

Philip Quaque and the Early History of Black Anglicanism

Presentation by Sylvester Johnson, Ph.D.

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In the 1750s, one of the youths of present-day Ghana traveled to England to study Christian theology. His name was Philip Quaque (pronounced Kway-koo), and he became the first African to be ordained as a priest in the Anglican Church. After spending more than a decade in the British metropole, Quaque returned to his West African hometown and lived his entire adult career as an Anglican chaplain. His regular reports to the British office of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel constitute one of the largest collections of extant writings by a Black author of the eighteenth century.

Quaque's life and legacy reveal an important dimension of the African presence in the Anglican Church during the eighteenth century. In this lecture, Sylvester Johnson will discuss Quaque's career as an Anglican priest and what it reveals about the larger history of early Black Anglicanism. The presentation will be followed by a Q&A period.

Spouses, partners and guests of conference attendees are invited to attend this presentation.

Sylvester Johnson earned his Ph.D. in Systematic Theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York City where he studied contemporary religious thought with James H. Cone. Before joining the Department of African American Studies and the Religious Studies Department at Northwestern University he served on the faculties of Florida A&M University in Tallahassee, Florida and Indiana University in Bloomington. He has just written *African American Religions, 1500-2000: Colonialism, Democracy, and Freedom* (Cambridge University Press), which will be released this year. His *Myth of Ham in Nineteenth-Century American Christianity* (Palgrave 2004) won the American Academy of Religion's Best First Book Award in 2005. His articles and essays have appeared in a number of academic journals, including *Religion and American Culture*, *Literature and Theology*, and *Church History*. Dr. Johnson is a founding co-editor of the *Journal of Africana Religions*, a peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary journal that publishes research on religion in Africa and the Black diaspora. He co-chairs the North American Religions section of the American Academy of Religion.

