

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 4, 2015**

Media contact: Liz Joss, [ljoss@cts.edu](mailto:ljoss@cts.edu) or 317-931-2316

**Christian Theological Seminary names new Dean:  
Dr. Leah Gunning Francis**

*Gunning Francis will serve as VP for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty*

**Indianapolis, IN** – Dr. Matthew Myer Boulton, president of Christian Theological Seminary, today announced that Dr. Leah Gunning Francis will join the seminary as Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty.

Dr. Gunning Francis is currently on the faculty at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis, where she also serves as Associate Dean of Contextual Education. That unique vantage point on the events in Ferguson, Missouri, enabled her to write the well-received *Ferguson and Faith: Sparking Leadership & Awakening Community* (Chalice Press, 2015).

“Leah’s work emphasizes how faith communities can and should play a pivotal role in engaging society’s most pressing challenges,” said Boulton. “That view aligns perfectly with the mission and goals of Christian Theological Seminary.”

Dr. Gunning Francis earned her Ph.D. in Christian Education and Congregational Studies from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL; her Master of Divinity from Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, GA; and her bachelor’s degree in marketing from Hampton University in Hampton, VA. She has taught graduate-level classes, provided pastoral leadership in various churches, and worked in the healthcare industry.

Throughout her career, and from the perspective of a mother with two African-American sons, Dr. Gunning Francis has focused on the struggle to embody God’s vision of love and justice for the most vulnerable communities. A frequent guest lecturer, preacher and workshop facilitator, she draws on her marketing experience, pastoral leadership and academic training to creatively equip students, clergy and congregations for transformative social action. In 2012, Dr. Gunning Francis won the prestigious Engaged Scholars Fellowship to study how mothers view issues of risk among middle-class African-American young men and how to promote wholeness and well-being.

Dr. Gunning Francis will assume her new role June 1, 2016. She replaces Dr. Bill Kincaid, the Herald B. Monroe Associate Professor in Practical Parish Ministry at CTS, who has served as the interim dean for two years and will return to faculty and administrative duties full-time.

###