

Rev. Dr. Donna J. Simon holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature from San Francisco State University (1991), a Master of Divinity from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (PLTS) in Berkeley, California (1999), and a Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Mission and Leadership from Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota (2016).

Rev. Simon was ordained *extra ordinem*¹ in Kansas City on October 28, 2000, and was called to St. Mark Hope and Peace Lutheran Church. In 2016, Simon joined the staff of the Central States Synod as the Director of Evangelical Mission. She continued both calls until she was elected bishop of the synod during the 2025 synod assembly.² During her tenure in both capacities, Simon focused on mission, service, and justice, often asking, “What is God doing here, and how can we join with God?” Rev. Simon has also previously served as Dean of ELCA congregations in the Kansas City metro area and Lawrence, KS, and serves as treasurer of the board of the Heartland Center for Jobs and Freedom.

Rev. Simon lives in Kansas City, Missouri with her wife, Colleen, their son Dominic, and three cats. When she is not doing church work, she can be found with a book or in the kitchen trying to coax magic out of food.

¹ Outside of the church’s standard ordination process, which did not allow for gay and lesbian persons in committed relationships at that time.

² <https://www.css-elca.org/assembly>