

ACTheals 2017 International Conference Plenary Information



Dr. Karl Lehman, MD

Dr. Lehman is a board-certified psychiatrist with thirty years and more than forty thousand hours of clinical experience. He has worked tenaciously throughout his career to integrate his personal Christian faith with medical science, modern mental health care, and his rigorous scientific training; and he has especially worked to integrate faith-based emotional healing with insights provided by psychological and neurological research. Working closely with Dr. E. James Wilder, Dr. Lehman developed the Immanuel Approach. In addition to observations from his clinical work, regular consultation with colleagues, and extensive ongoing study of a wide range of research literature, Dr. Lehman is also deeply committed to his own growth and healing. He is constantly learning through the application of emotional healing principles and tools in his personal journey. Furthermore, Dr. Lehman has been married for more than twenty-six years, and he and Charlotte work as a team to apply everything they learn about growth and healing in the context of their marriage. This combination of decades of clinical experience, extensive ongoing study, regular collaboration with colleagues, and regular emotional healing work in his own life has provided an especially strong foundation from which to discover important new insights.

Plenary presentation - “Our Brains Work Best in Community”:

In this presentation, Dr. Lehman will describe how our brains work better on the emotional energy fuel of joy, as opposed to the fuel of anger or fear, and he will explain why this optimal joy fuel is only available in the context of community. He will elucidate the ways in which each of the five levels of functioning in our right hemispheres work best in community. He will describe how community helps us to feel the importance and perceive the meaning of all mental content. And he will explain why the safety net component of the Immanuel Approach is most effective in the context of community. Putting all of these pieces together, Dr. Lehman will present a compelling case for the profound truth that God has designed our brains to work best in community.



Pastor Charlotte Lehman, M.Div.

Charlotte Lehman, M.Div. is extremely grateful to have become part of Reba Place Church (Mennonite Church USA) of Evanston, IL in her early 20's (around 1987) and to have had the opportunity to be shaped by the strong and loving multi-generational community of Jesus' followers there. In 2009, she became Lead Pastor and has been having an awesome adventure in learning the art of leadership ever since. Charlotte's current tasks include preaching and coordination of lay preachers in the community, leadership of the staff team and church Leadership Team, casting vision and lay leadership development, representing the church in the community, and pastoral care ranging from weddings and funerals to individual prayer times. Charlotte is sure that she would not have survived, let alone thrived, in her role as pastor, had she not already been living a lifestyle of regular connection with and healing from Jesus through Immanuel Prayer. She's grateful to her husband, psychiatrist and Immanuel Approach developer Karl Lehman, M.D., for that! She has also experienced tremendous growth through the deliberate study of the 19 right brain skills taught by Life Model Works, and has enjoyed seeing Reba Place Church benefit from the application of these principles to its congregational life.

Plenary presentation - "Healing in Community: Staying Relational":

Pastor Charlotte Lehman believes that the foundation of a healing community is the establishment of a relational culture, and in this presentation she will describe that culture and share a theological, Biblical foundation for it. Charlotte will also give examples of how her church community has worked to build this foundation and experienced its benefits.



Rev. Chris M. Coursey, MT & Jen Coursey

Chris is an ordained minister, pastoral counselor, published author, curriculum designer and international speaker. Chris authors, teaches and trains people and groups to start joy and master the 19 character skills. Priorities include an active ministry filled with the development of products and training packages designed to propagate relational skills that include discipleship, curriculum development, networking, teaching and speaking. Chris spends much of his time writing, studying, serving his church community, fostering relationships and playing with his two sons. Chris enjoys equipping churches, pastors, missionaries, leaders, groups and couples to be joyful and resilient in their life, ministry, marriage and relationships.

Chris and Jen Coursey lead the Thrive Training Institute, which leverages the Life Model Works exercises to teach people relational skills that bring joy, hope, healing, maturity and resiliency. They are parents to two active boys, Matthew and Andrew. Jen is a teacher, Thrive Training facilitator, author, a synchronized dance instructor and blogger on the thrivetoday.org site about how the skills are used in marriage and parenting.

Plenary presentation – “Relational Skills That Heal and Restore Joy in Communities”:

Chris and Jen’s intention with this session is to introduce the nineteen relational brain skills and focus specifically on Skill 11 of the nineteen: *Return to Joy from the Big Six Feelings*.

Using the combination of Scripture, brain research and personal experience as their foundation, they will introduce relational joy and how God gave us joy as our natural state then will talk about how God’s people must learn to regulate and quiet negative emotions all the while staying in relationship. They will point out this is a learned skill that families and communities must put into practice.

Chris and Jen will talk about the pros of having this *Return to Joy* skill and the cons that result when the skill is missing individually and corporately. They will discuss how God designed us to learn how to return to joy from the six negative emotions that include fear, anger, shame, disgust, hopeless despair and fear. I will reiterate that *Return to Joy* allows God’s people to keep relationships bigger than problems. After a time of introducing the skill they will introduce a simple exercise to provide some hands-on practice returning to joy from a negative emotion. This interactive moment will include practice with people, practice with God and some application.



Father Bob Sears, SJ, PhD

Father Bob Sears, SJ, PhD, former Superior of Gonzaga Jesuit Community at Loyola University Chicago, is a theologian specializing in the relationship between psychotherapy and the theology of the Holy Spirit. A counselor, spiritual director, and former professor at the Institute for Pastoral Studies, Loyola University Chicago, he has taught and written extensively on such topics as Adult Faith Development and Generational Healing, Jung, Family Systems, and Ignatian Spirituality.



Rev. Shirley Brummell, PhD

After dealing with numerous health challenges Rev. Brummell realizes life is all about dealing with changes and challenges and therefore, devotes her life to assisting others who deal with life's adversities. Her focus is to "Encourage one another and build one another up." (1 Thessalonians 5:11) Rev. Brummell is blessed to have the support of Charles, her spouse of 48 years, 4 children, and 8 grandchildren. Strong faith, a supportive family, and friends have brought her through the tough times.

Rev. Brummell received her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, Masters Degree in Pastoral Counseling (MAPC) from Loyola University in Chicago, Illinois and Ph.D. in Organization Development from Benedictine University in Lisle, Illinois. She holds certificates in "Addressing the Spiritual Dimension in Suffering, Healing, & Resilience", from Chicago Center for Family Health (CCFH), "Ministry to the Sick, Dying and Grieving", Loyola University, Chicago, IL, and "The Family Journey with Cancer: Navigating the Challenges, (CCFH).

Ordained a Local Elder, Rev. Brummell serves at DuPage AME Church on the Pastoral Support Team, and also coordinates the DuPage CARES Support Ministry. She is founder of Scriptural Inspirational Phrases (SIP) in 2008, which develop inspirational materials to help persons during their time of need. She produced a compact disc of Daily Inspirational Scriptures entitled, "Restore Your Soul". She currently serves as Co-chair of Spiritual Life committee, of ACTheals, and is on the Boys & Girls Club of Naperville Board of Directors. Rev. Brummell truly believes that *Life is all about balance* and therefore advocates *Managing the Change in your life!*

**Plenary presentation - "Finding Christian Unity in Community":
(Robert T. Sears, SJ, PhD and Rev. Shirley Brummell, Ph.D)**

The writer of Ephesians calls attention to the need for spiritual purification and growth into the maturity of Christ to find Christian Unity in Community. "[T]hat we may no longer be infants, tossed by waves and swept along by every wind of teaching arising from human trickery....Rather, living the truth in love, we should grow in every way into him who is the head, Christ" (Eph 4:14-16) Because of human imperfection, the Christian Church became

fragmented as had Israel before Christ. Jesus reached out to heal the divisions but was himself rejected and killed. The early Christians first lived by his forgiveness, but then rejected the Jews who had first rejected them. Then the Christian Church experienced a series of schisms, between Orthodox and Catholic, Protestant and Catholic, and divisions among Protestants. We struggle with this brokenness today. Christian Unity will only be possible if we face the deep pain of our separation and humbly suffer with Jesus as we let God restore the Truth and Love Jesus prayed for (Jn 17:22-23).

Romans 12:4-5 speaks of this unity: "We, who are many, are one body in Christ and individually we are members one of another." We are all believers with different gifts and these gifts are to contribute to the unity of purpose. Many have experienced trauma and brokenness related to church experiences. As we seek to build healing communities, again Scripture guides us "so that there should be no division in the body, but that its members should have mutual concern for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together, if one member is honored, all rejoice together." (1 Corinthians 12:25-26) God calls us to come together to create such a healing environment.