

ELCA Inter-Religious Task Force Bios

Katie Bringman Baxter is Vice President of Program Strategy at Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC), a Chicago-based non-profit with the vision to make interfaith cooperation a norm in our society. In this role she guides IFYC's various programmatic initiatives related to interfaith cooperation in higher education – often in partnership with ELCA colleges. In addition to holding a graduate degree in higher education, Katie is an ELCA college alumna (Wittenberg University; BA, Religion) and is a lay leader at St. Luke's Lutheran Church of Logan Square in Chicago.

Dr. Jacqueline Bussie is Director of the Forum on Faith and Life and Professor of Religion at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota where she teaches courses in interfaith studies as well as theology. Her first book, *The Laughter of the Oppressed*, won the national Trinity Prize, and her second book, *Outlaw Christian: Finding Authentic Faith by Breaking the Rules* won the 2017 Gold Medal Illumination Award for Christian Living. Her third book, *Love Without Limits: Jesus' Radical Vision for Love with No Exceptions* explores love across difference--including interfaith friendships--and will be published in August 2018.

Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton (ex-officio) serves as the ELCA's fourth presiding bishop. In this role, she serves as the ELCA's chief ecumenical and inter-religious officer, and is currently the vice president for North America of the Lutheran World Federation. She earned a Master of Divinity degree from Harvard Divinity School and a Bachelor of Music Education from the College of Wooster.

Rahuldeep Singh Gill, Ph.D., has served as Director for the Center for Equality and Justice at California Lutheran University, where he is a tenured faculty member in the Religion Department. Dr. Gill serves as Cal Lutheran's Campus Interfaith Strategist and has twice been voted Cal Lutheran's Diversity Professor of the Year. As a writer and speaker, his life goal is to inspire connected communities. He lives in Los Angeles with his family.

Mr. William Horne was elected to serve as ELCA Vice President at the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in New Orleans. Bill served as a Colonel in the United States Air Force. His post military retirement career has been in public management. In 2001, Bill was appointed by the Clearwater City Council to serve as the Chief Administrative Officer (City Manager) of the city (113,000 pop) with responsibility for all departments except the City Attorney's Office.

The Rev. Dr. Darrell Jodock is Professor Emeritus at Gustavus Adolphus College. He chairs the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations and represents the ELCA at the National Council of Churches' Convening Table on inter-religious dialogue and the national Jewish-Christian Dialogue on Pastoral Issues co-sponsored by the NCC and the National Council of Synagogues. He was a consulting editor and one of the authors for *Engaging Others, Knowing Ourselves: A Lutheran Calling in a Multi-Religious World* and the editor and co-author of *Covenantal Conversations: Christians in Dialogue with Jews and Judaism*.

Carol Schersten LaHurd, Ph.D. is currently Distinguished Affiliate Professor at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and educational outreach consultant for its Center of Christian-Muslim Engagement for Peace and Justice. She serves on the ELCA Consultative Panel on

Lutheran-Muslim Relations and edited *Engaging Others, Knowing Ourselves: A Lutheran Calling in a Multi-Religious World*. She writes on inter-religious topics for such publications as *Gather Magazine*, *Dialog*, *Currents in Theology and Mission*, and *Journal of Lutheran Ethics*.

Bishop Patricia Lull (chair) serves as Bishop of the Saint Paul Area Synod. She has been engaged in inter-religious work in congregational and campus ministry settings, as well as her leadership of the Saint Paul Area Council of Church as they assumed an inter-religious identity.

Rev. Peg Schultz-Akerson, D. Min. serves as Interim Pastor at Lutheran Church of the Master, located in the richly diverse neighborhoods surrounding UCLA. She is a certified Spiritual Director, a member of the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations and co-chairs the Southwest California Synod *Green Faith Team*. Her D. Min. thesis title is *Reading the Word with the Heart: Luther's Large Catechism and the Practice of Faith*.

The Rev. Dr. Mark N. Swanson has served since 2006 as the Harold S. Vogelaar Professor of Christian-Muslim Studies and Interfaith Relations at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. Previously he taught at Luther Seminary in St. Paul and at the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo, Egypt. His publications include *The Coptic Papacy in Islamic Egypt, 641–1517* and other studies of Christian Arabic literature, the medieval Egyptian church, and the history of Christian-Muslim relations

The Rev. Lamont Anthony Wells is the Assistant to the Bishop for Evangelism/ Director for Evangelism Mission- Metro New York Synod. He currently serves as the National President of the African Descent Lutheran Association- ELCA. Though originally from Philadelphia, he considers himself a southern preacher at heart.

Kathryn Mary Lohre (staff) serves as assistant to the presiding bishop and executive for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations & Theological Discernment. She was the first Lutheran and youngest woman to serve as president of the National Council of Churches USA. Prior, she served as assistant director of the Pluralism Project at Harvard University, a research project on religious diversity. She was the editor of *For Such a Time as This: Young Adults on the Future of the Church* and consulting editor of *Engaging Others, Knowing Ourselves: A Lutheran Calling in a Multi-Religious World*.