

## The Reverend Vern Barnet, DMn

convener emeritus, the Greater Kansas City Interfaith Council  
minister emeritus, Center for Religious Experience and Study (“CRES”)  
Assistant Professor, Religious Pluralism, Central Baptist Theological Seminary  
CRES, Box 45414, Kansas City, MO 64171—8414; website [www.cres.org](http://www.cres.org); email [vern@cres.org](mailto:vern@cres.org)



VERN BARNET studied at the University of Chicago with the world-renowned historian of religion, Mircea Eliade. Barnet was awarded his doctorate in 1970. After serving churches in Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Kansas, and activities abroad, he has devoted his energies to interfaith work in metro Kansas City. In 1989 he founded the Kansas City Interfaith Council. From 1994 through 2012, he wrote a weekly religion column for *The Kansas City Star*, and his articles and reviews have appeared in many national publications.



Honored by Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, and civic organizations, he has taught world religions and related subjects at several universities and seminaries. He currently teaches at Central Seminary which asked him to develop a course to train ministers for today’s multi-faith environment.

Following 9/11, he led the region’s unprecedented “Gifts of Pluralism” conference which fostered interfaith initiatives featured on a half-hour CBS-TV special. Among his many civic activities, he chaired the Jackson County government’s Diversity Task Force that studied the effects of 9/11 on people of faith in the 5-county Kansas City area and issued a 35,000-word report. With three others he edited the internationally-published 740-page

reference book, *The Essential Guide to Religious Traditions and Spirituality for Health Care Providers* in 2013, with endorsements from the Mayo Clinic and the American Academy of Family Physicians. His book of 154 sonnets, *Thanks for Noticing: The interpretation of Desire*, was published in 2015 with countless references to themes in the religions of the world.

His interfaith work led to Kansas City being chosen as the site for the nation’s first “Interfaith Academies” sponsored by Harvard University’s Pluralism Project, Religions for Peace-USA, and other groups in 2007. Ellie Pierce, then the Project’s principal researcher, said, “At the Pluralism Project, we consider Kansas City to be truly at the forefront of interfaith relations. This is — in no small part — due to the tireless efforts of Vern Barnet, whose work and writings have been an inspiration to all of us at the Pluralism Project.”

A complete bio can be found at [www.cres.org/vern](http://www.cres.org/vern).