

SPEAKERS



Amy Fenton Lee

Ms. Lee has written extensively on the subject of special needs inclusion in children's ministry environments and has been published in many in-print publications, journals and on the web. She has written the comprehensive book, *Leading a Special Needs Ministry; A Practical Guide to Including Children and Loving Families*. Diana Garland, former Dean of Baylor University's School of Social Work, reviewed this book saying, "Every congregation of every size should have this resource. They need it because there is no other resource that brings such experience, wisdom, and compassion to the blessings and challenges of welcoming every child and family to be a part of the community of faith." Amy continues to share amazing sources and ideas for churches and volunteers with her blog at www.theinclusivechurch.com. Amy grew up in the church as a "PK" (Preacher's Kid) and has since served as a volunteer leader in virtually every type of children's and preschool ministry environment. Amy graduated from Baylor University and worked as a certified public accountant for a Big Four accounting firm. Ms. Lee has since served as the director of special needs initiatives for ReThink Group (Orange) from 2012 – 2014. She is a gifted speaker and has spoken across the country advocating for special needs ministries, training and teaching. She has directed numerous events to share the knowledge she has gained through research, study and experience. Amy lives in Atlanta with her husband and son.



Stacy Hodge

Stacy Hodge has over 10 years' experience teaching (both in the church and currently as a preschool Deaf Education teacher) and training churches to welcome individuals of all ages and abilities into the Church. Stacy served as Minister to Special Needs at Hunters Glen Baptist Church in Plano for five of those years. In her role with Hunters Glen, Stacy helped the church launch a special needs ministry for all ages that involved ministry through Sunday mornings, Wednesday nights, sibling workshops, parent support groups, and Vacation Bible School. Stacy also developed a "Disciple Now" weekend experience for teens with special needs in addition to teaching a mid-week Bible study for adults with special needs. She has also spent 3 years traveling Texas training churches through the ministry of Joni and Friends Texas. Stacy has lead training events for Orange, the Collin Baptist Association, and has spoken to classes at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, where she received her Master's in Christian Education with a concentration in Student Ministry. Stacy has a degree in Deaf Education with a minor in Sign Language Interpreting from Baylor University Sic 'em Bears!

SPEAKERS



Bill Gaventa

Bill Gaventa is currently the Director of the Summer Institute on Theology and Disability as well as the new Collaborative on Faith and Disability, linking a number of University Centers of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities who are addressing spirituality through initiatives in training, technical assistance, research, and/or dissemination. He was formerly Director of Community and Congregational Supports at the Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities in New Jersey. Bill's primary areas of experience and expertise are spiritual and faith based supports with people with disabilities, training for clergy, seminarians and community services staff, aging and end of life/grief issues in intellectual and developmental disabilities, cultural competence, and community building. He is currently serving as the President of American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities for 2016-2017. As a writer and editor, he has edited newsletters and several book, written articles and chapters, and served as the Editor of the *Journal of Religion, Disability and Health* for 14 years, now as an Associate Editor. Bill and his wife, Beverly Roberts Gaventa, moved in 2013 to Waco, Texas where she serves as Professor of New Testament Interpretation at Baylor University. They have one son, Matthew, daughter in law Sarah, both of whom are clergy in Virginia, and one grandson, Charlie.



Dr. Jason D. Whitt

Dr. Whitt is associate director of the Institute for Faith and Learning and adjunct faculty in Baylor's medical humanities program. Dr. Whitt earned degrees from Baylor University (B.A. and Ph.D.) and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (M.Div.). His research interests are in the areas of theology of disability, ecclesiology, and political theology. His articles have appeared in *Perspectives in Religious Studies*, *Christian Reflection*, *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, *the International Journal of Christianity and Education*, *Review and Expositor*, and *Christian Century*. In his role as associate director of the Institute for Faith and Learning, Dr. Whitt helps coordinate the annual Symposium on Faith and Culture, the Baylor Medical Ethics Banquet, the Bill and Roberta Bailey Family Lecture in Christian Ethics, other invited lectures, as well as programs for faculty and students. He also serves as co-director and sophomore cohort leader for the William Carey Crane Scholars Program. Dr. Whitt is a native of Fort Worth. He and his wife Maggie have two children. He is an ordained Baptist minister, serving as a youth minister and hospice chaplain before coming to Baylor.