

**Rev. Chelsey D. Hillyer's
Very Fancy CV**

Professional Credentials

- Elder, Missouri Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church
 - Ordained in 2018
- Facilitator, [Center for Courage and Renewal](#)
 - 2017-2018 Cohort, Leader: [Dr. Parker J. Palmer](#)
- Professional Certified Coach, [International Coaching Federation](#)
 - *In Progress*, Supervisor: [Val Hastings](#)
- Seminary of the Wild Earth Certificate, [Center for Wild Spirituality](#)
 - *In Progress*, Guide: [Dr. Timothy Eberhardt](#)

Education

- **Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO**
 - Graduated May 2015 with a Masters of Divinity; GPA: 3.94
 - Honors: Senior Preacher Award
 - Leadership: Evening Chapel Coordinator
- **Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington, Illinois**
 - Graduated May 2005 with a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature and Sociology (double major); GPA: 3.80
 - Honors: Phi Beta Kappa, Sigma Tau Delta (English Honors Society), Alpha Kappa Delta (Sociology Honors Society), Magna Cum Laude
 - Leadership: President, Class of 2005; President, Alpha Eta Pi Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta (2004-2005)
- **Industry CUSD #156, Industry, Illinois**
 - Graduated May 2001, High School Diploma
 - Honors: Voted Class Clown and Most Likely to Succeed

Selected Preparation in Creative Writing:

- [Middlebury Bread Loaf Environmental Writers Conference](#), Juried Workshop Contributor in Creative Nonfiction. Workshop Leader: Janisse Ray, Summer 2022.
- Editor-in-Chief, The Good Friday Collaborative Blog, Published Weekly, Spring 2022-Present. Link: <https://www.goodfridaycollaborative.com/writing>
- [Collegeville Institute](#), Writing Spirit, Writing Faith Multi-Genre Workshop, Juried Workshop Contributor in Creative Nonfiction. Workshop Leader: Dr. Mary Lane Potter, Fall 2021. (Full Scholarship Awarded)
- [Orion Magazine](#), Writing With Urgency Creative Nonfiction Workshop, Juried Workshop Contributor. Workshop Leader: Belle Boggs, Summer 2021.
- [Catapult](#), Online Fiction Workshop, Participant. Workshop Leader: Jac Jemc, Spring 2018.

- Editorial Board Member, *Tributaries Magazine*, Undergraduate Literary Journal of Illinois Wesleyan University, 2003-2005.
- Undergraduate Coursework in Creative Writing:
 - Introduction to Creative Writing (ENGL 101)
 - Creative Writing: Structure and Surprise (ENGL 202)
 - Seminar in Creative Writing (ENGL 301)

Selected Creative Writing Awards, Honors, and Publications:

- 2023 Ragdale Artist-in-Residence and Ragdale in Schools Fellowship Recipient. [Ragdale Institute](#), Lake Forest, Illinois. Board recommendation by Jac Jemc. (Residency to take place in Summer 2023.)
- “A Flood of Asters.” Flash Essay forthcoming in *Orion Magazine*. Forthcoming, 2023.
- “Gleaning in the Garden of Eden.” Feature Reported Essay in *Faith and Leadership: A Publication of Duke Divinity*. Forthcoming, Spring 2023.
- “This is My Body,” Essay, forthcoming in [Bearings Online: A Publication of the Collegeville Institute](#). Forthcoming, March 2023.
- Finalist, [Ruminate Magazine’s 2022 Flash Prose Prize](#) for Creative Nonfiction Flash Essay, “Terrifying. Wonderful.” Announced October 2022.
- “A Ministry of Ending,” Ministry Lab Feature Essay in *Fidelia Magazine*, a publication of Young Clergywomen International, Published online September 15, 2022. Link: <https://youngclergywomen.org/a-ministry-of-ending/>
- “Lost in You: The Mystique of Chris Gaines,” Feature Reported Essay in *The New Territory Magazine*, vol. 12, Spring 2022. Print.
- “When You Break the Ceiling,” Hybrid Essay, *Bending Genres*, vol. 25, February 2022, Link: <https://bendinggenres.com/after-you-break-the-ceiling/>
- “A Liturgy of Holy Communion focused on Justice and Mercy,” published by the Missouri Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. Link: <https://www.moumethodist.org/files/connectional+ministries/liturgical+resources+for+disasters/holy+communion+for+mercy+and+justice.pdf>
- *Tributaries Magazine*, Undergraduate Literary Journal of Illinois Wesleyan University:
 - Published Poetry:
 - “The Smiling Tree” (2003), “The Night Before the Morning After” (2003), “Stepsisters” (2004), “September Storm” (2004), “Ghazal from Here” (2004), “The Ophelia Sestina” (2005), “Entartete Kunst” (2005), “November Poem” (2005), “Progress Poem,” (2005)
 - Published Prose:

- “Emergency Exit” (2003), “From a Furrow” (2005)
- Winner, 2004 Arthur William Hinners and Louise Hinners Stipfle Poetry Prize, presented by the Academy of American Poets. Judge: Gabriel Gudding.

Selected Preparation in Teaching and Formation:

- **Member of the Program Design and Facilitation Team** for the Center for Courage and Renewal’s [Flourishing in Ministry Project](#) (Phase 1), 2019 - 2022
 - Worked collaboratively to offer four distinct formation events for religious professionals from diverse contexts. Funded by the Lily Endowment, the experiences included instruction in nonviolent communication and multimodal learning with a focus on creating multicultural communities of support for ongoing vocational resilience, discernment, and spiritual formation.
- **Facilitator** for Lexington Theological Seminary’s Flourishing in Ministry 2021-2022 Alumni Cohort.
 - Designed and facilitated two formation events and ongoing peer support models for recent graduates of Lexington Theological Seminary.
- **Student Professor** of “Theology of the Body,” Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, May 2015.
 - Hired by Rev. Dr. Damayanthi Niles (Professor of Constructive Theology) to co-design and teach an intensive course for students to engage intersectional, incarnational theology by exploring how somatic knowledge impacts faith development. The course incorporated art, drama, and Theater of the Oppressed in addition to traditional coursework in theology with the goal that students might become more attuned to the way embodied experiences of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and place nuance theological viewpoints.
- **Teaching Assistant** for “Biblical Studies III: The Gospels and Revelation,” Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, Fall 2012.
 - Hired by Rev. Dr. Deborah Krause (Academic Dean and Professor of New Testament Studies) to offer academic support to enrolled students, to assist with course design and execution of the first hybrid (virtual and in-person) version of the course offered at Eden, and to offer administrative assistance, as needed. Through the course of the semester, Rev. Dr. Krause and I regularly assessed classroom dynamics, learning goals, and opportunities for student support, offering real-time adaptive solutions as students shared feedback. I especially supported international students in navigating new technologies and language barriers. I was also in my third trimester of pregnancy.
- **Tutor** at the Illinois Wesleyan University Writing Center, Bloomington, Illinois, 2003-2005.
 - Recommended by English Department faculty member Dr. Alison Sainsbury, I was trained and hired to offer proofreading and support to students in developing critical thinking and college-level writing skills. I regularly assisted students with

structure and style, and developed a working knowledge of MLA, APA, ASA, and Chicago Style citation styles. Writing Center Coordinator Joel Haefner selected me to work 1:1 with students who needed additional support due to academic probation status, learning or behavioral needs, and/or additional English language needs, as I displayed a strong ability to support their success in academic writing.

- **Action Research Fellow** with the Action Research Center (ARC), Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington, Illinois, 2004-2005.
 - Hired by ARC Founders Dr. James Sikora (Professor of Sociology) and Dr. James Simeone (Professor of Political Science), I participated in the initial phases of planning, grant-writing, and community networking for the newly-formed Action Research Center. Designed as an interdisciplinary program to bring the gifts and passions of Illinois Wesleyan students, the resources of the Illinois Wesleyan academic community, and civic and business leaders in the Bloomington-Normal region, the ARC created opportunities to transcend the “Wesleyan Bubble,” bringing innovative ideas for social good to life. As one of ARC’s first fellows, I helped with early course design, developing community partnerships, and seeking support with IWU administrators.
 - My own action research project involved launching a zine and hosting a reading which featured the work of both community members and students who had no creative writing backgrounds.
- **Teaching Assistant** for “The History of Social Thought,” Illinois Wesleyan University, Fall 2002.
 - Hired by Dr. Christopher Prendergast (Professor of Sociology) to offer support to students enrolled in the keystone course for sociology majors and minors. After demonstrating a strong capacity in the course material as a student the previous semester, I offered 1:1 and small group opportunities for students to study and clarify the material covered in the course.

Selected Scholarly Presentations and Publications:

- “Greater Things Sermon Series,” Exegetical, worship, and sermon resources written for the Missouri Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, 2022. Link: <https://www.moumethodist.org/resourcedetail/greater-things-sermon-series-16516622>
- “The Still, Small Voice: Listening for the Soul,” Keynote address at Called: Discerning the Voice of Vocation Conference, St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Fayetteville, Arkansas, February 2021.
- “Activism and the Spiritual Life,” Keynote address at St. Louis United Methodist Youth Summit, St. Louis, Missouri, January 2020.
- “Between Fear and Faith: June 17-23, 2019,” Exegetical Essays published in *The Upper Room Disciplines: A Book of Daily Devotions 2019*, Upper Room Books, Nashville: 2019. Print.

- o “Cultivating a Collaborative Culture,” Keynote address for the Missouri Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church’s Right Start Meeting, Columbia, Missouri, May 2019.
- o “Point to the Truth,” lectionary commentary published by *Modern Metanoia*, online January 23, 2017. Link: <https://modernmetanoia.org/2017/01/23/5th-sunday-after-epiphany-point-to-the-truth/>
- o “A Vision for Road and Table,” Featured Homily, Eden Theological Seminary’s Spring Convocation, 2015.
- o “Extraordinary Things,” Student Remarks, Illinois Wesleyan University Honors Day Convocation, Spring 2005. Link: <https://sun.iwu.edu/~iwunews/newsrlse/hillyer.html>
- o “Beyond the Female: The Wife of Bath and Molly Bloom as Humanist Constructions,” Research paper presented at the St. Francis Undergraduate Conference on English Literature, University of St. Francis, Joliet, Illinois, 2005. Advisor: Dr. Dan Terkla
- o “Omen of Despair: The Call for Pan-Caribbean Unity in Kamau Brathwaite’s “Dream Haiti,” Research paper presented at the International Conference on Caribbean Literature, St. Croix, USVI, Nov. 3-5, 2004. Advisor: Dr. Robert Bray
- o “Factors Affecting Community Involvement in Bloomington-Normal, Illinois,” Poster presentation of original research at the John Wesley Powell Research Conference, Bloomington, IL, 2004. Co-Author: Bridget Mudron, Academic Advisor: Dr. Teodora Amoloza, Professor of Sociology, Illinois Wesleyan University.
- o “Kamau Brathwaite: Artist and Activist,” Active Research Presentation, Sigma Tau Delta Undergraduate Research Colloquium, Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington, IL, 2004.

Professional History:

- **2019 – Present: Self Employed**
 - o **Founder, [Amateur Efforts](#)**
 - Through coaching, facilitation, consulting and public speaking, I offer spaces of nonviolent spiritual formation for individuals and groups to identify core values and bring them into daily practice. My clients represent diverse professional spheres and backgrounds, but are often seeking support as they further their dedication to justice and compassion in the world.
 - o **Co-Founder, [The Good Friday Collaborative](#)**
 - As part of an ecumenical team of clergy dedicated to supporting Christian communities concluding ministry, I develop resources, offer coaching and consultation, and undertake strategic planning on behalf of our collaborative and our clients. Specifically, I am interested in shifting the

dominant theological framework around church death and the decline of Christendom away from capitalist-driven narratives through relationship and writing.

- o **Freelance Writer**
 - In addition to my creative work, I have created written resources and published journalistic work for a number of organizations and publications.
- **2009–2019: Religious Professional**
 - o **Pastor of Worship and Leadership**, First UMC Jefferson City, Jefferson City, Missouri
 - As a Pastoral Excellence Fellow for the Missouri Annual Conference, I was appointed to this large congregation as a high-capacity leader to assess the needs of the congregation and community and to assist the congregation in strategic planning. In addition to this relational and administrative work, I was also responsible for curating all liturgical aspects of 4 weekly worship services, for supervising the worship staff (4 paid, 30 volunteer), and for leading worship. I also performed other pastoral duties such as pastoral care, adult education and formation, fundraising, and community service. I also served as Interim Lead Pastor during the Lead Pastor's 3-month sabbatical.
 - **Lead Pastor**, Union UMC, St. Louis, Missouri
 - As the solo pastor of an urban congregation, my work focused on assisting an aging congregation that had experienced significant decline to discern a faithful future. The congregation moved through an intentional closure, which involved significant pastoral work and administrative skill, as I facilitated the collaborative processes of grief, sale of the property, and denominational procedures. At the same time, the congregation continued to carry out its mission as a church focused on intersectional justice by partnering with the Black Lives Matter movement, supporting local unhoused populations, and advocating for LGBTQ+ rights.
 - **Lead Pastor**, Open Hearts UMC, Wright City, Missouri
 - As solo pastor of a rural congregation, I assisted this congregation in discerning the most faithful path for their future. The congregation moved to close the existing congregation and to become a satellite site for a larger UMC congregation nearby. This role required me to navigate denominational requirements and politics, while caring for a grieving congregation, even as I completed my seminary education.
 - **Student Chaplain**, Lutheran Senior Services Breeze Park, St. Charles, Missouri

- Under the supervision of Chaplain Deaconess Karen Pitkin, I provided spiritual care and formation opportunities for residents in the locked memory care unit of a large senior living facility. Due to the residents' varied cognitive capacities, I developed creative and compassionate strategies for us to engage the narratives of Christian tradition in meaningful ways. This included: through song, play, touch, and visual storytelling.
 - **Director of Adult Ministries**, Kirkwood UMC, Kirkwood, Missouri
 - I coordinated all aspects of adult faith formation at a large suburban congregation. This included volunteer recruitment and training, curriculum review, design, and implementation, and community-building. I regularly facilitated and taught groups with participants ranging in age from 3 to 90 years and developed a strong capacity to adapt my teaching to various stages of spiritual, cognitive, and physical development.
- **2005–2009: Social Worker**
 - o **Counselor**, Hope Clinic for Women, Granite City, Illinois
 - I provided pre-abortion, options, contraceptive, and post-abortion counselling for women and support people considering and seeking abortion. In this position, I worked daily with women seeking abortion to provide clear information about abortion procedures, to help identify networks of support and coping strategies post-abortion, and to offer spiritual support, when appropriate. I redesigned our consent procedures for greater accessibility.
 - o **PRN Hotline Operator**, Lifeline, St. Louis, Missouri
 - Having completed training to answer a hotline dedicated to suicide assessment and crisis intervention counseling, I was hired to support the on-call staff on a PRN basis. Primarily, I worked overnight shifts to answer our dedicated hotline as well as several regional hotlines which forwarded to our line overnight. I assisted numerous individuals who indicated suicidal ideation by conducting assessments, providing compassionate listening, and providing appropriate referrals and plans of care. I also assisted in the supervision and training of volunteers and interns from area social work program.
- **2005–2009: Editor and Journalist**
 - o **Freelance Editor**, Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis, Missouri
 - I provided editorial services at all stages of the publication process for the Missouri Botanical Garden Press. Notable projects included the scientific journals *Novon* and *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden* and the international, collaborative project *The Flora of China*.
 - o **Associate Editor**, American Oil Chemist Society, Urbana, Illinois

- As a part of the Press Department for an international scientific society, I participated in all stages of the monthly publication *Inform Magazine*. I wrote news, features, departments, provided editorial services and input, performed layout design, and coordinated with our international editorial board to develop relevant content. I also provided editorial support for special publications and for the academic journals *Journal of the American Oil Chemists' Society*, *Lipids*, and *Journal of Surfactants and Detergents*.
- o **Correspondent**, East Central Communications, Champaign, Illinois
 - I reported on local affairs for three area newspapers published by East Central Communications: *The Savoy Star*, *The County Star*, and *The News-Gazette*. My published work included numerous reports and feature articles which followed AP style.
- o **Freelance Copywriter**
 - I provided copywriting and copyediting services for clients including:
 - o TNT Dental, Plano, Texas
 - o Girlistic Magazine, Santa Monica, California

References and/or employment history prior to 2005 provided upon request.