

JOHN WILLIS WARD, LCSW-S, M.DIV., Ph.D. Candidate

he/him/his

Diana R. Garland School of Social Work at Baylor University

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EDUCATION

Anticipated August 2025	Baylor University Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work Dissertation: LGBTQ Young People, Religion, and Spirituality: An Exploration of Risks and Benefits Chair: Gaynor Yancey, DSW
May 2016	Baylor University Master of Social Work
May 2016	Baylor University Master of Divinity
May 2012	Williams Baptist College (now University) Bachelor of Arts, Christian Ministries

RESEARCH INTERESTS

LGBTQ religion and spirituality; LGBTQ mental health; congregations as social change agents; play therapy; play as an expression of spirituality; school social work; qualitative methods; mixed methods; ministry with children and youth

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

1. Timbers, V., **Ward, W.**, & Ballard, S. (In Press). Grassroots activism impacting rural LGBTQIA+ communities: Implications for social work. *Advances in Social Work*.
2. **Ward, J. W.** & Gregory Jones, J. (2022). A congregational social worker's role in benevolence ministry: A case study of five models. *Social Work and Christianity*, 49(3), 270–280. <https://doi.org/10.34043/swc.v49i3.298>

MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

1. **Ward, J. W.** Minority stress theory and potential applications to spirituality in LGBTQ people. *Social Work and Christianity*.

2. Deal, H., & **Ward, J. W.** “The impact of clergy seminary or theological degree on congregational social and political action.” *Journal of Research in Christian Education*.
3. **Ward, J.W.**, “Social work is not a politically neutral profession: An ethical guide to bridging the political divide in the social work classroom.” *Journal of Social Work Education*.

MANUSCRIPTS IN PROGRESS (ANALYSES COMPLETED)

1. Invited Book Chapter: Drumm, R. and **Ward, J. W.** “An ethical guide to working with LGBTQ folks for Christian social workers.” *Christianity and Social Work Reader*. Edited by T. Laine Scales and Regina Chow Trammell. NACSW Press.
2. **Ward, J. W.** “Can’t she just get Medicaid?” A community-based participatory action research project with cancer patients who are under or uninsured.
3. McMullen, E*. & **Ward, J. W.** “An accompaniment model case study of one congregation’s benevolence ministry.”
4. **Ward, J. W.** “Christian social work is queer: What queer theology can contribute to the faith of Christian social workers.”
5. Invited book proposal: **Ward, J.W.**, Deal, H. *Culture wars in the social work classroom and beyond: How should social work educators respond?* NASW Press.

* Indicates M.Div/MSW student mentee

OPINION EDITORIALS

1. **Ward, W.** (2019, May 28). “In defense of prayer at Baylor University.” *Waco Tribune Herald*. https://wacotrib.com/opinion/columns/guest_columns/will-ward-guest-columnist-in-defense-of-prayer-at-baylor-university/article_273cbb99-de43-5b65-a228-ba084c309ff0.html

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

1. **Ward, J. W.**, & Deal, H. (2023). “Culture wars in social work classrooms and beyond: How should social work educators respond?” Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting.
2. **Ward, J. W.**, Goertzen, G.*, & McMullen, E.* (2023). “Congregational social work internships: A panel of three past interns.” North American Association of Christians in Social Work Convention.

3. Bond, A., Deal, H., & **Ward, J. W.** (2023). "Promoting sustainability in social work: Perspectives of dual educators/students." North American Association of Christians in Social Work Convention.
4. **Ward, J. W.**, & Deal, H. (2023). "Minority stress theory and applications to spirituality in LGBTQ people." North American Association of Christians in Social Work Convention.
5. Jones, E., Pedrotti, S., Frias, C., & **Ward, J. W.** (2022). Grassroots organizing techniques to increase family engagement in schools. National Community Schools and Family Engagement Conference.
6. **Ward, J. W.** & Cole, C. (2017). Holding space together: Strategies for helping your school embrace a diverse world. Texas School Social Work Conference.
7. **Ward, J. W.** & Cole, C. (2016). Holding space together: Strategies for helping your church embrace a diverse world. Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Annual Meeting.

* Indicates M.Div./MSW student mentee

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Summer 2022

LGBTQ History Project

Baylor Institute of Oral History

Advisors: Dr. Coretta Pittman and Ami Oliver

- Analyzed oral history interviews with LGBTQ alumni of Baylor University
- Conducted archival research to gain background information on participants in the research study as well as the historical context for the study

Fall 2021

Solid Gold Neighbor Research Fellow

Baylor University Office of External Affairs

Advisor: Dr. Gaynor Yancey, DSW

- Designed a qualitative research study using a community-based participatory action research model
- Conducted qualitative interviews with participants in the study.
- Transcribed and completed a qualitative thematic analysis of interviews
- Reported the findings to the board of community partner

Spring 2014 -
Spring 2016

Graduate Assistant

Baylor University Center for Family and Community Ministry

Advisors: Dr. Diana Garland, Samantha Oakley

- Provided copy editing and formatting support to the *Journal of Family and Community Ministry*

- Served as administrative support to the journal editorial board
- Conducted literature reviews for research as well as solicitation of authors

TEACHING INTERESTS

Social policy, clinical practice with children and families, human behavior and the social environment, clinical methods, field seminar

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Spring 2024	Adjunct Instructor[^] Foundation Seminar II (MSW) <i>Garland School of Social Work at Baylor University</i>
Fall 2023	Adjunct Instructor[^] Foundation Internship Seminar I (MSW) <i>Garland School of Social Work at Baylor University</i>
Summer 2023	Adjunct Instructor* Capstone Seminar (MSW) <i>Garland School of Social Work at Baylor University</i>
Spring 2023	Adjunct Instructor* Foundation Field Seminar II (MSW) <i>Garland School of Social Work at Baylor University</i>
Fall 2022	Adjunct Instructor* Foundation Field Seminar I (MSW) <i>Garland School of Social Work at Baylor University</i>
Summer 2022	Adjunct Instructor* Foundation Field Seminar II (MSW) <i>Garland School of Social Work at Baylor University</i>
	Adjunct Instructor* Capstone Seminar (MSW) <i>Garland School of Social Work at Baylor University</i>
Spring 2022	Adjunct Instructor* Foundation Field Seminar I (MSW) <i>Garland School of Social Work at Baylor University</i>
Fall 2021	Adjunct Instructor* Foundation Field Seminar I (MSW)

Garland School of Social Work at Baylor University

*indicates an online course

^ indicates in-person course

GUEST LECTURES

1. **Ward, J. W.** (2024, January). "Trauma, loss, and mourning in children and adolescents." Trauma, Loss, and Mourning. (Graduate and Undergraduate). Baylor University; Waco, TX.
2. **Ward, J. W.** (2024, January). "School social work." Introduction to Social Work. (Undergraduate). Texas Christian University; Fort Worth, TX.
3. **Ward, J. W.** (2023, December). "Cognitive behavioral therapy with children and adolescents." BEAR Project. Baylor University; Waco, TX
4. **Ward, J. W.** (2023, October). "School social work." Practice and Advocacy with Children and Families (graduate, advanced practice). Baylor University; Waco, TX.
5. **Ward, J. W.** (2023, October.) "Using play in generalist practice." Social Work Practice with Individuals and Families. (graduate, generalist practice). Baylor University; Waco, TX
6. Chapman, S. L. & **Ward, J. W.** (2023, April). "School social work." Introduction to Social Work (undergraduate). Texas Christian University; Fort Worth, TX.
7. **Ward, J. W.** (2023, February). "Grief and Loss in Children." Trauma, Loss, and Mourning (graduate and undergraduate). Baylor University; Waco, TX.
8. Chapman, S. L. & **Ward, J. W.** (2022, November). "School social work." Introduction to Social Work (undergraduate). Texas Christian University; Fort Worth, TX.
9. Chapman, S. L. & **Ward, J. W.** (2022, May). "School social work." Introduction to Social Work (undergraduate). Texas Christian University; Fort Worth, TX.
10. **Ward, J. W.** (2021, June). "School social work." Children and Families (graduate). Baylor University; Waco, TX.
11. **Ward, J. W.**, Abbe, H., & Dunn, S. (2017, September). "School social worker panel." School Social Work (graduate and undergraduate); Baylor University; Waco, TX.
12. **Ward, J. W.** & Cole, C. A. (2016, July). "Cultural Awareness, Competence, and Humility." Advanced Practice Readiness (graduate); Baylor University; Waco, TX.
13. **Ward, J. W.** & Cole, C. A. (2016, June). "Diversity Practice in Public Schools." Social

Policy and the Religious Sector (doctoral). Baylor University; Waco, TX.

14. **Ward, J. W. & Cole, C. A.** (2016, March). "Cultural Awareness, Competence, and Humility." *Social Policy for Social Work Practice* (graduate); Baylor University Waco, TX.

15. **Ward, J. W. & Cole, C. A.** (2016, February). "Cultural Awareness, Competence, and Humility." *Social Work Practice with Communities and Organizations* (undergraduate); Baylor University; Waco, TX.

AWARDS AND FUNDING

**Dan E. Homeyer Play Therapy
Research Award**

Texas Association of Play Therapy
March 2024
Award: \$1,000

Recognition for Excellence in Teaching

Baylor Graduate School
Fall 2023

Solid Gold Neighbor Fellow

Baylor Office of External Affairs
Fall 2021
Award: \$5,000

Field Intern of the Year

Garland School of Social Work
Baylor University
May 2016

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Fall 2014

Member, Faculty Search Committee - Tenure and Non-Tenure Track Position
Diana R. Garland School of Social Work, Baylor University

Fall 2015

Dean Search Student Interview Panel
Diana R. Garland School of Social Work, Baylor University

Fall 2023

Fuller Family Endowed Chair in Social Justice
Student Interview Panel
Diana R. Garland School of Social Work, Baylor University

SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE EXPERIENCE

May 2022 -
Present

Clinical School Social Worker

Transformation Waco: An In-District Partnership with Waco ISD

- Provide individual and group psychotherapy to students in grades Pre-K to 5th.
- Develop treatment plans for counseling clients
- Provide support to families, teachers, and school administrators on mental and behavioral health
- Supervise 2-3 Baylor social work interns
- Provide training to MSW graduates serving in schools on licensure exam preparation

October 2019 -
May 2022

Family Support Specialist

Transformation Waco: An In-District Partnership with Waco ISD

Alta Vista Elementary School

- Worked with families to meet their external needs by connecting them to resources, creating relationships, soliciting parent feedback, going on home visits, and establishing effective communication in order to ensure their child's educational success.
- Planned and implemented family engagement events and family support workshops to meet the expressed needs and capitalize on the strengths of the student's families.
- Coordinated with external partners to engage families in meaningful and helpful ways.

August 2018-
October 2019

Medical Social Worker and Palliative Coordinator

Community Healthcare of Texas/Providence Hospice

- Provided therapeutic/emotional support, education, and resource information to patients and their families.
- Advocated for patients' needs/wishes with team members, family members, caregivers, and other providers.
- Assessed the psychosocial needs of patients and family members
- Provided therapeutic counseling and emotional support to patients and family members and education on end-of-life issues
- Served as the lead social worker on all pediatric hospice cases

August 2016-
May 2018

Behavior Specialist/Social Worker

Midway ISD

Hewitt Elementary School

- Conducted therapeutic groups and individual counseling sessions to enhance the social development of students and provide peer support in navigating crises, resolving conflict, improving attendance, decision-making skills, and other skills essential to school success.

- Provided behavioral support and counseling to students, parents, and school staff.
- Developed and conducted parent training and therapeutic support groups.

August 2015-
May 2016

**MSW Advanced Practice Intern
Midway ISD**

- Offered Case management and basic counseling with students grades 5-12 in Discipline Alternative Education Program (DAEP)
- Served alongside crisis team in responding to student needs; including but not limited to drug and alcohol use, pregnancy, suicidal ideation, medical needs, abuse, neglect, and sexual assault.
- Facilitated a research study on diversity training and awareness for teachers in the district
- Developed and compiled a community resource manual

August 2014-
May 2015

**MSW Generalist Practice Intern
Calvary Baptist Church**

- Managed West Avenue Elementary Reading Buddies program
- Conducted individual assessment for benevolence needs
- Provided case management for ongoing community relationships
- Served as the leader of the Benevolence team
- Facilitated educational groups with staff, deacons, and other church members in community ministry

CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRY EXPERIENCE

Lay Leadership, Calvary Baptist Church (2012 - Present)

- Youth committee member and chair (2018-2019)
- Samaritan's Fund Member (2014 - Present)
- Mission's Committee Member (2014 - Present)
- Children's Committee Chair (2022 - 2023)
- Field Instructor for Social Work Practicum Students (2019 - Present)
- Deacon (2017 - 2020)
- Member, Pastor Search Committee calling Rev. Hannah Coe, (2020 - 2021)
- Youth Sunday School Teacher (2016 - Present)

Church Social Worker/Samaritan's Fund Case Manager, Calvary Baptist Church (2019 - 2020)

- Provided case management services to community members seeking crisis funding from the Samaritan's Fund
- Advised pastoral staff on social services, mental health, and community engagement
- Authored Samaritan's Fund Policy and Procedure Manual

Minister to Children and Families, Calvary Baptist Church Waco, TX (2014-2016)

- Led and planned programming on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings, as well as special events
- Coordinated volunteers including Sunday school teachers and paid staff including the Children’s Choir Coordinator and Pre-School Coordinator
- Participated in worship planning and leadership
- Planned, recruited volunteers, and orchestrated Vacation Bible School

Minister to Children, First Baptist Church, Walnut Ridge, AR (2010-2012)

- Developed a family ministry-based model for Wednesday nights, including writing curriculum, planning small groups, and leading recreation activities.
- Led in worship including children’s messages, occasional preaching, and prayer
- Coordinated volunteers including Sunday school teachers and Wednesday night small group leaders
- Provided pastoral care to children and their families and other church members as assigned by the pastor.

CERTIFICATION, PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE, AND ORDINATION

October 2023	Board Approved Clinical Supervisor Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners
March 2023	Safe and Sound Protocol Certified Provider Unyte-ILS
March 2023	AutPlay Therapy Certified Provider AutPlay Therapy
January 2023	TF-CBT Certification Medical University of South Carolina
November 2022	Texas CANS Child Welfare Assessor PRAED Foundation
September 2021	Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners
May 2019	Certificate in Spiritual Direction George W. Truett Theological Seminary; Baylor, University
May 2016	Ordination to the Gospel Ministry Calvary Baptist Church; Waco, TX
May 2012	Licensed to Gospel Ministry First Baptist Church; Walnut Ridge, AR

