

KRISTEN LEIGH MITCHELL

Durham, NC

kristenleighmitchell@gmail.com

WWW.KRISTENLEIGHMITCHELL.COM

EDUCATION

Union Theological Seminary, New York, NY

M.Div., Theology & The Arts concentration, 2010-2014

- **Traveling Fellowship Award**, granted by the faculty to the highest-performing graduate who shows “the greatest promise for contributing to theological knowledge through teaching”
- Thesis: “Finding God in the In-Between: Towards a Practical Theology of Sacred Music and Art” advised by John Thatamanil & Tom Beaudoin (Fordham University)
- Student Life Committee for Spiritual Formation; Arts Caucus

University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, NC

B.A., Communication Studies, Dec 2004

- *Magna cum laude*; Phi Beta Lambda Honors Society
- Returned to complete a minor in music studies 2019-2020

INTERNATIONAL

Institute for Interfaith Dialogue, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Henry Luce Research Fellow, 2013

- Ethnographic research on religious diversity in Indonesia, focusing on art and music at the intersection of indigenous culture, Western culture, and global religion

Facolta Valdese di Teologia, Rome, Italy

“Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations in Rome” Course, 2011

- One-month study abroad course led by Dr. Euan Cameron; attended private meetings with the Vatican’s President of The Pontifical Council for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue, as well as local Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim faith leaders
- Research project focusing on immigration and refugee camps in Rome

CERTIFICATIONS

Religious Trauma Studies Certification Program, 2024

Global Center for Religious Research

Spiritual Direction & Formation Certification Program, 2021-2022

University of Redlands & San Francisco Theological Seminary

WORK EXPERIENCE

Adult Discipleship Teacher, Facilitator, and Consultant

2017-present

- Ongoing development of a 3-year “Christian Foundations” curriculum that can be adapted in diverse contexts to facilitate mutual discernment and Christian praxis.
- Development of classes, workshops, and retreats in collaboration with clergy and lay leaders to strengthen connections between Christian spirituality, Episcopal tradition, and social justice values and initiatives.
- One-on-one spiritual direction seeking to integrate inward and outward aspects of the Christian spiritual life.

Servant Leadership School at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Greensboro, NC

Assistant Director, 2015-2017

- Curriculum development for adult intergenerational formation, in collaboration with program director, church staff, and diverse adjunct faculty.
- Planned, promoted, coordinated, and facilitated classes and workshops integrating inward dimensions of spiritual practice with discernment of outward call to serve.
- Led weekly centering prayer practice group in hybrid in-person/online format
- Designed course materials including PowerPoint, A/V, and print materials; developed course brochure and social media content to promote course offerings.
- Supported re-branding phase through compilation and assessment of student and faculty feedback, market research, grant writing, visioning, and strategic planning.

Westminster Presbyterian Church, Albany, NY

Interim Administrative Consultant, 2014-2015

- Managed administrative and communication needs while performing organizational audit to align systems with PCUSA polity and new budget realities.
- Successful implementation of changes to roles for staff and lay leaders.

Burke Theological Library at Columbia University Libraries, New York, NY

Special Collections Assistant Archivist, 2012-2014

- Organized, processed, and preserved cultural artifacts and historical documents from the 19th and 20th centuries, acquired from the Missionary Research Library.
- Publication of 20 library finding aids for collection access and research use.

Sacred Garden Bookstore at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Greensboro, NC

Bookstore Manager, 2008-2010

- Visioning, development, reopening, and successful management of progressive Christian bookstore that served as a well-known community hub and resource center for adult spiritual formation in central NC.
- Daily operations, inventory management, promotions, coordinating classes and special events with church staff and Servant Leadership School faculty.
- Cultivated safe and sacred space for spiritual and theological inquiry; stayed up to date on the latest publishing trends and offered pastoral care and guidance in navigating available resources on a variety of topics relating to Christian theology, spirituality, church history, creation care, and social justice issues.

Wild Goose Festival, Pittsboro, NC

Production Support Manager & Operations Planning Team, 2011

- Coordinated team of 8 production staff and 23 volunteers providing sound and stage management on 5 venues during a 4-day festival in its first year.
- Post-festival development and assessment with operations team, in collaboration with organizers from Greenbelt Festival in Cheltenham, England.

Liturgical Musician, Singer/Songwriter & Recording Artist

1998-2020

- Countless solo performances on stages across the U.S. and around the world, including live performances on radio and television.
- Production of 3 full-length albums, several EPs and singles, and a music video
- Church music consultant, congregational song leader, and paperless singing workshop facilitator
- Song leader training from Donald Schell & Emily Scott (All Saints Company), John Bell (Iona Community), Ysaye Barnwell (Sweet Honey in the Rock), Paul Vasile (Music That Makes Community), and the Taizé community in France.

Communications Consultant & Graphic Designer

2005-2019

- Assisted both corporate and non-profit sector organizations with visioning, brand identity, website design, and graphic design for digital and printed promotional materials, including social media content.
- Experience with managing and customizing complex database systems, employee trainings, project management, and organizational communication systems analysis.
- Graphic design portfolio includes websites, e-news, posters, videos, printed course catalogs, brochures, and mailers.

SPEAKING

LECTURES, CLASSES, & WORKSHOPS

“The Deuterocanonical Gospels: *Gospel of Thomas, Gospel of Mary, Gospel of Peter, and Gospel of Judas,*” with Rev. Joe Mitchell, The Episcopal Church of the Advocate, April-May 2026.

“Rooted in God’s Creation: Celebrating Earth Day with the Saints,” Sponsored by Creation Care Team at Chapel of the Cross, Chapel Hill, NC, April 2026.

“History of Tenebrae & the Paschal Triduum,” The Episcopal Church of the Advocate, April 2026.

“What Makes Episcopalians Episcopalian?” St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, Durham, NC, January 2026.

“Sacred Time: Seasons & Liturgical Cycles” (4-week class), St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, Durham, NC, December 2025.

“Praying the Hours & The Daily Office,” Part of *Episcopal 101* series with the Rev. Joe Mitchell, St. James Episcopal Church, Skaneateles, NY, May 2024.

- "Embodied Faith (4-week class): Christianity & the Marketplace, Christianity & Spirituality, Christianity & the Arts, and Christianity & the Body," St. James Episcopal Church, Skaneateles, NY, December 2023.
- "Creating Vocal Community: Singing for Worship" (2-week series), New Creation Community Church, Greensboro, NC, September 2019.
- "Gamelan Music & Religious Diversity in Indonesia," Guest lecturer for MUS135 Intro to Musicology, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, March 2019.
- "Celtic Spirituality in Art & Music," Westminster Presbyterian Church, Durham, NC, January 2019.
- "Preparing the Way for Christ: An Advent Taizé Program," St. Francis Springs Retreat Center, Stoneville, NC, December 2018.
- "Chant & Singing as a Spiritual Discipline," Part of Lent *Spiritual Disciplines* series, St Luke's Episcopal Church, Salisbury, NC, March 2018.
- "Celtic Art & Spirituality," Guest Presenter for Salem Presbytery Christian Educators Retreat led by Rev. Frank Dew, St Francis Springs Retreat Center, October 2018.
- "Music & Faith," Part of *Faith in Action* series, St. Francis Episcopal Church, Greensboro, NC, September 2018.
- "Come and See: Servant Leadership in Call & Action" (9-week class), with the Rev. Frank Dew, The Servant Leadership School at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Greensboro, NC, Sept-Nov 2017.
- "Co-Creation in Contemplative Chant & Singing," Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Greensboro, NC, August 2017.
- "Celtic Art & Spirituality," Part of *Celtic Spirituality* series, Sedgefield Presbyterian Church, Greensboro, NC, March 2017.
- "Singing as a Spiritual Practice" workshop, The Servant Leadership School at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Greensboro, NC, October 2016 & February 2017.
- "Centering Prayer" weekly practice group, The Servant Leadership School at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Greensboro, NC, 2016–2017.
- "The Light in Our Darkness: An Advent Taizé Program," St. Francis Springs Retreat Center, Stoneville, NC, December 2016.
- "The Extraordinary in the Ordinary: Liturgy & Divine Presence" (4-week series), The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, Asheboro, NC, December 2016.
- "God & Violence in the Hebrew Scriptures," Part of *A New Kind of Christianity* discussion group, Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Greensboro, NC, October 2015.
- "What Can Art Teach Us About Love? An Embodied Exploration of Art & Icon," First Church of Christ Congregational, Middletown, CT, November 2015.

"Songs for a Revolution Film Screening & Songwriting Workshop," with Danny Aguilar, Office of Institutional Diversity and Community Engagement, Union Theological Seminary, New York, NY, January 2014.

"Singing as a Spiritual Practice," with Monica-Lisa Mills, St Mark's Episcopal Church in the Bowery, New York, NY, April 2013.

"Finding Our Way: An Introduction to Walking the Labyrinth," New Student Orientation at Union Theological Seminary, New York, NY, August 2012, August 2013, & August 2014.

RETREATS

"Returning to God: Rest, Repentance, and Resistance," St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Cary, NC, March 2026.

"Women's Sabbath Retreat," The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, Asheboro, NC, March 2017.

"An Advent Retreat" (4-week series), co-led with Betsy Blake, First Friends Quaker Church, Greensboro, NC, December 2015.

PREACHING

"Adam, Eve, and the Root of Temptation," on Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-17 and Matthew 4:1-11, The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, Asheboro, NC, March 2020.

"What Is Clean and Unclean? A Brief History of Dirt" on Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-25. Faith Presbyterian Church, Greensboro, NC, February 2017.

"I Will Be Who I Will Be: Moses & the Quest for a True Calling," on Exodus 3:1-15. St. Mark's Episcopal Church in the Bowery, New York, NY, March 2013.

"Turning Towards Forgiveness: On the Challenges of Communal Life," on Matthew 18:21-35. Part of Labyrinth Installation Project at James Chapel, Union Theological Seminary, September 2011.

PODCASTS

"Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Folly," Charles Breton & Chris Henson, *A Jew and a Gentile Walk into a Bar...Mitzvah*, Episode 158, June 2025.

"The Power of Music with Kristen Leigh Mitchell," Charles Breton & Chris Henson, *A Jew and a Gentile Walk into a Bar...Mitzvah*, Episode 151, December 2022.

"Choice & Redemption: Theology and Star Wars: The Last Jedi," Charles Breton & Chris Henson, *A Jew and a Gentile Walk into a Bar...Mitzvah*, Episode 59, January 2018.

"True Calling," Russ Jennings, *Love in a Dangerous Time*, Episode 096, October 2017.

Guest Host: "Bushwick Abbey: Rev. Nell Archer & Rev. Vince Anderson on Art, Music, and Gentrification in Brooklyn," *Love in a Dangerous Time*, Episode 090, September 2017.

Guest Host: "Re-Thinking the Church Before It Was Cool: Wisdom from Church Pioneer Rev. Frank Dew," *Love in a Dangerous Time*, Episode 092, August 2017.

Guest Host: "The Servant Leadership School: A Model for Grounding Activism in Faith (and Vice Versa) with Executive Director Ruth Anderson," *Love in a Dangerous Time*, Episode 094, August 2017.

"Conversions: At the Bottom – I'm Going to Do This," Russ Jennings, *Love in a Dangerous Time*, Episode 089, August 2017.

"Singing from the Depths with Singer/Songwriter Kristen Leigh," Russ Jennings, *Love in a Dangerous Time*, Episode 054, February 2016.

WRITING

BOOK CHAPTERS

"What Did It Cost? Sacrifice and Kenosis in *The Infinity Saga*" in *Theology and the Marvel Universe*, Gregory Stevenson, ed. Fortress Academic Press, 2019.

"An Ascetic Aesthetic: St. John Chrysostom on the Discernment of Beauty in Music," in *The Concept of Beauty in Patristic and Byzantine Theology*, Fr. John A. McGuckin, ed. Theotokos Press, 2012.

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

"Approaching Sounds as Symbols in Archetypal Studies" in *Quadrant: Journal of the C.G. Jung Foundation for Analytical Psychology Vol 2*, Fall 2022.

CONFERENCE PAPERS

"Artist as Prophet, Priest, and Holy Fool: Re-Thinking the Role of Artists in the Life of the Church," *Shaped by Beauty: Music, Art, Theology, and Ethics in Conversation* Conference, Heythrop College, London, June 2014.

"Medieval Sight-Seeing: Visual Culture & Religious Practice in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe," *Knowledge in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* Conference, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, April 2014.

"Early Church Music & the Songs of Devils," *Sophia Institute Center for Orthodox Thought & Culture* Annual Conference, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, April 2014.

ONLINE ARTICLES

"Lent is For Losers: Returning to God in a Season of Suffering," *Substack: Kristen Leigh Mitchell*, February 22, 2026

"Music for the Seasons: 8 Playlists for Solar & Liturgical Time," *Substack: Kristen Leigh Mitchell*, January 01, 2026

"Annum: Epiphany," January 11, 2026

"Annum: Imbolc," February 2, 2026

"Annum: Bloom," March 21, 2026

"Annum: Nova," May 1, 2026

"Reclaiming the 12 Days of Christmas," *Substack: Kristen Leigh Mitchell*, December 30, 2025

"Apocalypse Now: Seeing with 2020 Vision," *Modern Metanoia*, Nov 23, 2020.

"Sighs Too Deep: On the Spiritual Value of Anger and Sadness," *Modern Metanoia*, July 13, 2020.

"Downward Mobility: Re-framing the Direction of Success," *Caminando with Jesus*, November 3 2019.

"April Fool's: Humor in the Resurrection Story," *Modern Metanoia*, April 1, 2018.

"Blessed Are the Divorced," *Modern Metanoia*, September 24, 2018.

"Servant Leadership: A Reflection for Maundy Thursday," *Modern Metanoia*, April 3, 2017.

"What Makes Religious Art Worthy of Praise?" *As the Kroe Flies*, July 15, 2018.

BOOKLETS & HANDOUTS

- *Walking With Jesus: A Daily Guide to Holy Week, Year A*, April 2026
- *Whenever You Fall: A Biblical Framework for Sin & Temptation*, March 2026
- *The Emergence of Humanity: A Chronology*, August 2025
- *The Gospel Tradition in Global History & Literary Context*, August 2025
- *The Daily Examen*, June 2025
- *A Book of Hours: 7 Prayerful Pauses for Throughout the Day*, April 2024
- *The Inward Journey: False Self to True Self*, September 2022
- *Twelve Steps for the Rest of Us*, April 2022
- *Holy Week 2020: At-Home Spiritual Resource Guide Booklet*, March 2020
- *Saints Printable Prayer Cards*, March 2017

IN PROGRESS

- Christian Foundations Curriculum
- Entry-level Bible Studies
- Online Ministry Resource Library

LITURGY, WORSHIP, & THE ARTS

NEW LITURGIES

- Tenebrae (for Holy Wednesday), The Episcopal Church of the Advocate, 2025-2026.
- Blue Christmas: A Solstice Service of Healing & Hope, Co-created with the Rev. Joe Mitchell, adapted for 3 parishes, 2017-2025.
- Holy Eucharist in the Celtic Tradition, Co-Created with the Rev. Joe Mitchell for The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd in Asheboro, NC 2017-2019.
- Alternative Sunday Morning Worship, Co-Created with the Rev. Greg Farrand for Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Greensboro, NC April 2016.
- A House of Prayer for All People: Improvisational Worship for Holy Monday, James Chapel, Union Theological Seminary New York, NY, April 2011.

MUSIC FOR WORSHIP

- Beer & Hymns Pub Sing, Host, Four Saints Brewery, Asheboro, NC, 2016-2020.
- Taizé Advent Program, Music Director & Cantor, St. Francis Springs Retreat Center, Stoneville, NC, 2016 & 2018.
- Paperless Singing Workshop with Music That Makes Community, Guest Facilitator The Episcopal Church of the Advocate, Chapel Hill, NC, 2017.
- Women's Retreat, Musician, Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Greensboro, NC, 2017.
- Seekers Together Service, Worship Leader, Community Lutheran Church, Greensboro, NC, 2016-2017.
- Women's Retreat for Presbyterian United Church of Christ, Musician, Christ the King Spiritual Life Center, Greenwich, NY, 2015.
- Good Friday Blues, Guest Musician, directed by Jeanine Otis, St. Mark's Episcopal Church in the Bowery, New York, NY, 2013 & 2014.
- Macapat Syafaat with Cak Nun & Kiai Kanjeng, Guest Musician, Hamlet Complex Alhamdulillah, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 2013.
- International Buddhist-Christian Conference, Musician & Chant Leader, Union Theological Seminary, New York, NY, 2013.
- Paperless Singing Worship Leader, St Mark's Episcopal Church in the Bowery, New York, NY, 2012-2013.
- Nightwatch Youth Program, Worship Leader & Facilitator, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York, NY, 2010-2013.

ACTING ROLES

Various, *In the Beginning: A Broadway Revue of the Book of Genesis*, directed by Kimberly Debus & Lindsay Nye, 2013.

Death, *Suspend Your Disbelief: A Medieval Mystery Play in Three Acts*, directed by Lucas Milikin, 2012.

Chorus, *Strangers & Other Angels*, directed by Karin Coonrad, Compagnia de' Colombari Theatre Company, 2010.

Marie Buckner, *How the Buckner Family Saved Christmas*, directed by Eric Traynor, 2005.

ORIGINAL ALBUMS

- *Making Friends with Ghosts*, 2010
- *Still Apt*, 2008
- *Home for Christmas*, 2007
- *Last Call*, 2006

FEATURED ON

Songs to Fill the Air: A Tribute to Jerry Garcia Live, DB Records, 2014

I, Even I, Can Sing, No Evil Star Records, 2011

This Album Kills Cancer, Lazlo Records, 2010

Kristen Leigh: Live @ Dotmatrix, Dotmatrix Project Records, 2009

Homegrown: A Tribute to the Songs of Neil Young, Shane D Records, 2009

MUSIC VIDEOS

"Gratitude," YouTube: Kristen Leigh Music, 2023

VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Task Force on Liturgical & Prayer Book Revision, Episcopal Diocese of NC, 2019

Student Life Committee for Spiritual Formation, Student Chair, Union Theological Seminary, 2011-2014

Annual Art Show Organizer, Union Theological Seminary, 2011-2014

International Buddhist-Christian Conference, Planning Committee, Union Theological Seminary, New York, NY, 2013

Student Government Representative, Union Theological Seminary, 2012-2013

Community Kitchen, Greensboro Urban Ministry, 2008-2009

DJ & Promotions Assistant, WUAG 103.1FM "The Music," 2003-2005

Communicating Common Ground Student Diversity Project, New Garden Friends School, 2004

Office of Waste Reduction & Recycling, Researcher & Project Intern, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2004

Task Force on Retaining Young Professionals, Action Greensboro, 2003

HONORS & AWARDS

Traveling Fellowship Award, Union Theological Seminary, 2014
Henry Luce Research Fellow, Gadj Mada University, 2013
Lambda Pi Eta Communication Honor Society, 2004
Pen and Quill Creative Writing Honor Society, 2000

REFERENCES

PROFESSIONAL

The Rev. Gregory Farrand, Rector, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Durham, NC
The Rev. Robert Fruehwirth, Priest Associate, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Cary, NC
The Rev. Jim Reisner, Retired Pastor, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Albany, NY

TEACHING & FORMATION

The Rev. Bonnie Duckworth, Deacon, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Salisbury, NC
The Rev. Frank Dew, Retired Pastor; co-founder of The Servant Leadership School
Marilyn Wolf, LMFT, Founder & Director, Space for Conscious Living, Greensboro, NC
Mo Allyn, Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministries, St. James Episcopal Church

ACADEMICS

Fr. Paul Knitter, Emeritus Professor of Theology, Religions, and Culture, Union
Theological Seminary
Fr. John A. McGuckin, Retired Professor of Church History & Patristic Theology, Union
Theological Seminary
The Rev. Dr. John Thatamanil, Professor of Comparative Theology and Religious
Diversity, Union Theological Seminary
The Rev. Dr. Hal Taussig, Professor of New Testament, Union Theological Seminary