

JOHN E. CARTER

Wake Forest University
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EDUCATION

- Boston College**, Chestnut Hill, Mass. 2015–2022
Ph.D. in theology (area: theological ethics)
• Graduate Fellow, Clough Center for the Study of Constitutional Democracy
• Certificate in Human Rights and International Justice, Center for Human Rights and International Justice
• Certificate in College Teaching, Center for Teaching Excellence

Dissertation:
“The Communitarian Conscience: A Theological Response to the Legal Debates about Religious Freedom”
Director: Cathleen Kaveny
Committee: Lisa Cahill and James Keenan, S.J.
- Boston College**, Chestnut Hill, Mass. 2014–2015
Th.M. in moral theology
- Wake Forest University**, Winston-Salem, N.C. 2007–2010
M.Div.
• Wait Fellow
- Duke University**, Durham, N.C. 1993–1996
J.D.
• Death Penalty Clinic
- Samford University**, Birmingham, Ala. 1989–1993
B.A., *cum laude*, English major, biology minor
• Omicron Delta Kappa

PUBLICATIONS

Expanding the Conscience of RFRA (under submission).

Lot's Daughters and Naomi and Ruth: Of “Moral Love” and National Myths, 52 J. RELIGIOUS ETHICS 50 (2024) (peer-reviewed).

Natural Law's Return: Uncovering the Roots of Intractability on Gun Laws as a Prelude to New Growth, 12 J. MORAL THEOLOGY 33 (2023) (peer-reviewed).

Reconsidering the Relationship Between Vitoria and Grotius's Contributions to the International Law and Natural Law Traditions, 49 J. RELIGIOUS ETHICS 159 (2021) (peer-reviewed).

Treading Water at the Cliff's Edge: The Dilemma Posed by Federal Money for Southern Baptist Colleges and Universities, 1958-1969 45 PERSP. RELIGIOUS STUD. 277 (2018) (peer-reviewed).

Whose Conscience? Which Religious Liberty? Rhetoric of Conscience and the Unfinished Baptist Doctrine of Soul Competency, 34 AM. BAPTIST Q. 271 (2015) (peer-reviewed).

ACADEMIC CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“Baptist Contributions to a Communitarian Conscience,” National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion (NABPR) Annual Meeting, Gardner-Webb University, Boiling Springs, N.C., May 2023.

“The Future of Church-State Relations: Problems and Possibilities,” Ethics and Law Working Group (panel), Society of Christian Ethics Annual Meeting, online, January 2022.

“Lot’s Daughters, Ruth and Naomi, and the ‘1619 Project’: Lessons for Contemporary Reparations Discourse,” Society of Christian Ethics Annual Meeting, online, January 2021.

“Perspectives on the Communitarian Conscience” (poster), A Critical Time for Bridge-Building: Catholic Theological Ethics Today, Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church (CTEWC), Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, July 2018.

“Separation of Church and State: A Renewed Case for an Historic Baptist Witness,” Theologians Conference, in conjunction with the American Baptist Churches-USA Biennial Mission Summit, Portland, Ore., June 2017.

“Distinct Bases, Crossing Paths: Rights of Internal and External Dissent in the Baptist and Catholic Traditions,” College Theology Society Annual Conference, in conjunction with National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion (NABPR) Region-at-Large, Salve Regina University, Newport, R.I., June 2017.

“Finding a Basis for ‘Burden Sharing’ in a Communitarian Conception of Human Rights,” Public Theology and the Global Common Good: The Contribution of David Hollenbach, S.J., Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Mass., October 2016.

“Commitmentarian Biblical Ethics: A Legal Text-Based Approach,” Biblical Ethics in the 21st Century, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wis., April 2016.

“The Rise and Fall of Kentucky Southern College: A Case Study,” Baptist History and Heritage Society Annual Conference, Georgetown College, Georgetown, Ky., June 2010.

TEACHING POSITIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, N.C.

2023–

Visiting Assistant Professor of Law at the School of Law and in the Program for Leadership and Character, and Visiting Assistant Professor of Religion, Law, and Public Life at the School of Divinity

Co-faculty director, Pro Bono Program (2023–2024)

Graduate courses taught:

- Christianity and Public Policy (Divinity School: spring 2025)
- Insurance Law (Law School: spring 2025)
- Conscience, Religious Freedom, and the Law (Law/Divinity: fall 2024)
- Conscience, Religious Freedom, and the Law (new course, Law/Divinity: spring 2024)
- Christian Theology (Divinity School: spring 2024)

Service:

- S.J.D. Committee, Abrar Alahmari (Law School: spring 2024)
- Third-year Project Advisor, Lucy Hirschenberger (Divinity School: fall 2024 – spring 2025)

Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Mass.

2016–2022

Teaching Fellow, Department of Theology (2019–2022)

Undergraduate course taught:

- God, Self, and Society (5 sections over 3 years)

Undergraduate courses served as teaching assistant:

- Perspectives on Western Culture I & II
- Biblical Heritage I & II

LEGAL EMPLOYMENT

Farrar & Bates, LLP, Nashville, Tenn.

February 2012 – August 2014

Staff Attorney

- Litigated in state and federal courts. Practice focused on defending municipalities across Tennessee, especially constitutional cases brought under 42 U.S.C. § 1983.

Carter Law Firm, PLLC, Owenton, Ky.

February 2002 – June 2007

Co-Managing Partner

- General practice, focused on estate planning and probate, civil litigation, and agricultural and residential real estate document drafting and closings.

Owen County Attorney's Office, Owenton, Ky.

February 2002 – June 2007

Assistant County Attorney (part-time)

- Assisted in prosecuting criminal cases in District Court (including juvenile court and family court) and advising the Owen County Fiscal Court.

Contract Attorney, Nashville, Tenn.

November 2000 – January 2002

- Conducted research and drafted briefs related to constitutional cases brought under 42 U.S.C. § 1983.

Farrar & Bates, LLP, Nashville, Tenn.

August 1997 – October 2000

Non-equity partner

- Litigated in state and federal courts. Practice focused on defending municipalities across Tennessee, especially constitutional cases brought under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, and defending real estate brokers and agents in cases covered by errors and omissions liability insurance.

Johnson, Judy, True & Guarnieri, LLP, Frankfort, Ky.

Summers 1994, 1995

Law Clerk

- High-profile litigation firm, handling both criminal defense and civil cases.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT

- Common Praxis, LLC,** September 2011 – March 2013
Consultant (part-time remote)
- Assisted in developing a legal consulting business to advise churches interested in community development strategies.
- Cone Health,** Greensboro, N.C. November 2010 – August 2011
Chaplain Resident
- Provided chaplaincy care at primary health care center for small mid-size city.
- Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty,** Washington, D.C. September 2008 – December 2008
Moyers Scholar
- Conducted research for advocacy organization which works for separation of church and state.
- Wake Forest Health,** Winston-Salem, N.C. June 2008 – August 2008
Chaplain Intern
- Provided chaplaincy care at primary health care center for small mid-size city.

BAR ADMISSIONS and PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

State bar admissions: Kentucky and Tennessee, 1996.

Federal bar admissions: United States Supreme Court, April 2000; Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals; Eastern and Western District Courts of Kentucky, and Eastern, Middle, and Western District Courts of Tennessee.

Clinical Pastoral Education, 4 units total, received at Cone Health, Greensboro, N.C. (2010 – 2011) and Wake Forest Health, Winston-Salem, N.C. (2008).

Ordained Baptist minister, Crescent Hill Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky., June 2010, recognized by American Baptist Churches USA and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

LANGUAGES

Biblical Hebrew (intermediate reading), Biblical Greek (beginning reading), French (research reading), German (research reading)

MEMBERSHIPS

Kentucky Bar Association

Society of Christian Ethics

National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion

Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church