

## **EPIC 2018 Presenter Bio's**

### **Keynoter & Workshop Presenter:**

**Kris Stache** spends her days teaching at Wartburg Theological Seminary as Associate Professor of Missional Leadership, and works with the faculty and leadership team to creative a culture of creativity as the Director for Innovative Initiatives. She gets energy for that work by playing games with her kids, reading most anything she can get her hands on, and exploring new places with her favorite traveling companion, her husband. Kris' favorite activity at church is to sit on the floor with 3rd and 4th graders and wonder with them about God.

### **Workshop Presenters:**

**Kerry Fehrman** is from Wausau WI and is a member of Saint Andrew Lutheran Church where she has served Saint Andrew Lutheran Church Treasurer (2010- 2017) and Saint Andrew Lutheran Church Council Secretary (2000-2010). Kerry currently serves on the ECSW Synod Council as the Vice President (July 1, 2017-present) Outside of her activities with the ECSW and Saint Andrew, she works part time as the Finance Assistant at Newman Catholic Schools and as the financial officer for her husband Mark's company, Rib Mountain Paper, LCC.

**Rev. Jean DeVoll-Donaldson:** Bishop's Associate for Evangelical Mission, Pastor Jean DeVoll-Donaldson has



been in the East Central Synod of Wisconsin for just over two years, as our first full time Director for Evangelical Mission. As deployed staff out of the Domestic Mission unit of the ELCA, she both serves on the ELCA Renewal Team and is fully integrated into the synod staff team and works collaboratively with others to provide support to congregations. The areas of her emphasis within Evangelizing Mission include supporting Transformation/Renewal of congregations living into changed contexts and growing in their missional capacity to engage their communities; accompanying congregations in Redevelopment and New Start/Mission Development; and providing Mission Support and Stewardship education and support.

**Jodi Sullivan** currently serves on the East Central Synod of Wisconsin's staff, working in the area of Candidacy, communication, Assembly planning, and as the Gathering Synod Coordinator for the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering. Jodi builds on her previous experience of serving as a congregational ministry leader focusing on outreach and youth and family. She enjoys engaging with leaders to explore ministry opportunities.

**Jennifer Prinz** is Portico Benefit Services' regional representative covering the ELCA Region 5 (Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Upper Peninsula of Michigan). The six Portico regional representatives focus on establishing and maintaining excellent member and sponsor relationships in their assigned territories. Some of this is done by facilitating workshops at synod assemblies, meeting with senior seminary students, first call Pastors, and Jennifer also meets annually with all of the 12 synod Bishops and their staff in her region.



Jennifer has more than 25 years of communications and relationship-building experience, in both faith-based and health care organizations. She previously worked as a gift planner for the ELCA Foundation, serving the state of Illinois. Prior to that, she was Director of Professional Development at St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa.

Jennifer earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa, and a Master of Public Administration degree from Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. She recently moved to Waverly, Iowa, where her husband is an ELCA Pastor at St. Paul's Lutheran Church and School.

Portico Benefit Services provides health, flexible spending, retirement, disability, and survivor plans to rostered and lay leaders. Through benefits designed for ministry, Portico empowers members to live well — physically, financially, and emotionally. By living well as whole people of God, we can better enhance the lives of others.

**Tim Knutson** of the ELCA Foundation will be presenting a workshop on the topic of *Endowments, Planned Gifts, & Ministry Funding Plans*. The discussion will be focused on congregations and some of their most common questions about using endowments and planned gifts to support their ministry.

The ELCA Foundation, the East Central Synod of WI, and a dozen other ELCA ministries (such as Crossways Camps and Lutheran Social Services) work in partnership to provide gift planning resources for congregations and individuals throughout Wisconsin. Tim Knutson serves as the gift planner for the partnership. His previous work includes a dozen years in outdoor ministry and six years as a representative with Thrivent Financial. He is available to meet with congregations to create their own ministry funding plan.

**Rev. Dione Miller** serves as a pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church in Waupaca. She is the co-chair of the synod's antiracism team and has a special interest in Global Christianity and Mission.

**Pastor Leah Woehr-Grande** recently received her M.Div. from the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and is a first-call associate pastor serving Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Plover. After earning a degree in art, with concentrations in ceramics and life drawing, from Luther College in Decorah, IA, she pursued a career as a professional artist, which included developing her own line of wheel-thrown utilitarian pottery and co-founding a community group for clay artists. For over 13 years she was a ceramist and tile maker for a living history museum, Moravian Pottery & Tile Works in Doylestown, PA, making Arts & Crafts Era tiles and mosaics, mentoring apprentices, and specializing in glaze chemistry. Pastor Leah has long been fascinated by the natural interplay between art and theology and brings her passion for the arts to her practice of pastoral ministry. This past fall she began an "Artful Sanctuary" group at Good Shepherd to begin to experiment with incorporating new visual elements in the worship space.

**Pr. Jim Honig** is pastor with the people of Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church in Northern Door County, Wisconsin. He has been an active leader and trainer in congregation based organizing in the Metro Chicago area and beyond. He served on a national ELCA Task Force for Congregation Based Organizing.

**The Rev. Diane Murray**, Rector, St. James Episcopal Church, Manitowoc. Either as a lay person, deacon or priest, I have been part of four Episcopal and one ELCA Congregations in the geographic Diocese (NE Wisconsin). I have been a spiritual director or leader for many women's, co-ed adult and youth retreats as well as a workshop presenter. Teaching, guiding, nurturing people on their spiritual journey is one of my passions! I have organized and led "prayer rooms" for various occasions. Involved with children's and youth ministry for years, I have been a church camp director/counselor for what seems like forever and I developed a worship service known as KinderChurch for young children and their grownups. I helped start The Welcome Table community meal program in Plymouth as well as a homework club for elementary children. I serve on



the Board and volunteer at Hope House homeless shelter in Manitowoc and have volunteered with Habitat for Humanity in several communities. I have helped lead youth and adults on mission trips around the U.S. and in Mexico (cross-cultural even in the U.S.). I serve on several Episcopal Diocesan committees, have been the liaison to the ECSW Resource Center, worked with the Deaf Community for many years through the Hands of Christ Ecumenical Deaf Ministry based in the Fox Valley until its merger into another congregation. I am a member of FORMA a National Episcopal group of Christian Formation and Education folks. I am currently a bi-vocational priest serving half time at St. James and also working full time in the secular world as a Production Supervisor for Sargento Cheese. I have three adult children, four grandchildren and some granddogs! I live in the country surrounded by a farm south of Plymouth. Life is good!

**Aaron Sturgis** is the lead pastor at Central Lutheran Church in Chippewa Falls. Central Lutheran is a fast growing congregation that is not only growing but is growing young. When it comes to telling the story of Central, Aaron enjoys sharing what has worked and where they have failed miserable. Aaron is married to his wife and they have three young children...and a dog....and a bearded dragon.

**Jen Kooistra** has been involved in youth ministry for over 25 years and has seen that faith formation in children and youth has the most solid foundation when modeled by parents and reinforced by the faith community. As the mother of two teenage boys who still crawl into bed for prayers and blessings and who cheerfully and willingly lead songs and lessons at church, Jen has the benefits of Cross+Gen Ministry unfolding in her own family as well as in her faith family at St. John's Lutheran Church in Oregon, WI. Jen is a full time Director of Youth, Family, and Education Ministry at St. John's, a member of the ELCA Generosity Project Team, the Region 5 representative for SYMBOL Steering Team, a coach for the newly unveiled Discipling Cohort Initiative of the ELCA Network, and will be a main stage presenter and contributing author for Rich Melheim's Cross+Gen conference in Estes Park this fall.