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Rev. Stephanie Buckhanon Crowder, PhD Elected Dean of Chicago Theological Seminary

CHICAGO- May 8, 2018 - Chicago Theological Seminary board of trustees and tenured faculty unanimously and enthusiastically elected **Rev. Dr. Stephanie Buckhanon Crowder, PhD** as the new academic dean & vice president of academic affairs, effective July 1, 2018. Crowder most recently served as associate professor of theological field education & new testament and director of theological field education. Current academic dean & vice president of academic affairs **Dr. Ken Stone**, embarks on sabbatical beginning June 30, and will return to the Seminary's full-time faculty in September 2019. Dean Stone served for the past decade and led the initiatives ranging from strategic planning efforts to the research, curricular structure, and delivery of the first accredited, fully-online Master of Divinity degree.

"Dean-Elect Crowder recognizes the remarkable opportunity to build upon the foundation that Dean Stone and the faculty and staff of CTS have laid for the success of our students, theological education, and the enhancement of the public square," said seminary president, Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray, Jr. "Dean-Elect Crowder is an accomplished scholar with the ability to plan for, evaluate, and organize the administrative necessities for our seminary to continue to serve or constituencies at the highest levels. Her wisdom and leadership will strengthen our ability and imagine new possibilities to advance or work of supporting scholars, activists, and leaders to carry justice and mercy forward in the world."

Crowder came to CTS in October 2014 as director of theological field education. In May 2015, she was appointed assistant professor of theological field education and new testament and in May 2017 promoted to associate professor. She has also represented CTS in the Association of Chicago Theological Schools' (ACTS) Doctor of Ministry in Preaching program. Before joining CTS, Crowder served as an adjunct professor at McCormick Theological Seminary, and taught at Shaw University Divinity School and American Baptist College. Crowder has over 20 years' experience as a dually-ordained National Baptist and Disciples of Christ minister, serving in leadership roles at several churches, including New Covenant Christian Church and the Founding Co-Pastor at The Empowerment Church in Nashville and Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church in Memphis.

An accomplished writer and author, Crowder is a blogger for The Huffington Post, where she has written many pieces ranging from Ferguson to two-stepping, and has published a number of research papers. She is the author of *When Momma Speaks: The Bible Through African-American Motherhood*, which provides an engaging womanist reading of mother characters in the Old and New Testaments.

"I am honored to serve as the new Academic Dean at CTS," Crowder said. "The history and mission of CTS deeply resonate with my values. I look forward to working with President Ray, the Board, the faculty, staff, and students to advance our seminary and theological education."

Crowder earned her master's degree and doctor of philosophy from Vanderbilt University, a master of divinity degree from United Theological Seminary, and a bachelor of science degree (summa cum laude) from Howard University.

ABOUT CHICAGO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Based on Chicago's Southside, Chicago Theological Seminary is committed to creating leaders for the next generation at religious leadership...whatever that may be. A leader in social justice, CTS is committed to LGBTQ and gender issues, interreligious understanding, and racial justice.

CTS is an affiliated seminary of the United Church of Christ. Since its founding in 1855, CTS has pushed at the growing boundaries of the church in order to make faith more relevant and transform society towards greater justice and mercy. The student body now represents more than 40 different faith traditions, perspectives, and denominations.