

# Truth Academy: Our Instructors

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## Jenni Brandt

Jenni is a previous public school teacher, homeschool mom, and lover of children's literature! Their family has been homeschooling since 2013 and has been a part of Truth Academy for the past three years. Homeschooled most of her growing up years, Jenni graduated from Crown College with a degree in Elementary Education and a concentration in Middle School Language Arts. She has taught at both the Elementary and Middle School levels and has grown in her skillset over the years while teaching her own children at home. Her main influences include Charlotte Mason, Andrew Pudewa, Sarah Mackenzie, Susan Wise Bauer, and Julie Bogart. She is excited to share her love of writing and literature with the students at Truth Academy this year.

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## Judy Brown

Judy has a BA in Elementary and Special Education, and a MS in Literacy. With over 20 years of teaching experience, in both regular and special education, private, public, and homeschool settings, she has a passion for teaching children and especially for teaching children from a biblical worldview. Judy is a current reading tutor, piano teacher, and Bible teacher. It gives her great joy to teach in the student program at a local BSF (Bible Study Fellowship) group, and she also loves teaching a 6th grade biblical foundations class on Sunday mornings with her husband as her co-teacher. Each summer she teaches reading in the summer school program at Groves Academy; a school that meets the needs of students with many learning challenges that can often accompany diagnoses such as dyslexia and ADHD. A transplant from Long Island, New York, she now makes her home in a small town with her wonderful husband, 3 teenage sons (which includes a set of twins), and one miracle-girl daughter. A few of her favorites include reading christian historical fiction, eating at Nautical Bowls, and going "home" to NY every summer. No trip is complete without swimming at her favorite ocean beach and eating New York pizza. She is absolutely thrilled to join the Truth Academy family!

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## Angelina Cunningham

From a young age, Angelina Cunningham has had a passion for music. At age five she started taking piano lessons. By age eight, inspired by a favorite CD, she also wanted to learn the violin. Her dad knew that succeeding at any instrument, just like success in any area of life, takes time and dedication. To test her commitment, he told her if she could do ten pull-ups by a deadline she could get a violin (she did it!). After ten years of hard work and private lessons, she now has the privilege of playing in GTCYS Symphony. She currently studies under Conor O'Brien and joyfully seizes opportunities to engage with music and others- from collaborating with other musicians, playing for special events, being part of the church worship team, teaching, and even learning ukulele, cello and guitar. Music injects beauty into the world, and Angelina enjoys sharing this with her students while growing habits of discipline and hard work in the process...all while keeping a good bow hold, of course!

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## Kimberly Grainger

Kimberly (never "Kim") Grainger has taught for 40 years. From children's church and Sunday School, to an Elementary Education degree and teaching at Pensacola Christian Academy, from writing and editing Christian school curricula to 16 years homeschooling four kids, she is an enthusiastic voice for Biblio-centric education. As a mother of four, MIL of three, and grandma of five, Kimberly loves children and thrills when they grasp **truth**, grow in faith and enjoy the process. Kimberly is eagerly anticipating successful collaboration with students and parents,

growing, laughing and learning together.

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## Laura Glassel

Laura Glassel grew up in the New England area, Germany, and Minnesota. She received her associate's degree in Aircraft Maintenance, her bachelor's degree in Missionary Aviation, and her master's degree in Bible Translation from Bob Jones University. As part of her education, she earned both her aircraft mechanic's and pilot's certificates. During her college years, she tutored high school students and learned a lot about teaching techniques and learning. She has been tutoring and teaching middle school and high school classes in the Twin Cities since 2008.

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## Tessa Hagen

Ms Tessa has been training in Tae Kwon Do her whole life. Her mother was the head instructor of her school, so as a child it was something she had to do, but she quickly discovered that it was her passion as well. She received her black belt as a teenager and has been teaching ever since. In 2023 she achieved the status of Master by finishing her 4th degree black belt. She teaches in 4 locations outside of TA during the week and enjoys it tremendously! When she is not teaching TKD, she is usually found at home with her husband, her two sons (who are homeschooled) and her FIVE cats!

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## Bonita Jerome

Bonita Jerome fell in love with teaching while working as an administrator and tutor at a small missionary kids' school in the Philippines just after graduating from high school. Returning to the U.S. in 1990, she pursued a career in elementary and middle school education with an emphasis on language arts. She then spent over a decade teaching elementary and middle school students at several private Christian schools. Bonita has spent the last decade educating her own children at home, teaching and tutoring in the homeschool community, and trying to keep up on the laundry. She is incredibly blessed to be a part of the Truth Academy community and is looking forward to another year of introducing students to the joys of reading and writing well.

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## Kathi Koester

Kathi homeschooled her children for 17 years and has taught homeschool co-op classes in 5 different churches. She also led an American Heritage Girl troop and taught at Southwest Christian High School. She has a Bachelor of Science, etc. You can meet her via her published book [Our Piano Teacher](#), and @Maknartceramics Instagram. Kathi is married to an engineer, and they have a son, 24 years old, and a daughter who is a junior (Fall '24) at SWCHS. Dave and Kathi participate in various charities and study groups. They love travel, and look forward to chaperoning the SWCHS students to England & Scotland this May!

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## Andrea Merboth

Andrea Merboth has a BA degree in Occupational Therapy. Andrea has taken various art classes in watercolor and oil painting and has been involved in several art shows, art exhibits, and canvass painting parties with small and large groups. She has taught art classes for 15 years to varied age groups, primarily to the homeschool population. In addition to enjoying painting on canvas, Andrea paints furniture, walls, fabric, room murals, a 10'x20' mural in the library in McGregor MN, a mural in Ciudad Juarez with locals and done set painting for full-length plays with AGLOW-a homeschool theater experience. With her husband they have helped young people in the Christian faith, realizing that all forms of communication, including art have the ability to either draw you towards or away from the truths of God. She believes that beauty is a reflection of God, and art classes can empower students to find creative ways to share God with the world.

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## Ann Pearson

My name is Ann Pearson. Born and raised in Spring Park on Lake Minnetonka, I am a true 'lake girl'. I am so excited for my 3rd year at Truth! I taught at the elementary level, primarily in private schools, for 14 years before becoming a stay-at-home mom once my oldest child was born. This has always been my dream job! I hold an M.A. in Education from the University of Minnesota, and I particularly enjoy teaching history/social studies, especially American history. My family consists of my husband Carl and our three children: Abby (15), Nolan (14), and Evan (12). We've been homeschooling for five years now and are grateful the Lord changed our educational path. In my free time, I enjoy boating, swimming, reading, writing, nature walks, and spending time with my family.

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## Kim Witthuhn

Kim Witthuhn works as a professional editor and has taught English, social sciences, career exploration, intro to personality, study skills, and personal finance at various homeschool organizations over the last 20 years, including homeschooling her own children. She is also a certified career consultant and enjoys helping people discover the unique design God gave them. She is passionate about helping students enjoy learning and knowing God better by studying His Word and the world He created. Mrs. Witthuhn graduated from Concordia University with a BA in English and Social Science Education. She lives in Eden Prairie with her husband and two of her four children and enjoys studying the Bible, reading, learning, and spending time with family.

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## Terri Wood

Terri has been teaching Apologia Science classes at the high school level since 2001. She has a passion for science and is able to explain difficult concepts in an organized and understandable way. Her classes are well-planned and enjoyable, and she takes a special interest in every student. She first pursued her interest in science by becoming a Registered Medical Assistant and being employed in a medical clinic in Minneapolis. She homeschooled her own three children from kindergarten through graduation and has tutored dozens of math students at all levels. When she isn't teaching science classes, you might find her riding her tandem along Rebecca Park trail with her husband.

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## Gabe Wuetherich

From the moment I can remember, music has been my true passion. I grew up with the sound of Randy Travis' *Hymns* album on repeat, which sparked my love for playing guitar—and I've been hooked ever since! Over the years, I've expanded my musical talents to include bass, ukulele, and drums. I'm currently deepening my knowledge of music theory with a tutor and have taken several years of voice lessons. Music is an integral part of my life, whether I'm helping lead worship at my church, playing with the youth group worship team, or organizing music for Calvary's summer VBS program. I've also been teaching lessons for the past year and am incredibly excited to share my passion and experience with your students!