

Pastor Leah Woehr-Grande is an artist/craftswoman and pastor, and she loves sharing the good news of Jesus Christ in a world that aches for love, reconciliation, justice, and peace.

Born in Doylestown, PA, she grew up in Upper Bucks County, the daughter of an artist/businesswoman and a 35-year veteran public educator. On a Reformation Sunday, she was baptized as an infant into the community at St. John's Lutheran Church, Ridge Valley, where she spent much of her time at church and was an active, lifelong member until her ordination and first call. When she was a young child, she could sense the movement of the Holy Spirit long before she had words to describe her experiences, and she told her mom that she was going to be a pastor. At age 12, she wrote in her diary that when she grew up she was *"going to be either an astronaut, an archaeologist, or a Lutheran pastor."* She attended Luther College, an ELCA affiliated Liberal Arts College in Decorah, IA where she studied biology/pre-veterinary medicine, art (ceramics & life drawing), music, and religion. She spent her junior year abroad in England, studying at the University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University. Upon graduation in Spring 1997, she started her own pottery business (Wöhr Pottery) and co-founded and established a community based ceramic arts group (The Potter's Exchange of Lehigh Valley). For 13+ wonderful years she worked as a ceramist, specializing in American Arts & Crafts Era glaze chemistry, at Moravian Pottery & Tile Works Museum, a living history museum in Doylestown, PA. For 4+ years, as a young adult, she immersed herself in a Mennonite community and was greatly influenced by their ministries rooted in peace/justice work and by the incredible sense of welcome and commitment to community she experienced with them.

While she never dismissed her sense of call to pastoral ministry, Pastor Leah knew that she needed to pursue other aspects of her identity, and when the time was right she would live into her pastoral call. She began by taking just one class at The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia in Fall 2007. One class led to another, and she formally entered candidacy in SEPA Synod, enrolling in seminary as a part-time commuter student for seven years, while continuing to work as a ceramist full-time. In May 2014, she took a huge leap of faith and left her full-time job to complete seminary and the candidacy requirements full-time. She completed her Clinical Pastoral Education at St. Luke's University Hospital Network in Bethlehem, PA. Pastor Leah began working at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Red Hill, teaching Bible & Art for children ages two through tweens at the Upper Perkiomen Child Care Center, a ministry of St. Paul. She completed her internship at St. Paul the following year, before staying on staff at St. Paul for a third year, serving as a Pastoral Assistant until she graduated from seminary in May 2017 and received her First Call.

Open to where there was need within the Church, and led by the Spirit, First Call led Pastor Leah to serve as Associate Pastor at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Plover, WI beginning in 2017. Early in 2021, when the congregation's Lead Pastor resigned for another call, Pastor Leah, working with a synod recommended consultant, led the congregation through a time of pastoral transition while she herself entered into parallel discernment alongside the congregation. Their parallel discernment eventually became mutual discernment, and the Spirit led the congregation to extend and a Second Call to Pastor

Leah as Lead Pastor, which she accepted. Highlights of their shared ministry over the past seven years include:

- The establishing of “Artful Sanctuary,” which brings the visual arts and installations into the worship experience in service to the Word;
- Working with ecumenical and community partners to co-found “One Big Tent,” a non-profit to assist those most vulnerable in our community;
- Walking with the congregation through the RIC (Reconciling in Christ) process, which leads the community to embrace an intentional commitment to racial equity work and inclusion/radical welcome of persons who identify as LGBTQIA+.

Pastor Leah has also served non-profit boards for the Interfaith Food Pantry and One Big Tent, and she has served as a chaplain for the local police departments and county sheriff’s department.

This past spring the Spirit moved Pastor Leah to open herself to the possibility of a call back in SEPA Synod, which would allow them to return home where both her family and her husband’s family all reside. Pastor Leah, along with her husband of 20+ years, Alex, and their 11-year-old son, Zander, are looking forward with hopeful anticipation to returning home to their roots. As a family, they enjoy spending time in nature, engaging art, LEGO, and discovering new foods. Pastor Leah delights in the movement of the Holy Spirit, and has a passion for the Gospel of Jesus Christ, social justice, racial equity, art & theology, spiritual discernment, and ecumenical partnerships. She affirms and celebrates the unique gifts of LGBTQIA+ persons as beloved children of God. Pastor Leah loves sharing in the many ministries within her congregation and in the community. She feels blessed to love and serve the neighbor near and far in response to the unconditional love that she herself has received from God.

After engaging in a lengthy and meaningful Call Process, Pastor Leah feels a deep, joy-filled, and open, Spirit-led sense of pastoral call to serve as Lead Pastor at Grace Lutheran Church in Royersford, PA. With gratitude, she expresses her deep appreciation for the GLC Call Committee and the GLC Council for their partnership in this process.