

Mark Lau Branson

Curriculum Vita

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Present Position

Homer L. Goddard Professor of Ministry of the Laity, Fuller Theological Seminary (2000-present)

Personal Data

Married (1980) to Nina Lau-Branson; sons Noah (1991) and Nathan (1993)

Education

Ed.D. (International and Multicultural Education), University of San Francisco, 1998
M.A. (Theology and Pastoral Counseling), School of Theology at Claremont, 1975
B.A. (Majors: Public Address and Religion), Wichita State University, 1972

Ordained/Church

Ordained, San Francisco Christian Center, Bishop Donald Green, 1985; Leadership Team, The Table (Free Methodist) Pasadena/Altadena, CA (current).

Narrative

Rev. Mark Lau Branson, Ed.D., is the Homer L. Goddard Professor of the Ministry of the Laity at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, where he teaches courses in congregational leadership and community engagement. He was ordained at San Francisco Christian Center, an African American Pentecostal church, and has served on the pastoral teams in United Methodist and Presbyterian (PCUSA) churches. Branson has worked with several Christian agencies active in education, community development, university ministry, and community organizing, and he continues to consult with churches, judicatories, and community organizations. He has graduate degrees from Claremont School of Theology and the University of San Francisco. Mark is a senior consultant with The Mission Network. His most recent books are *Starting Missional Churches: Life with God in the Neighborhood* (co-edited with Nicholas Warnes), *Churches, Cultures & Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities* (IVP Academic, coauthored with Juan Martínez), and *Memories, Hopes, and Conversations: Appreciative Inquiry, Missional Engagement, and Congregational Change*, 2nd ed. (Rowman & Littlefield). He contributed chapters and articles to *Encyclopedia of Christian Education* (eds. George Kurian and Mark Lamport), *Religious Leadership: A Reference Handbook* (ed. Sharon Callahan), *The Missional Church in Context* (ed. Craig Van Gelder), *Leadership in Congregations* (ed. Richard Bass), and *The Three Tasks of Leadership* (ed. Eric Jacobsen). Mark and his wife Nina Lau-Branson are on the leadership team of The Table, a Free Methodist church plant in Pasadena/Altadena, California.

Professional Experience

Homer Goddard Professor of Ministry of the Laity, Fuller Theological Seminary (2000-present); Chair, SOT Ministry Division (2001, 2014-2016); Chair, SOT/SIS Ministry Curricular Area (2014-2016); Coordinator, SOT PhD program in Practical Theology (2014-present)

Senior Consultant, The Missional Network (themissionalnetwork.com)
Consultant/organizer, churches and community organizations (1990-present)
Minister of Adult Education, Rockridge United Methodist Church, Oakland, CA (1991- 1999)
Vice President and Dean, College of Theology and Urban Studies and Fellowship Bible Institute, San Francisco (1985-1993)
General Secretary, Theological Students Fellowship, concurrent with other local and national positions with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (1974-1984)
Educational Associate, Bel Air Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), Los Angeles (1976-1980)
Electronic Engineer, Wichita, KS, and Hollywood, CA (1969-1973)

Other Teaching Experience

Fuller Theological Seminary, Northern California Extension (1998-2000)
American Baptist Seminary of the West (1995)
Fuller's Institute for Christian Organizational Development (1982-1987)
Evangelical Seminary of Lima, Peru (1984)
Director of Summer School, New College, Berkeley (1982)
Teaching Assistant, Claremont Men's College (1972-1974)
Teaching Assistant, Fuller Theological Seminary (1973-1975)

Memberships and Associations

Academy of Religious Leadership (2004-present; board, 2012-2015)
Ekklesia Project (2001-present; board, 2010-2015; vice-chair, 2012-2015)
Gospel and Our Culture Network (1997-2003)
International Urban Associates (1991-2000)
Precept/Church Information and Development Services (1990-1993)
United Methodist Bayview District, Chair of Council on Ministries (1991-1993)
Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research, Collegeville, MN (1984-1986)
American Academy of Religion, Chair of Evangelical Theology Group (1978-1986)
National Council of Churches' Faith and Order Commission (1984)

Presentations: National and International (Selected)

Cell Network Institute of Dongsan Church in Ansan, Korea – action research and consulting (June and December, 2016)
Academy of Religious Leadership, "Matthew and Learning Communities" (April 2016)
Seoul and Ansan, Korea, 10 days of workshops and lectures, including the Korean Mission Studies Forum (September, 2015)
Glocal, Christian Reformed Church National Conference (November, 2014)
Christian Scholars Conference, Pepperdine University, panel (June, 2011)
Academy of Religious Leadership, "A Practical Theology of Leadership: With International Voices" (April, 2011)
Association of Downtown Lutheran Churches (ELCA, MSLC, WELS) (lecture; 2011)
Christians Supporting Community Organizing, (2010)
Presbyterian Global Fellowship – 2-day seminars in San Diego, Illinois, Atlanta, Seattle (2010-2011)
United Reformed Church, UK, 2-day seminar (2009)
Diocese of Chelmsford, England, 2-day seminar (2009)

Association of Trained Intentional Interim Ministers of Illinois & Indiana, 2 day seminar (2009)

PCUSA General Assembly, Church Transformation area, lecture (2008)

Association of Presbyterian Church Educators, seminar (2008)

Ekklesia Project, workshops (2007, 2011)

Allelon/Fuller Leadership Institute, Pasadena, seminar (2007)

Allelon Schools Project, Dallas, paper (2007)

Coalition for Ministry in Daily Life Convocation, Pasadena, panel (2006)

Wesley Theological Seminary, Lewis Center for Leadership, seminar (2006)

Missional Church Consultation, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN, lecture (2005)

Melbourne Pastors' Conference (Baptist), Australia, seminar (2005)

Burleigh College Pastors Conference, Adelaide, Australia, 2-day seminar (2005)

Vineyard Church Planting Conference on Diversity, seminar (2005)

Center for Parish Development Convocation, Chicago, 2-day seminar (2005)

Coalition for Ministry in Daily Life, planning committee (2005)

Gospel and Our Culture Network Conference, panel (2003, 2004)

World Council of Church's CWME consultation, Germany, lecture (2002)

LIGHT Ministries, Zimbales, Philippines seminars (2000)

Context and Hermeneutics in the Americas, Convener, Tlayacapan, Mexico (1983)

Ecumenical Institute of Canada, lectures (1983)

Stanley Foundation, Messiah College, lectures (1983)

International Economics and the Bible, Los Angeles, convener (1980)

Colloquy on the Loss and Recovery of the Sacred, Notre Dame University, lecture (1979)

Presentations: Academic, Judicatories & Local Organizations (Selected)

ELCA: Synod of NW Washington (multiple, 2013-15)

Presbytery of Chicago (speaker, workshop; Nov., 2014)

Free Methodist Church Southern California (plenary lecture at "Learning Community" conference – 2014)

Luther Southern Theological Seminary & Region 9 ELCA (presentations, workshops; Oct., 2013)

ELCA: Southwest Texas Synod, Region 9 (9 synods, Southeast US), Northwest Washington Synod (2013-14)

Free Methodist Church Southern California (plenary lectures at "Learning Community" conference – 2013)

PCUSA Presbyteries: San Fernando, San Diego (2013)

Point Loma Nazarene University – Center for Pastoral Leadership (2012)

Fresno Pacific University - Janzen Biblical Lectures (2012)

Churches of Christ, Bay Area & Central Valley (2012)

Pastors of Oakland (2011)

PCUSA Synod of Southern California & Hawaii and Synod of the Pacific (multiple events, coaching, planning; 2011-present)

Azusa Pacific University Multi-Ethnic Leaders Program speaker (2011)

PCUSA Presbyteries: San Diego, Riverside (2010)

Southern California Lay Equipping and Development organization, keynote (2001, 2006)

Presbytery of San Francisco (PCUSA) Interim Pastors Seminar (2006)

San Joaquin Presbytery (PCUSA) clergy seminar (2005)

Akron Mennonite Church (PA) missions week lecturer (2005)
 Northwest Pasadena Development Corporation, board development (2005, 2006))
 Los Ranchos Presbytery (PCUSA) seminar, consultation (2004)
 American Baptist Theological Center (Southern California), keynote address (January 2004)
 Southwest California Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), keynote address and two seminars (May 2003)
 Western Regional Conference of the African American Episcopal Zion (AMEZ), plenary seminar (May 2002, May 2003)
 Partners in Urban Transformation conference “The Multicultural Congregational Journey” (May 2003)
 San Gabriel Presbytery Executive Council (PCUSA), presentation on “Leadership, Congregations, and Changing Congregational Needs” (April 2003)
 Presbyterian Pastors’ Conference, Fuller Theological Seminary (January 2002, January 2003)
 San Fernando Presbytery and national PCUSA consultation on New Church Development, presentations on “Exile, Cultures, and New Church Developments” (March 2003)
 Hawaii District United Church of Christ and the Bible Institute of Hawaii half-day clergy workshop (2001, 2002, 2005, 2006, 2007)
 Christian Community Development Association (2000, 2002)
 Numerous consulting/teaching clergy workshops, Roman Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco, Sierra-Nevada Conference of the United Methodist Church, and ecumenical clergy associations in the Bay Area (1985-1999)

Publications

Books/Chapters/Entries in Reference Works

- Memories, Hopes, and Conversations: Appreciative Inquiry, Missional Engagement, & Congregational Change, 2nd ed.* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).
 “Creating Missional Environments,” “Educating for Intercultural Life,” and “Transformational Congregational Learning,” in George Thomas Kurian and Mark A Lamport (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Christian Education* (3 vols.) (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).
Starting Missional Churches: Life with God in the Neighborhood, co-edited with Nicholas Warnes (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014).
 “Religious Leaders and Social Change,” in Sharon Callahan (ed.), *Religious Leadership: A Reference Handbook* (2 vols.) (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2013).
Churches, Cultures & Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities, co-authored with Juan Martínez (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011).
 “Gratitude as Access to Meaning,” in Eric Jacobsen (ed.), *The Three Tasks of Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009).
 “Ecclesiology and Leadership in Context,” in Craig Van Gelder (ed.), *The Missional Church in Context* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007)
 “Forming God’s People,” in Richard Bass (ed.), *Leadership in Congregations* (Herndon, VA: Alban, 2007), reprinted from *Congregations* 29 (Winter 2003).

Intercultural Church Life and Adult Formation: Community, Narrative, and Transformation (Ed.D. dissertation) (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI, 1998).
“Adoption,” article and textual footnotes in Joel B. Green and Tremper Longman III (eds.) *Everyday Study Bible* (Dallas: Word, 1996).
Conflict and Context: Hermeneutics in the Americas, co-editor with C. René Padilla, and author of chapter “Response to Samuel Escobar’s ‘Our Hermeneutical Task Today’” (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986).
The Reader’s Guide to the Best Evangelical Books (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983).

Articles

“Matthew and Learning Communities,” *Journal of Religious Leadership* 15:2 (Fall 2016).
“A Missional Church Process: Post-Intervention Research,” *Journal of Religious Leadership* 13:1 (Spring 2014).
“A Practical Theology of Leadership: With International Voices,” with Juan Martínez, *Journal of Religious Leadership* 10:2 (Fall 2011).
“Interpretive Leadership During Social Dislocation: Jeremiah and Social Imaginary,” *Journal of Religious Leadership* 8:1 (Spring 2009).
“A Missional Theology for Evangelical Seminaries,” with Ryan Bolger, for the Allelon Schools Project.
“Escaping a False Gospel: On Changing Stories,” *Theology, News & Notes*, (Spring 2004).
“Forming Church, Forming Mission,” *International Review of Mission* 92 (April 2003).
“We Created an EcoFund,” with Tom Prince, *Cohousing Journal* 15:1 (Spring 2002).
“Intergenerational Worship: A Cyber Conversation” (contributor), *The Gospel and Our Culture Newsletter* 13:1 (March 2001).
“Organize to Beat the Devil,” with Joel B. Green, *The Gospel and Our Culture Newsletter* 12:4 (December 2000).
“But I’m Too Busy to Read Poetry: A Conversation with Eugene Peterson,” *Radix* 20:3 (1991).
“Spirit, Self, and Society: Eugene Peterson’s Agenda,” *Catalyst* 18:1 (Nov. 1991).
“A Theological Foundation for Marriage,” *Transformation* 6:1 (January/March 1989).
“Personal Budgets: Questions and Answers,” *Radix* 19:2 (1989).
“John Wesley’s Theology and Our Own,” *Radix* 17:5 (1986).
“Marriage as Sanctification,” *Radix* 15:5 (1984).
“Evangelism and Social Ethics: Church, University and Seminary,” *Perkins Journal* 35:2 (Winter-Spring 1982).
“A Break in the Battle,” *Presbyterian Outlook* 163:36 (October 12, 1981).

Editorial Positions

Editor, *Asian Journal of Religion and Society* (2016-present)
Editorial Board, *Journal of Missional Practice* (2014-present)
Series editor, Theological Students Fellowship/Institute for Biblical Research
Bibliographical Study Guides, InterVarsity Press (1980-1985)
Senior editor, *TSF Bulletin* (and predecessor *TSF News & Reviews*) (1975-1984)
Book review editor & contributing editor, *Radix* (1985-2000); Board chair (1988-1998)

Managing editor & book review editor, *Transformation: An International Conversation on Evangelical Social Ethics* (1983-1990)

Book Reviews (selected)

- Harvie Conn, *The American City and the Evangelical Church: A Historical Overview* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994); *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 20 (1996): 87.
- Donald A. McGavran, *Effective Evangelism: A Theological Mandate* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1988); *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 14 (1990): 92-3.
- Orlando Costas, *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission beyond Christendom* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1982); *Transformation* 4 (1987): 32+.
- Harvie Conn, *Evangelism: Doing Justice and Preaching Grace* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982). *Transformation* 4 (1987): 32+.
- Donald Kraybill, *The Upsidedown Kingdom* (Harrisonburg, VA: 1978); *Transformation* 4 (1987): 32+.
- Mortimer Arias, *Announcing the Reign of God: Evangelization and the Subversive Memory of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984); *Transformation* 4 (1987): 32+.
- John Coleman, *An American Strategic Theology* (Ramsey, NJ: Paulist, 1982). *Christian Century* 100 (1983): 126+.
- Dale Moody, *The Word of Truth: A Summary of Christian Doctrine Based on Biblical Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981); *Christian Century* 98 (1981): 971-972.
- Paul Mickey, *Essentials of Wesleyan Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980) *Christian Century* 9 (1981): 208-209.

Other Book Reviews and short commentary/sidebar pieces in *Christianity Today*, *Eternity*, *Evangelical Newsletter*, *LayNet*, *The Other Side*, *Radix*, *The Reformed Journal*, *Themelios*, *TSF Bulletin*, *Transformation*, *TSF News & Notes*, *Urban Mission*.

Courses Offered

Practical Theology Methods (Ph.D.)
Learning Community: Practical Theology and Christian Education (Ph.D.)
Practices of Christian Community
Christian Education & Ethnic Diversity
Congregation as Learning Community
Missional Churches & Leadership
Foundations for Ministry (with Kurt Fredrickson)
Forming God's People: Congregational Praxis
Spirituality and Everyday Life
Multiculturalism Today (with Juan Martínez)
Ethnicities & Churches (with Juan Martínez)
Church-Based Urban Research (with Joe Colletti)
Congregations in the World (with René Padilla)
Emerging Church (with Ryan Bolger)
Mission Education and the Local Church (with Frank Jackson, Oakland)
Leading Missional Churches: Cities, Cultures and Congregations (D.Min.)

Empowering the People of God (Korean D.Min.)
Missional Leadership Cohorts (DMin, multiyear, with Alan Roxburgh)
Líderes Latinos en un Mundo Multicultural (DMin, with Juan Martínez)
American Studies: Social Location & the Gospel (with Ryan Bolger; national award from Yale Divinity School)

Community Activities/Associations

Institute for Urban Initiatives (2002-present; Board president, 2007-2011; vice-president, 2011-present)
One Community: A Grassroots Think Tank (Founder, vice-president, 2008-2012)
Northwest Pasadena Development Corporation (Board consultant)
Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice
Churches United for Economic Development
Ecumenical Council of Pasadena Area Churches
ChildShare
Ascending Lights
Superior Court of Los Angeles Clergy-Court Conferences
Pacific Institute of Community Organizing
Institute for Urban Research and Development
Numerous church sermons, lectures, seminars, retreats, and consulting activities

Current Research

Korean churches, local mission, leadership development
Leadership traits and practices for congregational transformation
Church planting from perspectives of missional ecclesiology
Appreciative Inquiry in local congregations and judicatories
Post-intervention research on missional church transformation
Statistical and historical research on Pasadena-Altadena congregations

Web Interviews & Development

Churches, Cultures & Leadership website – numerous interviews and other materials to augment the Branson-Martínez textbook.
www.churchesculturesleadership.com
Center for Progressive Renewal, Gregg Carlson, webinar on “Leading Church Change Better with Appreciative Inquiry, 6/3/2014 <https://vimeo.com/97326191> password: renewal
Interview with Mike Cope, University Preacher at Pepperdine, 2/23/2012
<http://preachermike.com/2012/02/23/interview-with-mark-lau-branson>
ChurchNext, Interview with Chris Yaw, “How Do We Participate in God’s Initiatives,” 3/16/2012 http://churchnext.tv/2012/03/16/mark-lau-branson-how-do-we-participate-in-gods-initiatives/?utm_source=ChurchNext+Newsletter&utm_campaign=373e0f40b3-March_19_20123_16_2012&utm_medium=email

Provoked to Newness interview with Alan Brisco April, 2012 (4 parts)

<http://provokedtonewness.com/webpage/interview-mark-lau-branson-part-i-of-iv>

“A Father-Son Conversation about Gaming” from Fuller Youth Institute

fulleryouthinstitute.org/2009/10/mark-and-noah-branson-interview/

“The Church and Its Neighbors” from Fuller Theological Seminary on iTunesU