



Rev. Dr. Willie James Jennings

The Rev. Dr. Willie Jennings is Associate Professor of Systematic Theology and Africana Studies at Yale University Divinity School. He received the 2014 Grawemeyer Award in religion for [*The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race*](#). This book traces the historical ties between colonialism, Christianity, and the social construction of race in order to understand how a religion of love has been so deeply implicated in racial oppression. Rev. Dr. Jennings suggests that reimagining Christian identity in relation to Judaism might be vital in healing current racial tensions in the United States. Furthermore, he argues that attending to place, geography, and landscape is important for Christianity to become a religion of love that can unite rather than divide. *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race* also received the American Academy of Religion Best Book Award for Constructive Theology in 2011.

Rev. Dr. Jennings is an executive member of Scholars for the Future of North Carolina, an academic alliance working to benefit communities through scholarship, and has been closely involved in Moral Mondays, a coalition the NAACP launched in North Carolina two years ago to protest unfair treatment and discrimination in government. A consultant for the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Religion and Theology and the Association of Theological Schools, Rev. Dr. Jennings also takes part in cross-disciplinary academic initiatives such as University of Virginia's Project for Lived Theology and Yale University's Joy and Religious Traditions Project.