

LEC 2022 Breakout Session Presenters

Alicia Arzaga, Bethany Lutheran School, Long Beach CA

Alicia Arzaga is starting her fifth year of teaching at Bethany Lutheran in Long Beach, CA where she currently teaches third grade. While earning her BA in Liberal Studies at Long Beach State, where she was a member of the Women's Golf team, she successfully self-published her first children's book, titled "There's No Color Like My Color."



Cece Bosma, Grand Canyon University, Phoenix, AZ

Cecelia Bosma is a K12 Professional Development Manager for K12 Educational Development at Grand Canyon University. She brings her passion for academic success to innovative workshops that guide teachers in implementing evidence-based best practices to foster growth and provide innovative instruction and support for students. She loves to inspire and promote spiritual growth for teachers and students to actively live as salt and light in the world. Leveraging lessons she has learned in 15 years in education including 12 years in Christian School classrooms, public/charter school classrooms and outdoor education, Cecelia transitioned into the world of professional development and coaching. A self-proclaimed learner for life, she earned her Master's Degree in Education at Miami University, Ohio.

Dr. Kara Bratton, LSEM and Concordia University, Irvine, CA

Dr. Kara Bratton is the special education director for Lutheran Special Education Ministries (LSEM) and an adjunct professor at Concordia Irvine in the Doctor of Education Leadership Program. She also serves on the board of directors for the Indiana Non-Public School Association (INPEA). Prior to her role as a special education director, she taught special education in Lutheran schools in Fort Wayne, IN for 11 years. A graduate of Valparaiso University with an undergraduate degree in Elementary Education, Kara also has earned graduate degrees in Special Education from Indiana Wesleyan University, Gifted and Talented education from Ball State University, and a Master's degree from Indiana Wesleyan in Curriculum and instruction. She earned her PhD in Special Education Leadership from Concordia University Chicago in 2020. Kara is passionate about research related to improving special education practices in non-public schools and the role that principals play in building effective programs for students with disabilities.

Dr. Steve Buuck, Faith Lutheran Middle & Senior High School, Las Vegas, NV

Dr. Steve Buuck serves as the Chief Executive Officer at Faith Lutheran Middle School & High School in Las Vegas, Nevada. Faith Lutheran is the largest Lutheran school in the United States and the largest non-public school in the state of Nevada.

Steve earned his undergraduate and master's degrees at Concordia University Wisconsin and his Ph.D. at Marquette University. Steve has served at Lutheran high schools in Texas, Michigan, and Nevada. He has also worked for Wisconsin International University and taught graduate school in Brazil, Estonia, and Taiwan.

Steve is a licensed deacon in the Lutheran Church and serves at Faith Community Lutheran Church. He has served on several boards and committees in the Pacific Southwest District and for the LCMS.

Steve is blessed by his wonderful wife Julie. They have three adult children and two grandchildren. In his spare time, Steve and Julie love to watch sports of all kinds, travel, golf, bike, and see shows on the Strip.

Dr. Darius "Bo" Chapman, Faith Lutheran Middle & Senior High School, Las Vegas, NV

Dr. Chapman is in his fifth year serving at Faith Lutheran Middle School and High School, Las Vegas, as part of the theology faculty. Before that, Dr. Chapman had the blessing of serving as a Director of Student Ministries for over 20 years both in Michigan and Texas. His passion is striving to make a positive difference in the lives of others, especially in the lives of students and their families. He also loves investing in present and future ministry workers as they step into the "trenches" to impact the world in which they live.

Caley Chapman & Jon Doyle, Christ Lutheran, Phoenix, AZ

Caley Chapman- Connections Program- Bachelor of General and Special Education, Master of Autism Spectrum Disorders- Christ Lutheran School, Phoenix

Jon Doyle- Principal- Bachelor of Science, Master of Administration- Christ Lutheran School, Phoenix

Jon Corippo, EduProtocols, Coarsegold, CA

Eduprotocols co-creator Jon Corippo describes himself as a “formerly disgruntled student.” Jon graduated from college with no intention of teaching. Jon presents all over the world, helping teachers to “Teach Better Work Less”. Jon is a County Teacher of the Year, an NSBA 20 to Watch Educator, and was named a Top 100 Influencer by EdTech Digest.

Adam Coughran, President, Safe Kids Inc., Orange, CA

Adam Coughran is an industry leader in safety and security training for schools, businesses, and organizations. Adam is a veteran of Southern California law enforcement who utilized his expertise to found Safe Kids Inc., an organization dedicated to helping prevent and survive violence in schools. He’s been recognized as one of the “Go-To” experts for national media outlets, appearing on NBC’s Today Show, ABC’s Good Morning America, FOX’s Nancy Grace, HLN’s Michaela, CBS This Morning, and numerous live interviews in addition to being a contributing author to Newsweek Magazine.

Matt de la Peña, Author/Speaker, Southern California

Matt de la Peña is the New York Times Bestselling, Newbery Medal-winning author of seven young adult novels (including Mexican WhiteBoy, We Were Here, and Superman: Dawnbreaker) and six picture books (including Milo Imagines the World and Last Stop on Market Street). In 2016 he was awarded the NCTE Intellectual Freedom Award. Matt received his MFA in creative writing from San Diego State University and his BA from the University of the Pacific where he attended school on a full basketball scholarship. In 2019 Matt was given an honorary doctorate from UOP. de la Peña currently lives in Southern California. He teaches creative writing and visits schools and colleges throughout the country.

Dean-o, Bible REPLY Curriculum, San Clemente, CA

Via 12 albums and 30 years of children's ministry, Dean-o is a nationally-recognized musical evangelist currently publishing Bible REPLAY Curriculum—an innovative Bible curriculum—Online Adventure—Musical Encounter for Christian Schools and Home Educators.

Kim Gilman, Faith Lutheran Middle & Senior High School, Las Vegas, NV

Kim Gilman is an art educator at Faith Lutheran Middle and High School in Las Vegas, NV. With degrees in Studio Art and Education, she helps students find their creative voices and make personal connections through art. Her encounter with visual faith practices ten years ago transformed her approach to prayer. In addition to illustrating visual prayer assets for The Visual Faith Ministry, Kim practices a variety of historical arts and handicrafts including spinning, natural dyeing, and weaving. Her husband and adult children are her biggest supporters.

Sarah Harper, Principal, Faith Lutheran Middle & Senior High School, Las Vegas, NV

Sarah Harper is the Middle School Principal at Faith Lutheran Middle & High School in Las Vegas, NV. She has been a teacher, coach, dean of students and principal over the past 28 years. Sarah has served on various boards and committees locally and nationally in the areas of educational leadership. She is passionate about leadership development at all levels starting with her middle school students. The middle school administrative team at Faith Lutheran grew personally as professionally as they completed intensive training based on Brene Brown's Dare to Lead. Sarah is trained to facilitate this work and looks forward to growing this at Faith Las Vegas and beyond.

Sarah's greatest accomplishment is raising two independent, Christian women. Sarah and her husband Doug love to travel and watch their girls compete and perform in their respective college sports: softball and dance.

Ben Hunter, Red Hill Lutheran School, Tustin, CA

An Alumnus of Concordia University of Irvine, Ben Hunter is in his 9th year of teaching Instrumental Music at Red Hill Lutheran School in Tustin, CA. Mr. Hunter currently teaches ukulele, beginning orchestral strings, middle school orchestra, beginning band, middle school concert band, and middle school drumline. Previously, he has also taught preschool through second grade classroom music, recorder classes, and handbells. Hunter also functions as RHLS' Department Lead for electives and other specialty classes. Each Spring, he has the opportunity of facilitating the local Southern California Christian Schools Honor Ensemble Concert based in Orange County.

In 2020, Mr. Hunter was awarded as a Top 10 Teacher in Orange County by Parenting OC Magazine. Ben lives in Lake Forest, Ca with his wife, Allison, his daughter, Lina, his son, Killian, and their pug, Jackson.

Pastor Nathan Huse, Peace Lutheran Church, Tustin, CA

Nathan serves as the pastor of Peace Lutheran Church in Tustin, CA. He is passionate about preaching, teaching, and equipping the saints for works of ministry. During the last two years at Peace Tustin, the congregation has grown from a handful of dedicated members to over 100 people engaged in worship and community every week. Pastor Nathan is married to Hannah and has three children, Micah, Tessa, and Jonah. He loves road cycling and hiking with his family in his free time.

Dr. Belinda Karge, Concordia University, Irvine, CA

Dr. Karge is a Professor in the Doctoral Program at Concordia University Irvine and Chair of the Doctorate of Leadership Specialization in Special Education. Prior to the university, she served in teacher and administration roles in both elementary and secondary schools. She is the author of numerous publications and books, her latest will be out soon, Watch, Listen, Ask Learn: How Schools Can Create an Inclusive Environment for Students with Disabilities. She travels extensively with the US Dept. of State Office of Overseas Schools, speaking at schools and keynoting conferences. She is Lutheran and loves mission work globally and relaxing in Arizona, at the Colorado River with her family.

Jennie Lovie, CA Reading Specialist and Literacy Coach, Napa, CA

Jennie Lovie has been an educator for over thirty years, half of which were spent teaching primary grades at St. John's Lutheran in Napa, CA. Seven years ago she completed her CA Reading Specialist and Literacy Coach credential, as well as a Masters of Science in Reading and Literacy. Her passion is to come alongside students and teachers in their reading growth and development. Jennie is married to a retired CalFire Battalion Chief, and have two grown daughters who also are educators.

Anna McDaniel, Faith Lutheran Middle & Senior High School, Las Vegas, NV

Anna McDaniel grew up attending Bethany Lutheran Church and Schools in Long Beach, CA. She got her B.S. in Secondary Education - Mathematics and Theology from Concordia University, Nebraska and her M.Ed. in Educational Leadership from Concordia University, Portland. Anna received her first call to Faith Lutheran Middle School and High School, Las Vegas, NV in January 2016 and continues to serve there. She has held positions in the math, theology, and resource departments, and now serves as the Director of Academic Support. Anna is currently in the ALSS FACT Program, and is scheduled to complete the program in September

2023. Anna and her boyfriend, James, attend Faith Community Lutheran Church, where Anna serves as the "Top Dog" (team leader) on LCC K-9 Comfort Dog Team Salome and sings in the church choir. Anna lives with her sister Jen, two 6 year-old golden retrievers, and loves that she also lives in the same city as her brother's family.

Matt Miller, Blogger/Author/Speaker, West Central Indiana

Matt Miller taught in public schools for more than 10 years, teaching all levels of high school Spanish. In his career, he planned nearly 12,000 class lessons. He taught more than half a million instructional minutes. And he graded work for nearly 2,000 days of class. He's an award-winning author with five books to his name. Matt is a Google Certified Innovator, PBS LearningMedia Digital Innovator and two-time Bammy! Awards nominee. His Ditch That Textbook blog encourages tens of thousands of educators in more than 100 countries to use technology and creative ideas in teaching. Reach him at matt@DitchThatTextbook.com or on Twitter at [@jmattmiller](https://twitter.com/jmattmiller).

Donalyn Miller, The Book Whisperer, Colleyville, TX

Donalyn Miller is an award-winning Texas teacher and independent reading advocate. She is the author or coauthor of numerous books and articles about engaging young people with reading, including most recently *The Joy of Reading*, coauthored with Teri S. Lesesne, and *Game Changer! Book Access for All Kids*, coauthored with Colby Sharp. She is cofounder of the Nerdy Book Club and founder of #bookaday.

Brian Page, Concordia Plans, St. Louis, MO

Brian is a Retirement Solutions Consultant with Concordia Plans. With over 20 years of experience in the corporate and non-profit retirement plan industry, Brian seeks to foster awareness and appreciation for the Concordia Plans Retirement Solution within the LCMS community. His presentation style uncomplicates retirement plans and his personal narrative drives his passion for cultivating retirement success stories.

Rev. Dominic Rivkin, Pacific Southwest District, Irvine, CA

Rev. Dominic J. Rivkin serves as the Mission Executive for the Pacific Southwest District of the LCMS and is a trained Spiritual Director. As an urban missionary and church planter, Pastor Dominic focuses on supporting the congregations of our District in creating new ministries. This includes developing strategies and partnerships toward planting new, multi-cultural

missions and equipping leaders for our diverse and growing region. His ongoing study has been in Ancient Christian Spirituality and the work of Dallas Willard, with a dissertation on Christian identity and purpose to follow. Dominic and his wife Cassie reside in Los Angeles, enjoying the excitement of the city as much as they love exploring the trails and mountains of Southern California.

Dr. Kent Schlichtemeier, Concordia University, Irvine, CA

Kent Schlichtemeier has enjoyed serving for over four decades as a leader in education. He began his career teaching 6th-8th grades. After completing his Master's degree at the University of Denver, he taught and coached at the high school level in Orlando, FL. Kent served as a Professor in the School of Education at Concordia University Irvine from 1988-2003 where he mentored future teachers. In addition to teaching at Concordia, Kent was the women's basketball coach until retiring from coaching in 1993 to pursue his doctoral degree. During the final two seasons of Kent's tenure as coach, the Lady Eagle basketball team made two consecutive appearances at the NAIA National Basketball Tournament after winning the Golden State Athletic Conference Championships. Kent was named the District Three NAIA Coach of the Year in 1992 and 1993 and was inducted into the Concordia Athletic Hall of Fame in 2006.

Kent completed his Ed.D. at UCLA in Educational Leadership. Kent served as a teacher and Assistant Principal at Orange Lutheran High School from 2003-2007 before returning to teach at Concordia University Irvine and most recently served as the Dean of the School of Education. Today, Kent is thrilled to serve as the inaugural Director of the Servant Leadership Institute. Kent enjoys frequent opportunities to speak at sports banquets, school graduations, conferences, leadership retreats, and business seminars.

Kent and his wife Cindy, are blessed by God with two children - Aaron and Kayla.

President Michael Thomas, Concordia University, Irvine, CA

Dr. Michael Thomas currently serves as the President at Concordia University Irvine (2020-present).

Prior to his selection as President, Dr. Thomas served in several roles at Concordia University Portland, including as: Executive Director of Lutheran Institute (2018-2019); Dean of Arts and

Sciences (2017-2018); Honors Director (2009-2017); & Professor of Theology and Classical Languages (2003-2019).

Dr. Thomas holds a Ph.D. in Religious Studies from the University of Virginia. He is a specialist in the history, languages, culture, and religions of antiquity, including the Mediterranean and Near Eastern regions and the religions of Christianity, Judaism, and paganism (ca. 600 B.C.-600 A.D.). He recently served as a co-editor and translator of *John: Interpreted by Early Christian and Medieval Commentators* (The Church's Bible series; Eerdmans Press). The John volume presents English translations of early Christian commentaries extant in Greek, Latin, and Syriac. Many of these texts have never before been translated.