

**The Reverend Samuel Cruz, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor of Religion & Society, Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York  
Senior Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church (Sunset Park, Brooklyn)  
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**EDUCATION**

2002 Ph.D., Drew University, Madison, New Jersey  
Dissertation: "African Influences in Puerto Rican Pentecostalism"  
1999 M. Phil., Drew University, Madison, New Jersey  
1994 M.A., New Brunswick Theological Seminary, New Brunswick, New Jersey  
1987 B.A., College of New Rochelle, New Rochelle, New York

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

2008 - Present Associate Professor of Religion & Society, Union Theological Seminary, New York, New York  
Summer 2013 Professor, Hispanic Summer Program- Union Theological Seminary, New York, New York  
2003 - 2007 Lecturer, Latino & Hispanic Caribbean Studies Department- Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey  
1999 - 2005 Adjunct Assistant Professor: Doctor of Ministry Program - Drew University, Madison, New Jersey  
1999 - 2003 Lecturer, Graduate School of Social Work- Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey

**MINISTRY EXPERIENCE**

2004 - Present Senior Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Brooklyn, New York  
2000 - 2003 Associate Minister, Fort Washington Collegiate Church, New York, New York  
2001 - 2003 Minister of Hispanic Ministries, Fort Washington Collegiate Church, New York, New York  
1991 - 1994 National Minister of Social Ministries, Asociación Iglesia Cristiana Nuevo Nacimiento, Newark, New Jersey  
1988 - 1990 Associate Pastor, Suydam Street Reformed Church, New Brunswick, New Jersey

**CREDENTIALS**

- Interfaith Counseling
- Rostered Pastor, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, December 14, 1994; current residency in New York district
- Ordained Minister, Reformed Church of America

**OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

1999 - 2000 Social Services Consultant, Abbott Early Childhood Education Initiative  
New Brunswick, New Jersey  
1994 - 1996 Senior Consultant and Supervisor of Case Managers, St. Claire's Riverside Medical Center- NJ Self-Help Clearinghouse, Denville, New Jersey  
1989 - 1994 Program Coordinator Housing Program for Mentally Ill Homeless, Community Mental

Health Center at Piscataway- University of Medicine and Dentistry of NJ, Piscataway  
New Jersey

1984 -1989 Senior Staff Associate, Progress Inc., New York, New York

### **LEADERSHIP IN THE ACADEMY AND CHURCH**

- Mama Leo Latinx Lecture Series, Founder and Director, Union Theological Seminary
- Sunset Park Housing Project, Trinity Lutheran Church
- WBAI Radio, Host, Crossroads - Where Spirit And Activism Meet

### **AFFILIATIONS**

- New Brunswick Theological Seminary Board of Trustees
- WBAI Radio
- Sunset Park Railroad Advisory Board
- Hispanic Summer Program Board of Trustees
- Puerto Rican Studies Association
- American Sociological Association
- American Academy of Religion
- Society for the Scientific Study of Religion

### **AWARDS**

- 1996 - 2001 Recipient of the Robert F. Smith Scholarship, The Caspersen School of Graduate Studies, Drew University
- 1993 Blushke-Beckstead Prize for Excellence in the Field of Pastoral Counseling, New Brunswick Theological Seminary
- 1993 Hageman Scholarship for Academic Excellence, New Brunswick Theological Seminary

### **WORKS AND PRESENTATIONS**

#### Books

Forthcoming: *Contributions and Challenges of Latinx Global Pentecostalism*, Guest Editor, Religions Journal- Special Issue, Fall 2021

*Christianity and Culture in the City: A Postcolonial Approach*, Lanham, Lexington Books, 2012

*Masked Africanisms: Puerto Rican Pentecostalism*, Dubuque, Kendall Hunt Publishing, 2005

#### Chapters in Edited Volumes

*Dictionary of Pan African Pentecostalism* ed. Estremelda Alexander, 2011, Pub. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock.

- “Juan Lugo and the Origins of Pentecostalism in Puerto Rico.”
- “Salomon Feliciano and Francisco Hernandez Pentecostal Missionary from Puerto Rico to the Dominican República.”
- “Introduction to Latin@ Pentecostalism in the U.S.”

“Re-Reading of Puerto Rican Pentecostalism,” In *Nuevas Voces/New Voices: Horizons in U.S. Hispanic/Latina/o Theology*, Pilgrim Press, 2003.

#### Articles

“Commentary on Mark 13:1-8,” Working Preacher, November 18, 2018  
 “Commentary on Mark 12:38-44,” Working Preacher, November 11, 2018  
 “Commentary on John 3:14-21,” Working Preacher, March 11, 2018  
 “Commentary on Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21,” Working Preacher, February 14, 2018  
 “Commentary on John 8:31-36,” Working Preacher, October 29, 2017  
 “Puerto Rico: A Colony in Crisis!,” Union Theological Seminary, October 9, 2017  
 “Commentary on John 20:19-23,” Working Preacher, June 4, 2017  
 “Commentary on John 17:1-11,” Working Preacher, May 28, 2017  
 “Commentary on John 14:15-21,” Working Preacher, May 21, 2017  
 “Preaching In Underwear - The Emperor Has No Clothes: The Case of Political Prisoner Oscar Lopez Rivera,” Huffington Post, December 1, 2016  
 “Bernie Sanders’ Progressive Ideals Must Be Embraced,” Nation of Change, November 16, 2016  
 “Progressive for Whom? A Latino Pastoral Perspective,” Huffington Post, November 04, 2016  
 “Are Progressive/Liberal Theological Institutions Ready for Latina/o Christianity?,” Huffington Post, October 28, 2016  
 “Race and Sexuality: What Do U.S. Latin@ Religious Scholars Say?,” Hispanic Summer Program, April 24, 2015  
 “Comentario del San Mateo 10:24-39,” Working Preacher, June 22, 2014  
 “Comentario del San Mateo 28:16-20,” Working Preacher, June 15, 2014  
 “Comentario del San Juan 20:19-33,” Working Preacher, June 8, 2014  
 “Comentario del San Juan 17:1-11,” Working Preacher, June 1, 2014  
 “A Radical Response to a Reactionary Situation: Jury Nullification, A Campaign!,” National Institute for Latino Policy, October 16, 2011  
 “Racialized Immigration Legislation.” ABC-CLIO, May 2011.  
 “Latino Pentecostalism and the Construction and Maintenance of Identity”, ABC-CLIO, 2010  
 “Good Intentions and the Kidnapping of Haitian Children” in El Diario La Prensa, February 2, 2010.  
 “Dinga y Mandinga en el Pentecostalismo Puertorriqueño.” in the Journal of the Facultades de Ciencias Universidad de Puerto Rico, November 2010.  
 “Scholarly Contributions in the Lutheran Church.” Perspectivas: Hispanic Theological Initiative Occasional Papers Series, Eleventh Issue, Fall 2007.  
 “Movimiento de Santuario Aboga para Justicia” in El Diario La Prensa, June 16, 2007.  
 “A Post-Colonial Reading of Puerto Rican Pentecostalism in the Diaspora,” In Apuntes: Reflexiones teológicas desde el contexto Hispano-Latino, Year 25, NO.4 Winter, 2005.  
 “Charism and Office,” Reformed Review Vol. 56 Spring, No.3 pp. 225-231, 2003.

#### Invited Reviews

“Book Review: Preaching about Racism: A Guide for Faith Leaders by Carolyn B. Helsel,” 2018  
 “Book Review: Idol and Grace: On Traditioning and Subversive Hope by Orlando O. Espin” in Syndicate, June 29, 2016  
 “Book Review: Latino Pentecostals in America: Faith and Politics in Action by Gastón Espinosa” in The Living Pulpit, August 17, 2015  
 “Book Review: Maps for a Fiesta: A Latina/o Perspective on Knowledge and the Global Crisis By Otto Maduro,” 2015  
 “Book Review: Christians at the Border: Immigration, the Church and the Bible by M. Daniel Carroll” in

Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology, Volume 64 Issue 3, SAGE Journals, October 2010

“Essay Review: “Recent publications on religion among Puerto Ricans and in the Caribbean.” in The Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños Journal , Volume XVIII, Number 1 Spring, 2006.

#### Journal Peer-Reviewer

Sociological Study of Religion Journal, Current Peer-Reviewer

Critical Research on Religion Journal, Current Peer-Reviewer

Centro Journal, Current Peer-Reviewer

#### Published Interviews

Refuse Fascism “Rev Dr. Samuel Cruz - Sept 5 Trump-Pence OutNow,” Refuse Fascism Youtube, September 5, 2020

Quigley, F., “Liberation Theology Calls Together The Religious And Political,” Sojourners, April 28, 2020

Dejesus, J. “Residents grill 72nd Precinct top cop on crime in Sunset Park,” The Brooklyn Reporter, February 11, 2020

Adams, R. “Industry City Supporters Face-Off With Activists At Rezoning Hearing,” The Brooklyn Paper, December 10, 2019

Foderaro, L. W., “A Prison Class in African Religion Attracts Students Beyond Its Walls,” The New York Times, Dec. 16, 2016

Union Theological Seminary, “Union Ideas: Without Plants There Can be No Religion,” Union Theological Seminary Youtube, May 2, 2016

Union Theological Seminary, “Union Ideas: Maintaining a Prophetic Voice in the Real World,” Union Theological Seminary Youtube, May 2, 2016

MacMillan, T. “Black Leaders Criticize Pot Policy Change As ‘Sugar Pill’” Wall Street Journal, November 11, 2014

Gonzalez, D. “Accusations of Racism in a Brooklyn Lutheran Community,” The New York Times, March 16, 2014

Molina, A. “Dr. Cornel West Calls for Release of Oscar Lopez Rivera,” The Puerto Rican Cultural Center, February 26, 2014

NotiCel, “Entrevista Dr. Samuel Cruz y Dr. Cornel West NotiCel,” NotiCel Youtube, September 29, 2013

Editorial Staff “Star of Brooklyn: Samuel Cruz, Senior Pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church” The Brooklyn Reporter, August 15, 2012

#### Lectures & Presentations

“Faith-Based Leaders Forum,” Presenter, Dianne Morales for Mayor, March 2021

“United Against Hate: Solidarity Town Hall,” Presenter, Diane Morales for Mayor, February 2021

“Conversations on Culture: Race, Myth, Art = Justice: The Truth Will Not Be Silenced,” Presenter, Creative Justice Initiative (Dr. Marta Moreno Vega), December 2020

“How Do We Move Forward After Election 2020: Caribbean Latinx Perspectives,” Host and Moderator, Union Theological Seminary, November 2020

“End Times: A Conversation with Professors of the Bible,” Presenter, Bishop Talks with Raymond Rivera, November 2020

- “Decolonizing Interfaith Dialogue: Race/Caste - Faith in the time of Social Justice”, Host and Moderator, Union Theological Seminary, October 2020
- “Adios Boricua, Aloha Borinkee: From Puerto Rico to Hawai'i and Back,” Presenter, Puerto Rican Organization for the Performing Arts, October 2020
- “Una Nueva Eclesiología: El Regreso del Exilio,” Presenter, Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico, September 2020
- “Clergy on the Frontlines: 2020 Police Brutality Protests” Presenter, WBAIFM 995’s Latin Roots with Felipe Luciano, June 2020
- “Latinx Pastors and People of Faith for Bernie Sanders,” Host and Moderator, Trinity Lutheran Church, March 2020
- “Race, Caste, and Christianity: A Conversation,” Presenter, Rutgers University, CCA, and The Reformed Church Center of NBTS, November 2019
- “Decolonizing Latinx Theology,” Moderator and Host, Union Theological Seminary, October 2019
- “Roundtable Discussion: Spiritism, African Belief Systems, and Interreligious Engagement in Puerto Rico,” Host and Moderator, El Corredor Afro, COPI, Union Theological Seminary, May 2019
- “God Box Talks: Year of Return: Pan-African Interfaith 400 Years Dialogue,” Presenter, The God Box Foundation & Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute, February 2019
- “Black Blood: Death and Mourning in the Black Caribbean,” Host and Moderator, Union Theological Seminary, February 2019
- “Theologizing the Caribbean’s Decolonization,” Host and Moderator, Union Theological Seminary, November 2018
- “Confronting White Supremacy: An Examination Of America’s Unrepentant Sin,” Presenter, Union Theological Seminary, May 2018
- “International Capital, Debt and Puerto Rico Reconstruction,” Host and Moderator, Trinity Lutheran Church, February 2018
- “Grito de Jayuya Commemoration: War Against All Puerto Ricans Book Talk with Nelson Denis,” Host and Moderator, Trinity Lutheran Church, October 2015
- “Stewardship & Climate Change: The Church’s Role with Karenna Gore,” Host and Moderator, Trinity Lutheran Church, May 2014
- “The Colonization of Puerto Rico & The History of African-Americans: Same Struggle, Same Fight and the Imperative to Free Oscar López Rivera with Jose López, Dr. Cornel West, and Dr. Samuel Cruz,” Presenter, WBAI-FM, March 2014
- “Theological Observations on the Social Transformation from the Excluded with Cornel West and Samuel Cruz,” Presenter, Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico, September 2013
- “Dialogue among Excluded Communities: Challenges and Hopes for Social Transformation with Cornel West and Samuel Cruz,” Presenter, University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras, September 2013
- “Roots, Ritual & Rhythm: African Belief Systems in Latin America,” Presenter, Newark Public Library, October 2012

## **COURSES**

Prophetic Pastoral Theology in the City  
 African Religions in the Americas  
 Liberation Theologies and Pentecostalism  
 Methods in the Study of Urban Life and Religion

Methods in the Study of Urban Life and Religion in Puerto Rico  
Contextual Perspectives on Culture and Race  
Christianities in the City  
Latina/o Churches in their Social Context: Methods In Congregational Studies  
Major Theories in the Sociology of Religion: Marx/Engels, Weber, Durkheim & Du Bois  
A Political Reading of the Bible: A View from the Field  
Contemporary Theories of the Sociology of Religion  
Integrative Seminar  
Immigration, Transnationalism, Religion  
The Church in its Social Context  
Oppression and Diversity  
Religion and the Hispanic Community  
African Belief System in the Latino Community  
Urban Religion: Newark, a Cross-Cultural Experience  
Groups at Risk in Contemporary Society  
Caribbean Religions  
Marx, Durkheim, and Weber: Major Thinkers in the Sociology of Religion  
Gay and Lesbian Liberation Theologies  
U.S. Latina/o Pentecostalism  
Introduction to Sociology

#### **TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS**

U.S. Latina/o Cultures, Drew University, Graduate School, Otto Maduro, Professor;  
U.S. Latina/o Religions, Drew University, Graduate School, Otto Maduro, Professor; Contemporary  
Sociological Theories, Drew University, Graduate School, Laurel Kearns, Professor;  
Critical Epistemologies, Drew University, Graduate School, Otto Maduro, Professor; African-Based  
Religions of the Caribbean and Latin America, Drew University, Graduate  
School, Peter Savastano, Professor.

#### **LANGUAGES**

English- Native Speaker  
Spanish - Native Speaker  
Portuguese - Advanced Intermediate proficiency