2018.

Grigoni, M., Dubie, E., Benac, D., Jobe, S., and Juskus, R. *Duke University Interdisciplinary Studies*, Duke Support for Interdisciplinary Graduate Networks (D-SIGN) grant for “Theology, Religion & Qualitative Methods Network” (\$5,000): granted March 2018.

Benac, Dustin. *Leadership Education at Duke Divinity School*, innovation grant (\$5,000): granted August 2017.

Benac, Dustin. *The M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust*, research grant (\$2,000): granted August 2017.

Benac, Dustin. *Duke University Interdisciplinary Studies*, Graduate Student Training Enhancement Grant (GSTEG) (\$1,500): granted April 2017.

Benac, Dustin. *General Board of Higher Education and Ministry*, education grant (\$3,000): granted April 2016.

Benac, Dustin. *Middle East Travel Seminar*, travel grant (\$6,000): granted March 2014.

Benac, Dustin. *The Fant Foundation*, education grant (\$15,000): granted April 2012.

Benac, Dustin. *The Seay Foundation*, education grant (\$52,000): granted April 2007.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Duke Divinity School, Everything Happens Project January 2020—November 2020
Dis/Connected: Equipping Pastors for the Digital Church

- Working in collaboration with project Co-PIs (Kate Bowler and Katherine), designed and managed an international study of digital connection and community.
- Launched a survey in the weeks following the Covid-19 crisis that received more than 1,400 responses, making it one of the largest international surveys of religious communities and their leaders in the wake of Covid-19.
- Organized and conducted focus groups with a random sample of survey respondents.
- Directed a research team to analyze quantitative and qualitative data and prepare summary reports.

Indiana University June 2018—December 2019
National Study of Congregations' Economic Practices

- Conducted semi-structured interviews with pastors from across the Southeast and Northeast that explored their cultural, religious, and practical orientations to money.
- Worked with a team of qualitative researchers to coordinate and complete the qualitative component of this study.
- Served as a calling team member for a nationally representative study that examines congregations' economic practices.
- Worked with faith-leaders, principal investigators, and researchers in order to increase response rate for the survey component of this study.

Duke University November 2017—July 2018
Reimagining Doctoral Education (RIDE) Committee

- Served in an administrative fellowship in the Provost's Office by supporting the university-wide Reimagining Doctoral Education Committee.
- Conducted an internal inventory of opportunities available to doctoral students at Duke by inventorying reports provided by schools, centers, and interdisciplinary initiatives.
- Prepared a coding schema and conducted a literature review about best practices, innovations, and trends in doctoral education.
- Provided support for the development of surveys of alumni and current doctoral students.

Duke Divinity School May 2016—August 2016
Divinity Archives and Special Collections

- Supported the processing of The Thomas C. Oden Collection at Duke Divinity School by reviewing Thomas Oden's papers upon receipt by Duke Divinity School.
- Worked collaboratively with a research team to develop a schematization for a collection registry in order to process over sixty linear feet of archival material.

Duke University, Rubenstein Library May 2013—June 2013
Peter Storey Papers

- Reviewed Peter Storey’s papers that chronicled his experience serving as a United Methodist pastor during South Africa’s Apartheid, relationship with Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu, and tenure as President of the South African Council for Churches. Reviewed materials included: correspondence, lectures, presentations, photos, date books, and news clippings.
- Combined research with an interview with Peter Storey to develop a book proposal *Peter Storey—South Africa’s Candle Light and Midnight*.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

George W. Truett Theology Seminary, Baylor University

Leadership in the Kingdom (LEAD 7301) Spring 2021
 Leading in the Kingdom (DMIN 7330) Spring 2021

Duke Divinity School

Instructor: Digital Rule of Life (PARISH 790) Fall 2020
 Instructor: Theology in the Contemporary Church (WCOS 522) Fall 2019
 Instructor: Theology in the Contemporary Church (SCOS 522) Summer 2019
 Preceptor: American Christianity (AMXTIAN 756) Spring 2019
 Preceptor: Early and Medieval Christianity (CHURHST 750) Fall 2018
 Preceptor: Christian Theology (XTIANTHE 755) Fall 2017
 Co-Instructor: Forming Disciples in the Wesleyan Tradition (PARISH 770) Spring 2017
 Preceptor: Christian Theology (XTIANTH 755) Fall 2016

Duke University

Teaching Assistant: Freshman Pre-Orientation to Research in the Humanities (P-Search) with Dr. Phil Stern Summer 2018

EMPLOYMENT

Duke Divinity School, Durham, NC

Doctoral Research Assistant January 2020—April 2020
 Preceptor/Teaching Assistant September 2016—April 2019
 Co-Instructor January 2017—May 2017
 Divinity Archives and Special Collections Assistant May 2016—August 2016
 Research Assistant September 2015—August 2016

Indiana University, Bloomington, IN

Qualitative Researcher June 2019—December 2019
 National Study of Congregations Economic Practices (NSCEP)
 Calling Team Member June 2018—November 2018
 National Study of Congregations Economic Practices (NSCEP)

Duke University, Durham, NC

Provost Graduate Fellow November 2017—July 2018

Fundraising Consultant, Various

Faculty member in the Department of Surgery at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Chapel Hill, NC)	December 2016—December 2017
Hill Country Daily Bread Ministries (Boerne, TX)	February 2012—July 2012
Speck Consulting (Phoenix, AZ)	November 2011—February 2012

Duke Divinity School Center for Reconciliation, Durham, NC

Development and Fundraising Associate	July 2012—July 2015
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GRANT WRITING EXPERIENCE

Benac, D., Riak, A. *The United Methodist Church General Board of Church and Society Peace with Justice Grant Program*, \$3,000 with \$3,000 matching: granted April 2016.

Riak, A., Benac, D., Lalam, M. Duke Center for Reconciliation. *Cornerstone Trust*, \$36,000: Granted June 2015.

Benac, D., Olson-Getty, D., Riak, A. Duke Center for Reconciliation. *The United Methodist Church General Board of Church and Society Peace with Justice Grant Program*, \$2,500 with \$2,500 matching: granted March 2014.

Benac, C and Benac, D. Personal Grant for Casey Benac. *The Seay Foundation*, \$15,000: granted January 2014.

Benac, D., Davelaar, K., Riak, A. Research Award for Chris Rice of the Duke Center for Reconciliation. *The Josiah Charles Trent Memorial Foundation Endowment Fund*, \$2,000 with \$2,000 matching: granted November 2013.

Benac, Dustin. Hill Country Daily Bread Ministries Capital Campaign. *Cecilia Young Willard Helping Fund*, \$2,000: granted September 2013.

Benac, Dustin. Hill Country Daily Bread Ministries. *The Dixie Starnes Wenger Foundation*, \$1,000: granted October 2012.

Benac, Dustin. Hill Country Daily Bread Ministries. *The CarMax Foundation*, \$5,000: granted July 2012.

Cantu, S., Benac, D., Hill Country Daily Bread Ministries. *The Harvey E. Najim Family Foundation*, \$50,000: granted April 2012.

Speck, D., Arteaga, D., Fernandez, M., Speck, T., Benac, D. "Community-Centered Healthy Marriage and Relationship Grants." *Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families*, \$350,000: granted October 2011—September 2014.

Speck, D and Benac, D. "Let's Move! in Indian Country." *Native American Programs—Improving the Well-Being of Children Supplemental Grant*, \$20,000: granted June 2011—August 2011.

GRANT MANAGEMENT

Benac, Dustin (Coordinator). "Competitive Training Grants Program Proposal—American College of Emergency Physicians." *Department of Homeland Security*, \$1,154,223: granted October 2005—September 2011, coordinated April 2011—September 2011.

ADVISING EXPERIENCE

George W. Truett Theology Seminary, Baylor University

Ryan Chandler (D.Min. Academic Supervisor, in progress)

CERTIFICATIONS, SERVICE, AND MEMBERSHIPS

Duke Th.D. Colloquium in Reflective and Faithful Teaching (CRAFT)

Wabash Center Teaching Seminar for Doctoral Students

ICPSR "Qualitative Research Methods" at the University of North Carolina's Odum Institute

The Collegeville Institute's "Writing Theology for the General Reader" writing workshop

Leadership Education A Convocation of Christian Leaders

Racial Equity Institute (REI) Phase 1 Training

Duke Summer Institute for Reconciliation

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Academy of Religion (AAR)

The British and Irish Association of Practical Theology (BIAPT)

TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PROFICIENCY

NVivo Qualitative Research Software

Tableau Data Visualization Software

Gephi Network Visualizations Software

LANGUAGE SKILLS AND PROFICIENCY

Academic German: Graduate level reading and translation

Academic French: Graduate level reading and translation

Koine Greek: Intermediate reading and exegesis

Biblical Hebrew: Introductory reading and exegesis

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Duke Divinity School—Strategic Planning Committee

Duke Divinity School—Duke Graduate Conference in Theology Planning Committee
Ad Hoc Peer Review—*Christian Higher Education*
Duke Divinity School—Admissions Committee
Duke Divinity School—Center for Reconciliation Student Formation Discernment
Process

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Service to Community

Intern: C. A. Dillon Youth Development Center, Butner, NC (2013)
Pro-Bono Writer: Street Zine (2011)
Camp Counselor, Sky Ranch Camps (2009)
En Christo, Spokane, WA (2008)
Youth Volunteer Coordinator, Hill Country Daily Bread Ministries (2008)

Service to Church

CityWell United Methodist Church, Durham, NC (2014—2020)
 Leadership Team Member (2016—2018)
 Admin Team Member (2016)
Munger Place United Methodist Church, Dallas, TX (2011-2012, 2014)
 Ministry Intern (2014)
 Member, Kitchen Group Member, Childcare Volunteer
Vintage Faith Community Church, Spokane, WA (2008-2010)
 Member, Volunteer, and Missional Community Member
Guest Preaching:
 Spring Valley Mennonite Church, Spring Valley, WA (January 2011)