

Rev. Megan Visser, Ph.D.

EDUCATION

Ph.D.	Sociology, University of California, San Francisco Dissertation: “‘How Connected is this Heart’: The Religious and Spiritual Experiences of Women of Color with Heart Disease”	June 2022
M.A.	Ethics & Social Theory, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA Thesis: “‘The Story Can Be Told Another Way’: The Contributions of Womanist Ethics to the Principle of Respect for Autonomy in Bioethics”	May 2009
B.A.	Society & Health (Sociology), Simmons University, Boston, MA Thesis: “Kinship, Faith and Empowerment: The Experiences of Community Organizers Working with Central American and Central American (Im)migrant Communities”	May 2006

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

Postdoctoral Fellowship	Children’s Hospital Los Angeles & The Saban Research Institute Mentored Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Integrated Diabetes Management (funded by ADCES Foundation/CBDCE)	2024 - 2027
Fellowship	Children’s Hospital, Los Angeles, CA Department of Spiritual Care	2023 - 2024
Residency	Clinical Pastoral Education, Levels I & II Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Los Angeles, CA Department of Spiritual Care	2022 - 2023
Internship	Clinical Pastoral Education, Level I Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Los Angeles, CA Department of Spiritual Care	2017
Certificate	Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA Women’s Studies in Religion	2011
PhD Student	Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA Ethics and Social Theory	2009-2011

FUNDED RESEARCH

Current

Grant: 1R01DK135000-01 NIDDK

Role: Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Title: Optimizing diabetes technology use for Latinx youth through DREAM (Device use Reimagined through Education And Mentorship) virtual peer groups

Goal: Support healthy coping among adolescents with type 1 diabetes by engaging them and their families in the design, implementation, and evaluation of a virtual peer group intervention.

Grant: Association of Diabetes Care and Education Specialists Mentored Fellowship in Integrated Diabetes Management

Role: Principal Investigator

Dates: 7/2024-09/2026

Title: Spiritual Care FaCtoReD In: Families Coping to Reduce Diabetes Distress Using Religion/Spirituality

Goal: Describe how caregivers of youth of Color with diabetes use religious/spiritual coping to reduce psychological distress and cope with a diabetes diagnosis; and explore the perceptions and preferences for incorporating spiritual care into psychosocial support services for families of youth with diabetes across diabetes treatment settings.

Grant: CHLA New Knowledge and Innovation Grant

Role: Principal Investigator

Dates: 6/2024-6/2026

Title: Spiritual Care FaCtoReD In: Families Coping to Reduce Diabetes Distress Using Religion/Spirituality

Goal: Describe how caregivers of youth of Color with diabetes use religious/spiritual coping to reduce psychological distress and cope with a diabetes diagnosis; and explore the perceptions and preferences for incorporating spiritual care into psychosocial support services for families of youth with diabetes across diabetes treatment settings.

Grant: Association of Clinical Pastoral Education Innovation in Spiritual Care Education & Research Grant

Role: Co-Principal Investigator

Dates: 7/2025-12/2026

Title: Health Equity Education, Practice and Research for Chaplains to Serve Youth with Chronic Illness and Their Families

Goal: Pilot dedicated outpatient chaplaincy in a pediatric diabetes clinic; assess the religious/spiritual care needs of youth with T1D and their families; and examine the availability of chaplain services across US sociodemographic contexts.

Recent

Grant: Aramont Charitable Foundation

Role: Leadership Team

Dates: 7/2024-8/2025

Title: The Pediatric Interprofessional Education Program for Relational and Communication Skills

Goal: Develop and implement a program for the institution-wide approach to interprofessional relational and communication education; enhance the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed for culturally humble, family-centered care for children with medical complexity.

Grant: CHLA Institute for Nursing and Interprofessional Research (INIR) Research Grant

Role: Principal Investigator

Title: The Equity and Pediatric Chaplaincy (EquiP-C) Project

Goal: Understand staff and chaplain experiences with interdisciplinary care near the end of a patient's life in the interdisciplinary team in the pediatric intensive care unit.

PUBLICATIONS

Visser, M, Flores-Garcia J, Barber R, Reid MW, Crossen SS, Wong JC, Torres Sanchez A, Gonzalez F, Lopez SA, Gonzalez Granados M, Raymond JK (2026). Spiritual Care for Latinx Youth with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) and their Caregivers: Qualitative Analysis of Focus Groups. *Diabetology & Metabolic Syndrome*

Visser, M, Leturia, SN, Flores-Garcia J, Sayegh C, Barber R, and Raymond J. (2026). Religious and Spiritual Coping Among Black, Indigenous and People of Color and Latinx Families of Youth With New Onset Diabetes (Abstract). *Diabetes* (Accepted).

de Lucca M, **Visser M**, Andre T, Leturia SN, Nascimento LC, Barber, ROLB. (2025). Mapping Barriers and Interventions to Diabetes Self-Management in Latino Youth: A Scoping Review. *Children*.

Visser, M; Rosselli J Letourneau-Friberg L; Magee M; Rieke J; Allen N; Nassa C; Barber ROLB. (2025). From Educators to Innovators: Part 3: Advancing Diabetes Care Through Research. *ADCES in Practice*.

Rieke J, **Visser M**, Barber R, Rosselli JL, Letourneau-Friberg L, Magee M, Allen N. (2025). From Educators to Innovators: The Case for Diabetes Care and Education Specialists in Clinical Inquiry. *ADCES in Practice*.

de Lucca M, Leturia SN, Andre T, **Visser M**, Nascimento LC, Barber, ROLB. (2025). Mapping Barriers and Interventions to Diabetes Self-Management in Latino Youth: A Scoping Review (Abstract). *Diabetes*.

Figueiredo LL, Alvarenga CS, de Lucca M, **Visser M**, Nascimento LC, Borba RIH, Barber ROLB. (2025). Health Literacy for blood glucose self-monitoring in children with diabetes. *Jornal da Sociedade Brasileira de Enfermeiros Pediatras*.

McCune E, **Visser M**, Bamberger, J. (2022). “Nobody Wants to Talk About It, Especially in This Building”: A Qualitative Study of How People Living in Permanent Supportive Housing Approach End-Of-Life Care. *Journal of Death and Dying*.

McCune E, **Visser M**, Bamberger, J. (2022). “End of Life Care in Permanent Supportive Housing.” Abstracts from the 2022 Annual Meeting of the Society of General Internal Medicine. (2022). *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 37(Suppl 2), 129–664.

Visser M (2022). “How Connected is this Heart?”: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Women of Color with Heart Disease. *ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, ProQuest One Academic* (2678729694).

PRESENTATIONS

Posters

Flores Garcia, J, **Visser M**, Torres Sanchez A, Manzanarez B, Reid MW, Salvy SJ, Ruelas, V and Raymond JK. (2026). 'The Shock of the Year' and Missed Opportunities: Youth/Family Perspectives on Team Clinic and T1D Care. Association of Diabetes Care and Education Specialists Conference, Columbus, Ohio, August 2026 (Accepted).

Visser, M, Leturia, SN, Flores-Garcia J, Sayegh C, Barber R, and Raymond JK. (2026). Religious and Spiritual Coping Among Black, Indigenous and People of Color and Latinx Families of Youth With New Onset Diabetes (Abstract). The Saban Research Institute Science Day, Los Angeles, California, June 2026 (Accepted).

Visser, M, Leturia, SN, Flores-Garcia J, Sayegh C, Barber R, and Raymond JK. (2026). Religious and Spiritual Coping Among Black, Indigenous and People of Color and Latinx Families of Youth With New Onset Diabetes (Abstract). American Diabetes Association Scientific Sessions, New Orleans, Louisiana, June 2026.

Flores Garcia, J, **Visser M**, Torres Sanchez A, Manzanarez B, Reid MW, Salvy SJ, Ruelas, V and Raymond JK. (2026). 'The Shock of the Year' and Missed Opportunities: Youth/Family Perspectives on Team Clinic and T1D Care. American Diabetes Association Scientific Sessions, New Orleans, Louisiana, June 2026.

Visser, M, Flores-Garcia, J, Barber, R, Wong, J, Crossen, S, Weissberg-Benchell, J, Arellano, D, Torres Sanchez, A, Gonzalez, F, Lopez, SA, Gonzales Granados, M, Raymond, JK. Spiritual Resources and Needs of Youth with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) and their Families (Abstract). International Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Diabetes Annual Conference, Montreal, Canada, October 2025.

Visser M, Grefe D, Ju SJ, Brewington-Mathis T, Li T, Sato HW, Zeier T. (2025). Describing PICU Chaplaincy Care: Spiritual Care of Children Near the End of Life Across Sociodemographic Categories. Association of Clinical Pastoral Education Annual Meeting, May 2025.

Lee M, **Visser M**, Li T, Baird J, Lotstein D. (2025). Developing a Pediatric Interprofessional Education Program for Relational and Communicational Skills. Poster Presentation, New Knowledge and Innovation Research and Innovation Day Conference, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, California, April 16, 2025.

Visser, M, Barber, R, Wong, J, Crossen, S, Garcia, J, Weissberg-Benchell, J, Arellano, D, Torres Sanchez, A, Gonzalez, F, Lopez, SA, Gonzales Granados, M, and Raymond, J. Use of Religious/Spiritual Coping for Youth with Diabetes and their Families, Poster Presentation, Association of Diabetes Care and Education Specialists Annual Meeting, 2024.

McCune, E and **Visser, M**. Goals and expectations for end-of-life care for people living in permanent supportive housing: a qualitative study, Poster Presentation, Society of General Internal Medicine Annual Meeting, 2022.

Scientific Presentations

Visser, M, Leturia, SN, Flores-Garcia J, Sayegh C, Barber R, and Raymond J. (2026). Religious and Spiritual Coping Among Black, Indigenous and People of Color and Latinx Families of Youth With New Onset Diabetes. Association of Diabetes Care and Education Specialists Conference, Columbus, Ohio, August 2026 (Accepted).

Wong, J, Flores Garcia, J, Reid, M, Torres Sanchez, A, Garban, N, Lopez, SA, Acosta Navarro, C, **Visser, M**, Crossen, SS, and Raymond, JK. Bilingual, Community-Building, and Supportive Virtual Peer Group (VPG) Model for Latinx Youth with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) Increases Diabetes Technology Use and Improves T1D-Distress. International Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Diabetes Annual Meeting, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, November 2026 (Submitted).

Manzanarez, B, Flores Garcia, J, Reid, MW, Torres Sanchez, A, Craft, K, Altuve, L, Arellano, C, **Visser, M**, Garban, N, Barber, R, Benavides, ME, Lopez, SA, Acosta Navarro, C, Raymond, JK, Wong, JC, and Crossen, SS. (2026). Building a DREAM Team: The importance of stakeholders in developing a virtual peer group curriculum for Latinx youth with T1D and their caregivers. International Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Diabetes Annual Meeting, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, November 2026 (Submitted).

Flores Garcia, J, Reid, MW, Wong, JC, Manzanarez, B, Torres Sanchez, A, Garban, N, Lopez, SA, Acosta Navarro, C, **Visser, M**, Crossen, SS, and Raymond, JK. (2026). Latinx Youth with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) and their Caregivers - Engagement and Satisfaction with Virtual Peer Groups (VPG) and In-Person Community-Building Events. International Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Diabetes Annual Meeting, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, November 2026 (Submitted).

Visser, M, Brewington-Mathis, T, Li, Tiffany, Sato, Hui-Wen, Grefe, D, and Zeier, T. Pediatric chaplain involvement near the end of life in a pediatric intensive care unit, New Knowledge and Innovation Council Research Day, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, California, April 16, 2025.

de Lucca M, Leturia SN, Andre T, **Visser M**, Nascimento LC, Barber, ROLB (2025). Mapping Barriers and Interventions to Diabetes Self-Management in Latino Youth: A Scoping Review. Abstracts of the 2025 American Diabetes Association Scientific Sessions.

Visser, M, Barber, R, Wong, J, Crossen, S, Garcia, J, Weissberg-Benchell, J, Arellano, D, Torres Sanchez, A, Gonzalez, F, Lopez, SA, Gonzales Granados, M, and Raymond, J. Use of Religious/Spiritual Coping for Youth with Diabetes and their Families, Oral Abstract Presentation, Southern California Organization of Pediatric Endocrinologists Annual Meeting, September 28, 2024.

Visser, M. “Holding it together”: how the 2021 COVID-19 pandemic changed religious and spiritual coping resources for Women of Color with heart disease. Presentation, Society for the Study of Social Problems Annual Conference, Los Angeles, CA, August 2022.

Visser, M. Religious and spiritual coping resources for Women of Color with heart disease. Accepted Roundtable Presentation, American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, CA, August 2022.

Visser, M and McCune, E. Expanding knowledge of end-of-life care in permanent supportive housing, Workshop, Housing First Annual Conference, Seattle, WA, April 14-16, 2022.

McCune, E, **Visser, M**, Kinderman, A, and Bamberger, J. Expectations and Desires for End-of-Life Care in Permanent Supportive Housing: A Qualitative Analysis, Poster Presentation, Summer Explore Symposium, School of Medicine, University of California San Francisco, November 2020.

Dowdell*, M. ‘Flesh-and-Blood’ in New Bioethics: Moral Experience, Risk, and Case 162: The Threat of Hemophilia (1974), Presentation. American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA, 2014.

Dowdell, M. Adverse Birth Outcomes, ‘Bad Fathers,’ and Disciplining Risk: A Place for a Feminist Voice in Bioethics, Plenary Finalist, Thinking Gender Conference, UCLA Center for the Study of Women, University of California Los Angeles, CA, 2013.

Dowdell, M. Playing with Cells in the Dark: Writing/Reading The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks as a Site of Memory, Presentation, Pacific Sociological Association, San Diego, CA, 2012. Presented in Absentia.

Dowdell, M. And What About the Doctors?: The Search for Human Dignity in the Clinical Encounter with Black Pregnant Women, Presentation, American Academy of Religion, San Francisco, CA, 2011.

Dowdell, M. Respect for the Human Dignity of Black Motherhood, Presentation, Eastern Society for Women in Philosophy, American Philosophical Association, Washington, D.C., 2011.

Dowdell, M. “The Story Can Be Told Another Way”: The Contributions of Womanist Ethics to the Principle of Respect for Autonomy in Bioethics, Presentation, American Academy of Religion – Western Region, Whittier College, Whittier, CA, March 2011.

Dowdell, M. How Doctors View Women of Color as Patients: Missing Histories and a Feminist Approach to Bioethics, Presentation, Women’s Studies in Religion Conference, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA, March 2010.

Clinical and Community Presentations

* Name changed to Visser from Dowdell in 2019.

Visser, M and Lopez, G. Upstream from the ICU, PCS Grand Rounds Presentation, Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, September 30, 2024.

Visser, M. Religious/Spiritual Coping and Health Equity (Guest Lecture). GRAD 219: Research on Racism in Science Mini-Course. University of California San Francisco, May 28, 2024.

Visser, M. Spiritual Tools for Coping. (Keynote). Community Symposium on Stroke, Depression and Mental Health. California Rehabilitation Institute, September 2022.

Visser, M. Ethics in Pastoral Ministry. Ministerial Leadership Course. Starr King School for the Ministry, September 2022.

Takahashi, L., **Visser, M.**, Carvill-Ziemer, E., Wolfe, S.J., and Stevens, E. Trauma and the Spirit Workshop. General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association, 2021.

Dowdell, M. Understanding and Reading Research 101, Clinical Pastoral Education Program Didactic Presentation, Department of Spiritual Care Services, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Los Angeles, November 2018.

Dowdell, M. Research Literacy for Chaplains, Clinical Pastoral Education Program Didactic Presentation, Department of Spiritual Care Services, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Los Angeles, October 2017.

Dowdell, M. A Christian Ethical Perspective on Federal Hate Crime Statistics (2011), Invited Lecture, Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Ministry, Berkeley, CA. (Declined).

Dowdell, M. Keynote Lecture, Allies for Racial Equity, Unitarian Universalist Conference, Fort Worth, TX, 2012.

Dowdell, M. A Commissioner’s Reflections on Evil, Conscience, War and Freedom, Presentation, Bay Area Truth Commission on Conscience in War, May 3, 2010.

RESEARCH TEACHING AT CHLA

Qualitative research design and analysis training (Grounded theory)	“Health beliefs of Hispanic/Latino Caregivers of Newly Diagnosed Youth with Type 1 Diabetes Mellitus,” Dr. Sisi Namoc Leturia (PI), Center for Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism	2025-Present
Qualitative research design and analysis training (Grounded theory and Rap-GAP)	“Exploring Language Differences in the PICU,” Dr. Tracy Ono (PI), Institute for Nursing and Interprofessional Research (INIR)	2025-Present
Qualitative analysis training (Rap-GAP)	“CHLA Team Clinic,” Dr. Jennifer Raymond (PI), Center for Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism	2025- Present
Co-Instructor	INIR Qualitative Analysis Retreat	2026
Co-Instructor	INIR Qualitative Research Extravaganza II: Analysis Workshop	2026
Co-Instructor	Clinical Pastoral Education Didactic Series on Clinical Inquiry and Research Methods for Chaplains	2025

Instructor	I Think We have a Situation Here: Using Situational Analysis to Explore the Social Worlds of Our Nursing and Interprofessional Care, New Knowledge and Innovation Council Research Day, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, California, April 2025.	2025
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OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Chaplain (per diem)	St. Joseph's Medical Center (Providence), Burbank, CA	2023-Present
Chaplain Fellow	Children's Hospital Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA	2023-2024
Chaplain Resident	California Rehabilitation Institute & Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Los Angeles, CA	2022-2023
Lead Minister	Unitarian Universalists of Santa Clarita Valley, Santa Clarita, CA	2019-2023
Faculty	Starr King School for the Ministry, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA	2010-2020

SERVICE

Member	Research Committee, Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE)	2023-2026
Member	Research Committee, Association of Diabetes Care and Education Specialists (ADCES)	2024-Present
Member	New Knowledge and Innovation Council, Collaborative Governance, Children's Hospital Los Angeles	2024-Present
Member	Outstanding Scholarship Award Committee, Division of Health, Health Policy, and Health Services, Society for the Study of Social Problems	2023
Officer	Sociology Student Organization University of California San Francisco, CA	2019-2020
Coordinator	Student Colloquium Series Department of Social/Behavioral Sciences & Institute on Health and Aging, University of California San Francisco, CA	2012-2013

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Innovation in Spiritual Care Education & Research Grant, Association of Clinical Pastoral Education	2025
Research Career Development Fellowship (postdoctoral), The Saban Research Institute at Children's Hospital Los Angeles	2025
Mentored Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Integrated Diabetes Management, Association of Diabetes Care and Education Specialists (ADCES) and Certification Board for Diabetes Care and Education (CBDCE)	2024

New Knowledge and Innovation Council Research Grant, Children's Hospital Los Angeles	2024
Institute for Nursing and Interprofessional Research Grant, Children's Hospital Los Angeles	2024
Clinical Services Dissemination Scholarship, Institute for Nursing and Interprofessional Research, Children's Hospital Los Angeles	2024
The Saban Research Institute's Training and Travel Award, Children's Hospital Los Angeles	2024
Patricia Benner Dissertation Fellowship, Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, University of California, San Francisco, CA	2021
Fund for Nurturing Scholarship Research Award, Unitarian Universalist Association, Boston, MA	2021
Fund for Nurturing Scholarship Research Award, Unitarian Universalist Association, Boston, MA	2017
Joseph Gittler Fund for Religious and Ethics Grant Award, Unitarian Universalist Association, Boston, MA	2016
C. Harrington Health Policy Fellowship, Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, University of California, San Francisco, CA	2014

HONORS AND AWARDS

American Diabetes Association Scholars Program	2026
Women's Interprofessional Network of the American Diabetes Association Professional Development Course	2026
Science School for Healthcare Professional (Delegate) International Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Diabetes (ISPAD) Lisbon, Portugal	2024
Oral Abstract Contest Winner Southern California Organization of Pediatric Endocrinologists Los Angeles, CA	2024
Science for Seminars Faculty Enrichment American Academy for the Advancement of Science, Dialogue on Science, Ethics & Religion, Retreat, Midway, UT (Declined due to family illness).	2019
Dean's Health Sciences Fellowship Award University of California, San Francisco, CA.	2013-2015
Newhall Teaching Fellowship Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA (Declined)	2011

Dean's Merit Scholarship Pacific School of Religion, Graduate Theological Union	2006-2008
Patricia Rieker Award for Most Distinguished Academic Record in Society & Health Department of Sociology, Simmons University	2006
Barbara Lee Legislative Fellowship, Simmons University	2006
Honors Program, Simmons University	2002-2006

MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

International Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Diabetes	2024-Present
Association of Diabetes Care and Education Specialists	2024-Present
American Diabetes Association	2024-Present
American Sociological Association	2011-Present
Association for Clinical Pastoral Education	2022-Present
Society for the Study of Social Problems	2021-2024
American Academy of Religion	2016-2022