

JOSEPH LEE KIMMEL

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CURRENT POSITIONS

- 2022 - present **BOSTON COLLEGE** (Chestnut Hill, MA)
Part-Time Faculty Member, Theology Department
- 2024 - present **ST. ANNE'S IN-THE-FIELDS EPISCOPAL CHURCH** (Lincoln, MA)
Assistant Rector

EDUCATION

- 2023 **HARVARD UNIVERSITY** (Cambridge, MA)
Ph.D. (Study of Religion: New Testament and Early Christianity)
Dissertation: *Power in the Name: Towards a Theological Posthumanism*
- 2020 **HARVARD UNIVERSITY: DEREK BOK CENTER FOR TEACHING AND
LEARNING** (Cambridge, MA)
Teaching Certificate
- 2019 **HARVARD UNIVERSITY** (Cambridge, MA)
M.A. in Passing (Study of Religion)
- 2016 **HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL** (Cambridge, MA)
M.Div. (Comparative Theology)
- 2012 **WHEATON COLLEGE** (Wheaton, IL)
M.A. (Clinical Psychology)
- 2007 **TIBET UNIVERSITY** (Lhasa, Tibet, China)
Classical Tibetan Language Certificate
- 2004 **UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO** (Chicago, IL)
A.B. (Religious Studies, with Honors)

BOOKS

1. *The Many Lives of Mantras: From Ancient India to the Contemporary World*. Under contract with Bloomsbury. Forthcoming in 2027.
2. *Power in the Name: A Comparative Analysis of Onomastic Invocations*. (Published in: "Ekstasis: Religious Experience from Antiquity to the Middle Ages.") Berlin: De Gruyter, 2025.

3. *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Comparative Theology: A Collection in Honor of Francis X. Clooney, SJ*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2024. Co-edited with Axel Takacs.

CHAPTERS IN EDITED BOOKS

1. **Kimmel, J.** “The Posthuman Demonic: From Ancient Binding to Ambivalent Symbiosis between Humans and Demons.” In *Demons Good and Bad: An Interdisciplinary Perspective*. Leuven: Peeters, forthcoming.
2. Takacs, A. & **Kimmel, J.** “Introduction.” In *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Comparative Theology: A Collection in Honor of Francis X. Clooney, SJ*, xvii-xxviii. Edited by Axel Takacs and Joseph Kimmel. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2024.
3. **Kimmel, J.** “Imagining Religion, Intuiting Comparison: Comparing the Roles of Inner Sense in the Scholarship of Jonathan Z. Smith and Francis X. Clooney, SJ.” In *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Comparative Theology: A Collection in Honor of Francis X. Clooney, SJ*, 13-20. Edited by Axel Takacs and Joseph Kimmel. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2024.
4. **Kimmel, J.**, Kim, Y., Boan, D., Aten, J. & Cleary, W. *Pastors’ Views on Church and Community in Post-Disaster Japan*. In J. Aten & D. Boan, “Disaster Ministry Handbook.” Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015.
5. Aten, J., Boan, D., Leavell, K., Stegman, S., **Kimmel, J.**, & Livingston, W. *Study of a Denomination’s Response to Hurricane Katrina: Denominational Responses, Areas for Growth, and Recommendations*. In J. Aten & D. Boan, “Disaster Ministry Handbook.” Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015.

JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS

1. “Names Matter: Towards A Neo-Materialist Theology of Names.” *Harvard Theological Review* (under review).
2. “Empowered Speech from Indic Mantras to the Name of Jesus.” *Buddhist-Christian Studies* (forthcoming).
3. “Material Encounters: The Agency of Objects in Otherworldly Experiences.” *Journal of Interreligious Studies* (forthcoming).
4. “Demons Seeking Identity?: The Psychic Life of New Testament Exorcisms.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 143 (1) (2024): 85-104; <https://doi.org/10.15699/jbl.1431.2024.5>.
5. “Agentive Names and Posthuman Ontologies: Onomastic Invocations of the “More-than-Human” in Early Christian and Medieval Tibetan Artifacts.” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 91 (2) (2023): 430-48; online publication: January 16, 2024; <https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfad083>.
6. ““What is Your Name?”: Names Comparatively Compelled in Christian and Buddhist Texts.” *Journal of Interreligious Studies* 40 (December 2023): 65-71.
7. “Coercive Names: Interpreting Mark 5:1-13 with Althusser’s ‘Interpellation.’” *Biblical Interpretation* 31 (2023): 356-73; online publication: 2022; doi:10.1163/15685152-20221704.
8. “Mary in Christ in God: The Intertwined Identities of Mary, Christ, and God Almighty in the Akathistos Hymn.” *Journal of Malankara Orthodox Theological Studies* 6 (2) (2021): 45-57.
9. “Bedeviling Spirit Possession in Ancient Christian Texts: A Q+A with Giovanni B. Bazzana on His Newest

Book.” *Harvard Divinity Bulletin* (Autumn/Winter 2020): <https://bulletin.hds.harvard.edu/bedeviling-spirit-possession-in-ancient-christian-texts/>

10. “Spiritual Danger and Interreligious Participation.” *Journal of Interreligious Studies* 25 (February 2019): 8-17.
11. “Comparative Confession: A Comparative Study of Confession in the Writings of Tertullian, Cassian, and Śāntideva.” *Journal of Interreligious Studies* 22 (April 2018): 2-21.
12. “Essential Others on the Path to Enlightenment: The Importance of Intersubjectivity in the *Visuddhimagga*’s Presentation of Progress along the Path.” *The Graduate Journal of Harvard Divinity School* 11 (2016): 36-51.
13. Hall, S., Watson, T., Kellums, M., & **Kimmel, J.**, “Mental health needs and resources in Nepal.” *International Journal of Culture and Mental Health* 9 (3) (2016): 278-84.

BLOG ARTICLES

1. “A chatbot willing to take on questions of all kinds - from the serious to the comical - is the latest representation of Jesus for the AI age.” *The Conversation*. August 1, 2023.

BOOK REVIEWS

1. Bauer, Nicole M. and J. Andrew Doole, eds. *Ideas of Possession: Interdisciplinary and Transcultural Perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024. Reviewed in *Religious Studies Review*, forthcoming.
2. McLellan, Peter N. *The Gospel of Mark and Other Haunted Places*. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2023. Reviewed in *The Bible and Critical Theory* 19 (2) (2023): 1-3.
3. Heim, S. Mark. *Crucified Wisdom: Theological Reflection on Christ and the Bodhisattva*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2019. Reviewed in the *Journal of Interreligious Studies* 37 (August 2022): 60-62.
4. Hedges, Paul. *Comparative Theology: A Critical and Methodological Perspective*. Leiden: Brill, 2017. Reviewed in the *Journal of Interreligious Studies* 34 (January 2022): 102-103.
5. Kärkkäinen, Veli-Matti. *Doing the Work of Comparative Theology*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2020. Reviewed in the *Journal of Interreligious Studies* 34 (January 2022): 100-101.
6. Luhrmann, T.M. *How God Becomes Real: Kindling the Presence of Invisible Others*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2020. Reviewed in the *Journal of Interreligious Studies* 33 (August 2021): 100-102.
7. Shatzer, Jacob. *Transhumanism and the Image of God: Today's Technology and the Future of Christian Discipleship*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2019. Reviewed in *AAR: Reading Religion* (September 2020).
8. Cornille, Catherine. *Meaning and Method in Comparative Theology*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2020. Reviewed in the *Journal of Interreligious Studies* 29 (March 2020): 79-81.

INTERVIEWS

1. CNN. Alexandra Willingham, “AI Technology Lets You Talk to Jesus or Satan. What Do They Say?” August 30, 2023. <https://www.cnn.com/2023/08/30/us/ai-technology-jesus-satan-religion-cec/index.html>

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2025

Dealing with Demons: Comparative Demonologies and Demonological Ethics between Christianity and Tibetan Buddhism. American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting (Boston, MA), Comparative Theology Unit, November 2025. **(Invited Lecture)**

Demons, Dualism, and the Development of Early Christian Demonological Ethics. Second Temple Judaism/Early Christianity Workshop (Boston College), September 2025. **(Invited Lecture)**

Strong Words: Empowered Speech in Christianity and Buddhism. Catholic Biblical Association Annual Meeting (Loyola University, Chicago), August 2025.

Spirit Possession and Otherworldly Power in Early Christianity. Altered States of Consciousness and the Study of Ancient Judaism and Christianity Conference (University of Texas at Austin), May 2025. **(Invited Lecture)**

2024

The Ethics of Exorcism: Hierarchical Violence in Humans' Encounters with Demons. American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting (San Diego, CA), Sacred Texts and Ethics Unit, November 2024.

Ancient Mediterranean Materialism: Onomastic Agency from Tertullian to Jane Bennett. Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting (San Diego, CA), Greco-Roman Religions Unit, November 2024.

2023

Encounters with Objects: Material Agencies and Otherworldly Experiences. Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting (San Antonio, TX), Religious Experience in Antiquity Unit, November 2023.

Material Encounters: The Agency of Objects in Otherworldly Experiences. "Engaging Particularities 20" Conference (Boston College), March 2023.

2022

Legion, Jesus, and Louis Althusser: Interpreting Mark 5:1-13 through the Lens of Interpellation. Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting (Denver, CO), Gospel of Mark Unit, November 2022.

"What is Your Name?": Names Comparatively Compelled in Christian and Buddhist Texts. American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting (Denver, CO), "The Political Implications of Comparative Theology" Panel, November 2022.

The Posthuman Demonic: From Ancient Binding to Ambivalent Symbiosis between Humans and Demons. "Demons: Good and Bad" Conference (Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland), October 2022.

Posthumanism(s), Althusser, and the Power of the Proper Name. "Critical Approaches to the Study of Religion" Conference (Queens University, Belfast, Northern Ireland), June 2022.

2021

Agentive Names: Reading Acts 16 through a Posthumanist Lens. Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting (San Antonio, TX), Religious Experience in Antiquity Unit, November 2021.

Onomastic Agencies: A Posthumanist Reading of Acts 16:16-18. Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting (San Antonio, TX), Book of Acts Unit, November 2021.

Weaponizing the Name of Jesus: Onomastic Malevolence in Early Christian Curses. American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting (San Antonio, TX), History of Christianity Unit, November 2021.

Names as Agents: A Posthumanist Reading of Mark 5:1-13. New England / Eastern Canada Region of the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting (online), March 2021.

2020

Material Names, Amuletic Agency: How Written Names Act in Early Christian Amulets. “Confluences of Embodiment, Materiality, and Textuality” Conference (Boston College), April 2020. (**Invited Lecture**; cancelled due to pandemic).

2019

Posthumanist Possession: Probing the Reality of Demons via the Ontologies of Posthumanism. “Religion and the Strange” Conference (Boston University), September 2019.

Names as Power in a Posthumanist World. “Religion and the Future” Conference (Columbia University), April 2019.

2018

Spiritual Danger and Interreligious Participation. “Engaging Particularities XVI” Conference (Boston College), April 2018.

2016

Comparative Confession: A Comparative Analysis of Confession in Tertullian, Cassian, and Śāntideva. “Enacting the Theology of Comparison: A Workshop on Comparative Theology” (Harvard Divinity School), April 2016.

2015

Personal Hybridity and Interpretations of the “Kingdom of God” among American and Nepalese Pastors. “Religious Diversity: Conflict, Cooperation, and Creolization” Conference (Boston University), November 2015.

2014

A Complex Kingdom: An Overview of Interpretations of the Kingdom of God. Invited presentation at Nepal Ebenezer Bible College (Kathmandu, Nepal), August 2014.

2013

Kimmel, J., Kim, Y., Boan, D., Aten, J., & Cleary, W. (April 2013). *Pastors’ Views on Church and Community in Post-Disaster Japan.* “Christian Association for Psychological Studies Annual Conference” (Portland, OR), April 2013.

Hall, S., **Kimmel, J.**, Kellums, M., Watson, T., Lindsey, M., & Van de Krol, L. *Stressors, Challenges, and Mental Health Symptoms of Helping Professionals in Nepal.* “Christian Association for Psychological Studies Annual Conference” (Portland, OR), April 2013.

Hovis, R., Stegman, S., Schrubba, A., Hook, K., **Kimmel, J.**, & Aten, J. *Disaster Spiritual and Emotional Care in Professional Psychology: A Review.* “Christian Association for Psychological Studies Annual Conference” (Portland, OR), April 2013.

Sanders, M., Smigelsky, M., Post, R., Hook, K., **Kimmel, J.**, Ku, A., Gerberich, S., & Aten, J. *The Cost of Trauma in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Literature Review.* “Christian Association for Psychological Studies Annual Conference” (Portland, OR), April 2013.

HONORS AND AWARDS

Graduate Student Council Conference Grant, Harvard University, 2022
Clarence G. Campbell Scholarship, Harvard Divinity School, 2021-2022
Certificate of Distinction in Teaching (2), Harvard University, 2018, 2019

Summer Foreign Study Grant, Center for Jewish Studies, Harvard University, 2018
Selection for Invitation-Only Teaching Seminar, Wabash Center, 2018
William and Lucille Nickerson Scholarship, Harvard Divinity School, 2014-2015; 2015-2016
Tuition Grant, Harvard Divinity School, 2013-2014
Summer Language Study Grant, Harvard China Fund, Harvard University, 2015
Summer Graduate Research Grant, South Asia Institute, Harvard University, 2014
International Field Education Grant, Harvard Divinity School, 2014
Academic Scholarship, Wheaton College Graduate School, 2010-2012
Dean's List, University of Chicago, 2000-2001; 2002-2003; 2003-2004
Undergraduate Full Academic Scholarship, University of Chicago, 2000-2004

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Visiting Assistant Professor (Biblical Studies), Boston College

- Spring 2024:
 - “Inscribing the Word: The New Testament” (THEO 1421; 2 sections)
 - “The Sacred Page: The Bible” (THEO 1422; 2 sections)

Part-Time/Adjunct Faculty Member

- Fall 2022-2024 and Spring 2022-2023, 2025: “The Sacred Page: The Bible” (THEO 1422): Boston College
- Summer 2023-2025: “The Everlasting Covenant: The Hebrew Bible” (THEO 1420): Boston College (asynchronous, online)
- Fall 2022: “The Everlasting Covenant: The Hebrew Bible” (THEO 1420): Boston College
- Spring 2022: “Junior Tutorial: ‘In the Name of the Lord’: Onomastics and Theology” (REL 98r): Harvard College
- Spring 2021 and Fall 2020: “Graeca” (HDS 4240): Harvard Divinity School
- Summer 2014: “Paul’s Letter to the Romans”: Nepal Ebenezer Bible College (Kathmandu, Nepal)

Teaching Fellow, Harvard University and Harvard Divinity School

- Head TF:
 - Fall 2020: “Classical Chinese Ethical and Political Theory” (GenEd 1091; Prof. Michael Puett)
 - Fall 2020, 2019: “Stories from the End of the World” (GenEd 1001; Prof. Giovanni Bazzana)
- TF:
 - Spring 2021: “Introduction to the New Testament” (HDS 1202; Prof. Karen King)
 - Spring 2021: “Jews and Christians: Parting of the Ways?” (HDS 1730; Prof. Judith Lieu)
 - Fall 2020: “Paul and His Reception in the Early Church” (HDS 1523; Prof. Judith Lieu)
 - Spring 2020: “Archaeology and History of Israel/Palestine from the Second Temple to the Early Islamic Period” (HDS 1834; Prof. Giovanni Bazzana)
 - Spring 2020: “Contemplative Prayer in Christianity” (HDS 2610; Prof. Stephanie Paulsell)
 - Spring 2019: “The Letters of Paul: Ethnicity, Sex, Ethics, and the End of the World” (HDS 1544; Prof. Laura Nasrallah)
 - Spring 2019: “Krishna and Christ: Text, Practice, Person, Experience” (HDS 3070; Prof. Francis X. Clooney, SJ)
 - Fall 2018: “Classical Chinese Ethical and Political Theory” (ER 18; Prof. Michael Puett)
 - Fall 2018: “Spirit Possession and Exorcism in Early Christianity” (HDS 1558; Prof. Giovanni Bazzana)

Teaching Assistant, Wheaton College Graduate School

- Spring 2012: “Psychology of Religion” (Prof. Richard Butman)
- Spring 2012: “Psychopathology” (Prof. Richard Butman)
- Fall 2011: “Abnormal Psychology” (Prof. Richard Butman)
- Fall 2011: “Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy” (Prof. Benjamin Pyykkonen)

English Teacher, ECC English Company (Osaka, Japan); 2008-2010

Joseph Lee Kimmel

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- **Assistant Rector**, St. Anne's in-the-Fields Episcopal Church (Lincoln, MA): July 2024 to present
- **Curate**, St. Anne's in-the-Fields Episcopal Church (Lincoln, MA): July 2022 to June 2024
- **Administrator for Digital Worship**, St. Peter's Episcopal Church (Cambridge, MA): Summer 2021 to July 2022
- **Hospital Chaplain-Intern**, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (Boston, MA): Fall 2021
- **Editorial Assistant**, Harvard Theological Review: 2019-2022
 - Promoted to supervisory role in October 2021
- **Archaeological Preservation Assistant**, Magdala, Israel: Summer 2018

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- **Steering Committee Member**, "Religious Experience in Antiquity Unit," Society of Biblical Literature: December 2024 to present
- **Panel Member**, "How to Prepare for General Exams," Harvard University: February 2020, April 2021
- **Student Representative**, Graduate Student Council, Harvard University: 2016-2017
- **Class Representative**, Graduate Psychology Students' Association, Wheaton College: 2011-2012

VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

- **Postulant-Intern**, St. Peter's Episcopal Church (Cambridge, MA): 2020
- **Parish Ministry Leader**, St. James's Episcopal Church (Cambridge, MA): 2018-2020
- **Homeless Ministry Coordinator**, First Church UCC (Cambridge, MA): 2017-2020
- **Homeless Ministry Volunteer**, First Church UCC (Cambridge, MA): 2014-2017
- **Editorial Board Member**, *Culture Graduate Student Journal*, Harvard Divinity School: 2014-2015
- **"Taizé at Harvard" Co-Founder and Worship Leader**, Harvard Divinity School: 2013-2015
- **Volunteer English Teacher**, Lhasa, Tibet, China: 2007-2008
- **English Tutor**, Pui Tak Center (Chicago, IL): 2003

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- Catholic Biblical Association (2024-present)
- Anglican Association of Biblical Scholars (2021-present)
- Society of Biblical Literature (2020-present)
- American Academy of Religion (2017-present)
- Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies (2016-present)

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Advanced

- Greek (Attic; reading)
- Tibetan (classical; reading)

Intermediate

- French (reading)

- German (reading)
- Mandarin (modern; speaking, listening, reading, and writing)
- Sanskrit (classical; reading)
- Tibetan (modern; speaking and listening)

Elementary

- Coptic (reading)
- Hebrew (biblical; reading)
- Japanese (modern; speaking, listening, reading, and writing)
- Latin (classical; reading)