

# MATTHEW THIESSEN

Associate Professor of Religious Studies  
McMaster University  
University Hall, Room 125  
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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- McMaster University, Associate Professor of Religious Studies (2016–)
- Saint Louis University, Assistant Professor of Theological Studies (2012–2016)
- College of Emmanuel and St. Chad, Senior Lecturer (2010–2012)
- Elon University, Adjunct Instructor (2010)
- Duke University, the Divinity School, Instructor (2009–2010)

## EDUCATION

- **Duke University**, Durham, NC  
Ph.D. in Religion (2010)  
Advisor: Joel Marcus
- **University of Oxford**, Oxford, UK  
M.St. in Jewish Studies (2004)
- **Trinity Western University**, Langley, B.C.  
M.A. in Biblical Studies (2003)
- **Tyndale College**, Toronto, ON  
B.R.S. in Biblical Studies (2001)

## RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

- **New Testament:** Judaism and Christianity, the Epistles of Paul, The Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament, Synoptic Gospels, Hebrews
- **Judaism:** Jewish ethnicity in antiquity, Second Temple Jewish History, Dead Sea Scrolls, Pseudepigrapha, Septuagint

## MONOGRAPHS

- *Paul and the Gentile Problem*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.
  - Reviewed in *Ancient Jew Review* (a panel discussion), *Journal of Beliefs and Values*, *Reviews of the Enoch Seminar*
- *Contesting Conversion: Genealogy, Circumcision, and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Christianity*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
  - Reviewed in *CBQ*, *Center for Jewish Law and Contemporary Civilization*, *Conservative Judaism*, *ETL*, *H-Net Reviews*, *Hen*, *JR*, *JSNT*, *JSNT*, *JTS*, *RBL*, *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations*, *Touchstone*

## EDITED VOLUMES

- *Perceiving the Other in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*. Edited with Michal Bar-Asher Siegal and Wolfgang Grünstäudl. WUNT Series 1. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming 2017.
- *The So-Called Jew in Paul's Letter to the Romans*. Edited with Rafael Rodríguez. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016.

## REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

- "Conversion, Jewish." Forthcoming in *Oxford Classical Dictionary*. Edited by Sander Goldberg. New York: Oxford University Press.
- "The Legislation of Leviticus 12 in Light of Ancient Embryology," *Vetus Testamentum*, forthcoming.
- "The Many for One or One for the Many: Reading Mark 10:45 in the Roman Empire." *Harvard Theological Review* 109 (2016): 447–66.
- "Paul's Argument against Gentile Circumcision in Romans 2:17–29." *Novum Testamentum* 56 (2014): 373–91.
- "Aseneth's Eight-Day Transformation as Scriptural Justification for Conversion." *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 45 (2014): 229–49.
- "A Buried Pentateuchal Allusion to the Resurrection in Mark 12:25." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 76 (2014): 273–90.
- "'The Rock Was Christ': The Fluidity of Christ's Body in 1 Cor. 10.4." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 36 (2013): 103–26.
- "Revisiting the *prosēlutos* in 'the LXX'." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 132 (2013): 333–50.
- "Abolishers of the Law in Early Judaism and Matthew 5,17–20." *Biblica* 93 (2012): 543–56.
- "Luke 2:22, Leviticus 12, and Parturient Impurity." *Novum Testamentum* 54 (2012): 16–29.
- "The Text of Genesis 17:14." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 128 (2009): 625–42.
- "The Function of a Conjunction: Inclusivist or Exclusivist Strategies in Ezra 6.21 and Nehemiah 10.29–30?" *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 34 (2009): 63–79.
- "Hebrews 12.5–13, the Wilderness Period, and Israel's Discipline." *New Testament Studies* 55 (2009): 366–79.
- "4Q372 1 and the Continuation of Joseph's Exile." *Dead Sea Discoveries* 15 (2008): 380–95.
- "Hebrews and the End of the Exodus." *Novum Testamentum* 49 (2007): 353–69.
- "The Form and Function of the Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:1–43)." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 123 (2004): 1–23.

## NON-REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

- “The Letter to the Hebrews and the Jewish Law.” Forthcoming in *So Great A Salvation: A Dialogue on the Atonement in Hebrews*. Edited by Jon C. Laansma, George H. Guthrie, and Cynthia Westfall. Library of New Testament Studies. London: T&T Clark, forthcoming, 2018.
- “Circumcision,” “Conversion and Proselytism,” “Joseph, Apocryphon of (4Q371–373),” and “Wilderness” for *T&T Clark Companion to Second Temple Judaism*. 2 vols. Edited by Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Daniel M. Gurtner. London: T&T Clark, forthcoming, 2017.
- “Gentiles as Impure Animals in the Writings of Early Christ Followers” for *Perceiving the Other in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*. Edited with Michal Bar-Asher Siegal and Wolfgang Grünstäudl. WUNT Series 1. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming, 2017.
- “Paul’s Interlocutor in Romans: The Problem of Identification” (co-authored with Runar Thorsteinsson and Rafael Rodríguez). Pages 1–38 in *The So-Called Jew in Paul’s Letter to the Romans*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016.
- “Paul’s So-Called Jew and Lawless Lawkeeping.” Pages 59–83 in *The So-Called Jew in Paul’s Letter to the Romans*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016.
- “Barsabbas, Joseph,” and “Barsabbas, Judas.” Pages 553–54 in Volume Three of *The Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*. Edited by Hans-Josef Klauck et al. 30 vols. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2011.

## WORKS IN PROGRESS

- a monograph reexamining the Synoptic Gospels’ portrayals of Jesus’s interactions with ritual impurities
- a review essay of Joshua W. Jipp, *Christ is King: Paul’s Royal Ideology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015) for Syndicate, an online forum
- a response essay to three reviews of my monograph, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*

## REVIEWS

- Nina L. Collins, *Jesus, the Sabbath and the Jewish Debate: Healing on the Sabbath in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Centuries CE* (London: T&T Clark, 2014), reviewed for *Review of Biblical Literature* (July 2016): 1–7.
- Teresa Morgan, *Roman Faith and Christian Faith: Pistis and Fides in the Early Roman Empire and Early Churches* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), reviewed for *Religious Studies Review* 42.1 (2016): 49–50.
- Jon Levenson, *Inheriting Abraham: The Legacy of the Patriarch in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), reviewed for *Anabaptist Witness* 2 (2015): 174–76.

- Christian Frevel and Christophe Nihan, eds., *Purity and the Forming of Religious Traditions in the Ancient Mediterranean World and Ancient Judaism* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), reviewed for *Reviews of the Enoch Seminar*, August 2014.
- James G. Crossley, *Jesus in an Age of Neoliberalism: Quests, Scholarship and Ideology* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2012), reviewed for *Political Theology* 15.2 (2014): 214–16.
- Michael E. Stone, *Ancient Judaism: New Visions and Views* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), reviewed for *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 75.2 (2013): 376–78.
- M. David Litwa, *We Are Being Transformed: Deification in Paul's Soteriology* (BZNW 187; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), reviewed for *Religious Studies Review* 39.2 (2013): 112.
- Steve Walton, Thomas E. Phillips, Lloyd Keith Pietersen, and F. Scott Spencer, eds., *Reading Acts Today: Essays in Honour of Loveday C. A. Alexander* (LNTS 427; T&T Clark, 2011), reviewed for *Religious Studies Review* 38.4 (2012): 239.
- T. Ryan Jackson, *New Creation in Paul's Letters: A Study of the Historical and Social Setting of a Pauline Concept* (WUNT 2/272; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), reviewed for *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 74 (2012): 603–4.
- Terence L. Donaldson, *Jews and Anti-Judaism in the New Testament: Decision Points and Divergent Interpretations* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), reviewed for *Touchstone* 30.1 (2012): 65–67.
- Thomas E. Phillips, *Acts in Diverse Frames of Reference* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2010), reviewed for *Religious Studies Review* 37.3 (2011): 213.
- Nina E. Livesey, *Circumcision as a Malleable Symbol* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), reviewed for *Review of Biblical Literature* (September 2011): 1–4.
- Tatha Wiley, *Encountering Paul: Understanding the Man and His Message* (Sheed & Ward Books, 2010), reviewed for *Touchstone* 29.2 (2011): 59–60.

## ACADEMIC HONORS AND AWARDS

- **Manfred Lautenschlaeger Symposium Grant**, 2014 (15,000€)
- **Manfred Lautenschlaeger Award for Theological Promise 2014** (\$10,000)
- **Society of Biblical Literature**: 2014 Regional Scholar (\$1000)
- **Central States Society of Biblical Literature**: 2013 Regional Scholar Nominee (\$150)
- **Saint Louis University**: Mellon Faculty Development Grant (\$2500)
- **Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada**: SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellowship (\$67,000), Centre for the Study of Religion, University of Toronto (2011-2012; Supervisor: Terence L. Donaldson)
- **Duke University**: Graduate School Scholarship (2005-2010); James B. Duke Fellowship (2005-2010); Graduate School Travel Grant Fellowship (2008, 2009); and Graduate School Summer Research Grant (2009)

- **University of Oxford:** Entrance Scholarship (2003); Graduated with Distinction (2004); and OCHJS Dissertation Prize (2004)
- **Trinity Western University:** Honours Standing (2001-3); TWU Academic Scholarship (2001-3); Biblical Studies Award (2003); and Governor General's Gold Medal Award (2003)
- **Tyndale College:** Honours Standing (1999-2001); McCready Award for Excellence (2000); and Valedictorian Address (2001)

## SCHOLARLY AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Member of the editorial board, *Journal of Biblical Literature* (Society of Biblical Literature: Atlanta), 2016–
- Co-organizer with Michal Bar-Asher Siegal (Ben Gurion University) and Wolfgang Grünstäudl (University of Wuppertal) of the Manfred Lautenschlaeger Colloquium entitled *Perceiving the Other: Ancient and Modern Interactions with Outsiders*, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, March 14–16, 2016
- Manuscript reviewer for T&T Clark, Cascade Books, McGill University Press, and Equinox Publishing
- Article referee for *Journal of the Jesus Movement in its Jewish Setting*, *Irish Biblical Studies*, and *Neotestamentica*

## ACADEMIC CONFERENCES AND COLLOQUIA PRESENTATIONS

- Invited paper analyzing the contribution of E. P. Sanders's *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* on its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the Pauline Epistles section of the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, November, 2017.
- Invited paper entitled, "Remapping Paul within Jewish Ideologies of Inclusion," for the Paul within Judaism section of the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, November, 2017.
- "The Legislation of Leviticus 12 in Light of Ancient Embryology," for the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies, Toronto, ON, May 29, 2017.
- Invited paper entitled "The Eschatological Inclusion of the Gentiles in the *Animal Apocalypse* and the Apostle Paul," for The Scrollery, University of Toronto, April 6, 2017.
- Invited Response to a paper on 2 Corinthians by William Campbell for the Paul within Judaism Section of the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX, November 20, 2016.
- Invited Response to panel review of *Paul and the Gentile Problem* for the Pauline Epistles Section of the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX, November 19, 2016.
- "Paul, the *Animal Apocalypse*, and Abraham's Gentile Seed." Invited paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for New Testament Studies, Montreal, QC, August 5, 2016.

- “The Jewish Paul’s Construction of Gentiles in the Letter to the Ephesians.” Invited paper presented at “The Early Reception of Paul the Second Temple Jew,” The Enoch Seminar, Waldensian School of Theology, Rome, Italy, June 26–30, 2016. (presented in absentia)
- “Jesus and Ritual Impurity: The Case of *Lepra* (Mark 1:40–45).” Invited paper presented at the University of Oklahoma-Norman, Tuesday, April 18, 2016.
- “Indices of Ethnicity in Modern Constructions of ‘Luke’.” Invited paper for a panel discussion of race and ethnicity in Luke and Acts for the Luke and Acts sections of the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA, November 22, 2015.
- “Christ Was the Rock.” Invited paper presented at the SBL Awards Ceremony of the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, November 21, 2014.
- “Christ—the Seed of Abraham.” Paper presented to the Pauline Epistles section of the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, November 22, 2014.
- “Paul, Abraham, and the Promise of the *Pneuma*.” Invited paper presented at the award ceremony for the Manfred Lautenschlaeger Award for Theological Promise 2014, May 24, 2014.
- “Reading Mark 10:42-45 in Rome.” Paper presented to the New Testament section of the Central States Society of Biblical Literature Regional Meeting, St. Louis, MO, March 17, 2014.
- “‘So Shall Your Seed Be’: Early Jewish and Christian Interpretation of the Pentateuchal Promises of Star-like Seed.” Paper presented to the Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity section of the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD, November 25, 2013.
- “The Fluidity of Christ’s Body: 1 Cor. 10.4 in Light of Benjamin Sommer’s *The Bodies of God*.” Paper presented to the New Testament section of the Central States Society of Biblical Literature Regional Meeting, March 17, 2013.
- Respondent in a panel discussion of Michael Legaspi’s *The Death of Scripture and the Rise of Biblical Studies*, Saint Louis University, October 1, 2012.
- “Romans 2:17 and the Identity of the So-Called *Ioudaios*.” Paper presented to the Pauline Epistles section of the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA, November 21, 2011.
- “Two Methods of Giving Birth: Paul’s Interpretation of Genesis 16-21.” Paper presented to the New Testament section of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies Annual Meeting, Fredericton, NB, May 31, 2011.
- “Reading Paul’s Rereading of Genesis (Galatians 4:21-31).” Paper presented to the Graduate Studies Council Seminar at the University of Saskatchewan, December 2, 2010.
- “Circumcision in the Early Church according to Acts.” Paper presented to the Book of Acts program unit of the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA, November 22, 2010.

- “*Proselutos* in Light of the Translation Techniques of the LXX Translators.” Paper presented to the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies program unit of the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA, November 21, 2010.
- “Abolishers of the Law and the Early Jesus Movement.” Paper presented to the Matthew Section of the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA, November 24, 2009.
- “The Text of Genesis 17:14.” Paper presented to the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Section of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies Annual Meeting, Ottawa, ON, May 24, 2009.
- “Mark 7:15: A Scatological Approach.” Paper presented to the New Testament Section of the Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion/Southeast Regional Meeting of the SBL, Chapel Hill, NC, March 14, 2009.
- “Ill-Timed Excision in Genesis 17.” Paper presented to the New Testament and Early Judaism Colloquium, Duke University, Durham, NC, October 2, 2008.
- “Circumscribing Boundaries in *Jubilees*.” Paper presented to the Second Temple Judaism Section of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies Annual Meeting, Vancouver, BC, June 2, 2008.

## **SUPERVISORSHIPS**

- *Doctoral Supervisor*
  - John VanMaaren, in progress (co-supervisor with Anders Runesson)
  - Katharine Fitzgerald, in progress
- *Doctoral Supervisory Committee*
  - Michael Johnson, in progress
  - Rahim Samnani, in progress
- *MA Supervisory Committee*
  - Simon Zeldin, in progress
  - Hilla Lahtinen (matriculated 2016)
  - Alexander Chaffey (matriculated 2016)
  - Abraham Thomas (matriculated 2016)

## **RESEARCH FUNDING**

- Conference Grant, Arts Research Board, McMaster University, \$1900

## **COURSES TAUGHT**

- *Undergraduate*
  - Introduction to the New Testament
  - The Jewish World at the Time of the New Testament
  - Introduction to Religious Studies
  - The Apostle Paul
- *Graduate*

- Introduction to New Testament Greek
- Readings in Biblical Hebrew
- Jewish and Christian Interpretation of Scriptures
- Pauline Theology
- Paul: Apostle to the Pagans
- Galatians
- Gospel of Matthew
- Gospel of Mark
- Biblical Theology
- Agrarianism and the Bible
- The Gift in Early Judaism and Christianity

### **LANGUAGES STUDIED**

- Hellenistic Greek
- Biblical, Qumranic, and Rabbinic Hebrew
- Aramaic
- Syriac
- German
- French

### **ACADEMIC SERVICE**

- **McMaster University**
  - Undergraduate Affairs Committee (2016–)
  - Jewish Studies Committee (2016–)
  - Early Judaism/New Testament Search Committee (2016–)
- **Saint Louis University**
  - Ph.D. committee member (2015–2016)
  - Invited Lectures Committee (2014–2016)
  - Mellon Committee for Faculty Development (2014–2015)
  - M.A. in Theological Studies Committee member (2012–2015)
  - Danforth Chair in Theology Search Committee member (2013–2014)
- **Saskatoon Theological Union**
  - Convener of the Martin Memorial Lectures, November 1-3, 2011
  - STU Website Taskforce (2011)
  - Biblical Studies Committee Member (2010–2012)

### **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

- Society of Biblical Literature
- Canadian Society of Biblical Studies/Société canadienne des Études bibliques