

Rev. Kristen J. Leslie, PhD  
Brief Bio  
2025

The Rev. Kristen J. Leslie, Ph.D. is a feminist pastoral theologian who addresses issues of survivor resilience in the aftermath of sexualized violence in the United States military, on college campuses, and in post-genocide Rwanda. An ordained United Methodist minister, she has served as a parish pastor, college chaplain, pastoral counselor, rape counselor, and seminary professor. Dr. Leslie began her teaching career in 1998 at Yale University Divinity School as the Associate Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling. While at Yale, she served as a subject matter expert on matters related to the separation of church and state in the military. This led to an invitation to testify in Washington, D. C. in front of the House Armed Services Committee on matters related to Christian proselytizing in the U.S. military.

In 2010, Dr. Leslie joined the faculty at Eden Seminary, where her areas of research and teaching expanded to cover homelessness, trauma-informed pastoral care, and pastoral care in the public arena. During her time at Eden, Dr. Leslie served as a subject matter expert for the U.S. Navy, Marines, and Air Force Chaplains Corps on matters related to sexualized violence, moral injury, and pastoral care with millennials. She is the author of *When Violence is No Stranger: Pastoral Counseling with Survivors of Acquaintance Rape* (Fortress Press, 2003), numerous chapters and essays on topics related to sexualized violence, moral injury, and community gleaning and gardening. In 2023, she was named the Harold Peters Schultz Professor of Pastoral Theology and Care at Eden Seminary.

Dr. Leslie retired from Eden in 2024. In the winter months, she serves on the core team of St. Louis Winter Outreach, whose mission is to provide emergency shelter for unhoused guests on the coldest of nights. In the fall and summer, she serves as the co-founder and director of the Eden Gleaning and Garden Project. With a mission to reduce hunger, reduce food waste, and connect communities, the Eden Gleaning and Garden Project partners with farmers to glean produce from their fields. In the 2024 season, they gleaned over 20,000 lbs. of asparagus, sweet corn, potatoes, squash, watermelon, broccoli, cabbage, and winter squash that was distributed to food ministries in the St. Louis Region. At the end of 2024, Dr. Leslie served as the Spiritual Advisor for Chris Collings who was executed by the state of Missouri.