

# Who are the New Disaster Ministries Co- Coordinators in KO?

Meet Them; In their Own Words



My name is **Kelly Hansen** and I currently serve as a chaplain at two hospitals in the Kansas City area. I joined the KO Conference in 2019, transferring my candidacy for ministry from the United Methodist Church. I was ordained in 2020. My call has always been to chaplaincy, to serving outside the church. For a multitude of reasons, I have a passion for being with people in challenging circumstances, whether that is a hospital room, a prison, or perhaps the site of a disaster. I grew up in Montana in a Congregational Church and enjoyed church camp in the wilderness and beauty of nature--I knew God was not bound by

church walls. When I moved to Kansas City in 2004, I was attending church with my family, and their church had an extremely active disaster ministry. I learned how to drive and operate a skid loader, how to run a couple different kinds of chain saws, how to debrief and offer spiritual and psychological first aid, and took the CERT class offered by the local fire department.

Later, during CPE, our residency cohort had the opportunity to take part in a large area wide disaster drill. It reminded me of the drill I participated in as a grade school student that trained emergency workers in preparation for a large scale chemical spill. All of these activities underscore my appreciation for the Wesleyan theological perspective of faith in action. Coordinated and cooperative efforts create an efficient and effective response to disaster or emergency situations. Our covenantal relationships between churches and conferences foster the ability to offer support and resources to a specific context. Our presence and our assistance can help remind folks that God is with them during the challenges of life; and that they are not alone--there are helping hands that are a tangible sign of God's presence. I look forward to working with folks across the conference and at the national level to help coordinate care if a disaster strikes our area. Creating plans and building a network of relationships in advance can facilitate timely action when needed as well as support a long term recovery plan.



I am **Laura Woods** a Board-Certified Chaplain currently serving the Integris Healthcare System in the Oklahoma City metro. I spend 20 hours a week at the Integris Cancer Institute with the patients and staff and sometimes families, depending on covid protocols and also serve as an on-call and fill in chaplain when needed. I graduated from University of Central Oklahoma in 2002 with a BS, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in 2005 with an MDiv, and just finished my first class in the D. Min program at Phillips Theological Seminary. I did my CPE residency in San Antonio, TX with the Baptist Health System and became Board Certified in 2012. I was ordained by the UCC in 2012 in San Antonio. In 2019, I became a Certified Funeral Celebrant. This year besides agreeing to become the Disaster Co-Coordinator, I have also been selected to serve as the Annuitant Visitor in Oklahoma for the Pension Board.

Being a chaplain is who I am. Growing up I always knew that I am good at loving people. I didn't know how that would look until my first unit of CPE in seminary. It was as if a piece of the puzzle that is life fell into place. I literally thought, "*This is where I go,*" while standing in the Bone Marrow Transplant unit. Since CPE, I have spent my time as a chaplain in crisis situations. I dwell in nightmares and this is why I agreed to become co-coordinator for disasters. I am entirely more comfortable and skilled in someone's nightmare than I ever was in a pulpit.

My favorite thing to do when not working is aunting. Niece or nephew number 30 is due next March. My wife of 16 years, Diana and I adopted our son, Jacobie on his 16th birthday. I met him working as a case worker for Child Protective Services after CPE. He's 27 now and a tattoo artist in Arlington, TX. He and his wife, Ana (pronounced Ahna) are expecting their first child in October. We have a grand-dog, Beau, who is an 11 month old Basset Hound and a grand-snake named Mocha.

Beyond family, I enjoy reading, watching stuff, snuggling/playing with my dogs, Lily and Bailey, we have two cats, Sushi and Blue, they neither snuggle nor play. Diana and I also love to go camping and do so regularly with our dogs.