



A REASON FOR OUR HOPE

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Missouri District Professional Church Workers' Conference

October 10-13, 2023

Margaritaville Resort, Osage Beach



Plenary and Sectional Guide

Schedule of Speaking Events

Click on the sections for more sectional and plenary descriptions (or keep scrolling.)

Tuesday Oct 10

9:30AM-1:00PM	<i>Registration is open for Pastors.</i>
1:00-1:15	Opening Devotion
1:15-2:15	Plenary I
2:25-3:15	Sectional A
3:25-4:15	Sectional B
4:15-5:45	Happy Hour & Gemütlichkeit

Wednesday Oct 11

10:00AM-6:00PM	<i>Registration is open for Educators</i>
8:30-8:50	Announcements & Opening Devotion
8:50-9:50	Plenary II
10:10-11:00	Sectional C
11:10-12:00	Sectional D
12:00-1:30	Pastors' Lunch
1:30-2:20	Sectional E
2:30-4:00	Plenary III
6:00	Dinner

Thursday Oct 12

8:30-8:50	Announcements & Opening Devotion
8:50-9:50	Plenary IV
10:00-11:30	Worship
11:45-1:00	Educators' Lunch
1:00-1:50	Sectional F
2:00-2:50	Sectional G
3:00-4:00	Plenary V

Friday Oct 13

8:30-8:50	Announcements & Opening Devotion
9:00-9:50	Sectional H
10:00-11:00	Plenary VI
11:00-11:30	Closing Devotions

Tuesday, October 10

1:15–2:15PM

Plenary I

Tuesday, Oct 10

“On Critical Race Theory and Social Justice: A Reason for Hope” Winsome Conviction: Hard Topics in Contentious Times

Presented by [Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford](#)

American culture is full of racial division, tension, and upheaval. How can Christians talk with others about hard topics in contentious times? How do we disagree without destroying the church? Even more, how can we love our neighbor, speak well of them, defend them, and acknowledge injustice and the need for reconciliation while also guarding against misleading or harmful ideologies? This session explores how to maintain a winsome conviction amid difficult conversations on critical race theory and social justice, rooted in Lutheran Two Kingdom theology, so we can give a reason for our hope even amid contentious times.

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2:25–3:15PM

Sectional A (Pastors)

Tuesday, Oct 10

Sectional	Title	Presenter
A-01	Tomorrow’s Teachers & Preachers – Recruiting the Next Generation of Church Workers	Rev. Dr. Lee Hagan
A-02	Speaking the Truth About Our Stuff: A Sermon Series on the 3Ms of Stewardship	Rev. Matthew Clark
A-03	Acedia’s Acrimonious Assault – Knowing is Half the Battle	Rev. Kyle Fittje
A-04	The Six Great Commissions	Rev. Dan Gilbert
A-05	When Social Justice is Not Just: Bringing the Hope and Peace of Christ to Those Hurt by the Social Justice Movement	Rev. John Hellwege
A-06	Developing and Implementing a Simple Disciple Making Process for Your Church	Rev. Matt Peeples
A-07	What to do With the Confirmation Dinosaur	Rev. Matthew Priem
A-08	Major Doctrines of Lectionary B	Rev. Guillaume Williams

A-01: Tomorrow’s Teachers & Preachers – Recruiting the Next Generation of Church Workers

Presented by [President Rev. Dr. Lee Hagan](#)

This presentation will focus on the Missouri District’s first critical target, Church Worker Recruitment and Retention. We will discuss creative approaches to recruiting church workers, but also focus on how you can help.

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A-02: Speaking the Truth About Our Stuff: A Sermon Series on the 3Ms of Stewardship

Presented by [Rev. Matthew Clark](#)

The 3Ms of Stewardship sermon series (and accompanying Bible studies) consist of three sermons that focus on stewardship/Godly money management. The sermons are entitled: The Maker, The Master, and The Mule. All three use texts from the Gospel of Matthew as their basis. The sermons were originally written to fulfill a requirement for a course in the Doctor of Ministry program at Concordia Seminary. The sermons were first publicly preached in November of 2019 as our congregation launched its first capital campaign in many years. Great care has been taken to continually emphasize that our capital campaign, and its associated improvements, are about more than just raising funds. Instead, we strive to stay focused on our facilities as a means by which we share Christ with our congregation, school, and community.

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A-03: Acedia's Acrimonious Assault – Knowing is Half the Battle

Presented by [Rev. Kyle Fittje](#)

The Holy Spirit has chosen you to serve in the Lord's Church. Despite that momentous, world altering vocation, many Church Workers find themselves bereft of joy. Their service feels pointless, putrid, and pathetic. In response, Church workers feel guilty because they are not appreciating God's gifts like they think they should, which makes everything even harder. This experience is no stranger to the Christian Church. The early monks called it Acedia, and to them it was the forefront of spiritual warfare. Learn from them what Acedia is, how to shed the guilt, and how to start fighting back. God willing you can reclaim some of our your joy in service.

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A-04: The Six Great Commissions

Presented by [Rev. Dan Gilbert](#)

When we hear the words "The Great Commission," we usually think of Matthew 28: 16-20. But wait! There's more! The Lord gives us more than just one commission in his written Word. This presentation is a Bible study in which we'll dig into six of them, including the one in Matthew 28. Scripture interprets Scripture, so it's good to look at other commissions as well as the one we usually think about.

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A-05: When Social Justice is Not Just: Bringing the Hope and Peace of Christ to Those Hurt by the Social Justice Movement

Presented by [Rev. John Hellwege](#)

While today's Social Justice, or "Woke," movement purports to work for equality and justice, ultimately it leaves many hurting people in its wake. This presentation will look at how this ideology that has permeated so much of our society hurts both those it labels as "oppressors" and those it labels as "oppressed," as well as the hurts that the "Social Justice Warriors" are trying to assuage. This will include the types of struggles that many are facing today because of this ideology. Then it will discuss ways we can share the Gospel of Christ to bring healing and hope amid this pain. Join us as we look at ways to bring the sure hope and healing of Christ to a world that seems increasingly dark.

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A-06: Developing and Implementing a Simple Disciple Making Process for Your Church

Presented by [Rev. Matt Peeples](#)

Many Christians feel deeply passionate about their faith yet feel insecure, even uncertain, about how to share faith with friends and neighbors in a culture that is not interested in church. The old systems for outreach aren't working anymore. The Missionary Pathway is a free, eight-session online course built to provide Christians with a simple, repeatable framework for community engagement. Since its launch, The Missionary Pathway has helped over 100+ people in 8 countries increase their confidence in sharing their faith.

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A-07: What to do With the Confirmation Dinosaur

Presented by [Rev. Matthew Priem](#)

Confirmation is a cherished tradition in many Lutheran churches today, but it is also just as widely known as the last time we see many of your youth. Is confirmation the best way to assimilate youth today, and if not, what can we do about it?

Throughout history, the role of confirmation has developed considerably, and our approach to confirmation must continue to develop if we are to faithfully and effectively communicate the reason for our hope in today's world. This presentation offers a framework to consider some of the problems traditional confirmation may present for witness in today's culture, as well as how we can address these problems. The opportunities created by traditional confirmation, and how to maximize those opportunities, is also considered.

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A-08: Major Doctrines of Lectionary B

Presented by [Rev. Guillaume Williams](#)

Looking at the daily propers for each Sunday and determining the major theme/doctrine to be taught and preached for that Sunday.

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3:25–4:15PM

Sectional B (Pastors)

Tuesday, Oct 10

Sectional	Title	Presenter
B-01	Alternate Church Governance Models	Rev. Peter Kirby
B-02	The Cappadocian Fathers as Pastoral Theologians	Rev. David Burge
B-03	As a Child of God, I am... Sermon Series for the Epiphany Season, January and February of 2024	Rev. Mark Rouland
B-04	Lutheran Spiritual Support for Military-Connected People	Rev. Craig Muehler & Rev. Dr. Steven Hokana
B-05	A Gospel-based Reason for the Four Prohibitions in Acts 15	Rev. Paul Landgraf
B-06	Jesus and Bad Funeral Etiquette: A Reason for Hope	Rev. Jacob Mueller
B-07	New Starts in Small Town and Rural Missouri	Rev. John Perling & Kim Bradford, ODS Intern
B-08	The Chosen as a Tool for Bible Study	Rev. James Uglum



B-01: Alternate Church Governance Models

Presented by [Rev. Peter Kirby](#)

Many congregations are struggling with 40-50 year-old governance models that no longer work with smaller congregations and members less willing to serve for extended time on boards and committees. Many existing leaders have become burned out from long service and a lack of replacement leaders. Dr. David Peter has written recently on Organizing for Ministry and Mission, presenting 3 models for church governance and additional insight about how to disciple leaders into governance roles. The presentation will review models of church governance with strengths and weaknesses of each and discuss ways that leaders can organize their churches to get the same ministry done with fewer leaders and less stress on leadership teams.

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B-02: The Cappadocian Fathers as Pastoral Theologians

Presented by [Rev. David Burge](#)

There is a general awareness of the contributions of Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nysa, and Gregory of Nazianzus, the so-called "Cappadocian Fathers," to the orthodox doctrines of the Trinity, the Person of Christ, and the Holy Spirit. There is not, however, awareness of how they saw their theological tasks as part of their ministry as pastors. The purpose of this presentation is to explore how they function as Pastoral Theologians, as pastors working on theological questions and issues for the sake of the people to whom they minister and helping their people apply the theological insights they have developed to their lives. It encourages that we see the Cappadocian Fathers as models for our own ministries.

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B-03: As a Child of God, I am... Sermon Series for the Epiphany Season, January and February of 2024

Presented by [Rev. Mark Rouland](#)

Epiphany is a great time of the year as the Church gathers around the wondrous revealing of the identity of Jesus. But it's also a challenging time of year for pastors because the Christmas Season just ended, and Lent is coming so very soon! Because of that, the intent of this breakout is simple: to provide pastors with a sermon series running from Epiphany through Transfiguration, focusing on the Epistle Readings. In those readings, the Apostle Paul guides the Church to remember our true identity, as Partakers of the Promise (Epiphany), Baptized into Christ (Baptism of our Lord), and on and on.

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B-04: Lutheran Spiritual Support for Military-Connected People

Presented by [Rev. Craig Muehler](#) and [Rev. Dr. Steven Hokana](#)

How do you provide Lutheran spiritual support needed to help military-connected people in your church and community in today's culture? Can you in good conscience serve in the Military? (This includes those from your congregation who are serving currently as well as the Veterans in your congregation and community).

--provide encouragement and care to all military connected people (active, reserve, retired, veterans and their families). --provide encouragement, training, guidance and technical assistance to LCMS congregations to aid them in sharing the Gospel, providing encouragement, care and support to our veterans and all military connected people in their local communities and their families. --provide a network of care connecting congregations all across America in sharing the Gospel to the veterans and all military connected people. This network of care allows congregations stay connected, encourage one another, share best practices and receive resources as they serve who served us and have borne the burden of our nation in the Armed Forces.

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B-05: A Gospel-based Reason for the Four Prohibitions in Acts 15

Presented by [Rev. Paul Landgraf](#)

The interest level for the average pastor regarding the so-called 'Western' manuscripts is quite small, but their differences are significant, and many treat them as a first draft. As Acts 15 is examined, and the question arises as to the interest level of Paul regarding the four prohibitions that were proposed by James (v. 20), many pastors are unsure as to how to answer. This paper proposes a more cultural-literary answer to the 'Western' manuscript differences and connects the four prohibitions to the four gospel accounts. In Acts 15:29 those prohibitions appear in a similar order to the prohibitions in Leviticus 17-18, the central part of the central book of the extremely important Pentateuch, and connections may be made between the various prohibitions and their corresponding gospel account. Connecting these two things may be seen as a Jewish halakhic method of interpretation, while the additions to the text, seen especially in Acts, may be haggadic.

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B-06: Jesus and Bad Funeral Etiquette: A Reason for Hope

Presented by [Rev. Jacob Mueller](#)

Jesus wrecked funerals. His word and touch made dead people alive again. This is good news for us just as it was for the families of Jairus, the widow at Nain, and Lazarus' sisters. As pastors, teachers, and other church workers teach and preach these texts we bring hope to God's people and witness the power of the resurrection to the world. This workshop will explore Luke 7:11-17 (Jesus raises a widow's son), Mark 5:21-43 (Jesus raises Jairus' daughter), and John 11:1-46 (Jesus raises Lazarus). We will explore different ways we can use these texts to bring hope to God's people in our preaching and teaching.

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B-07: New Starts in Small Town and Rural Missouri

Presented by [Rev. John Perling](#) and [Kim Bradford, ODS Intern](#)

The Missouri Ozarks are the Bible Belt, but a Gospel Desert. Find out how one woman with a heart for the people of the Ozarks is partnering with her pastor to plant new gospel seedlings in long fallow ground. ODS Bradford and Pastor Perling are working to plant and nurture faith in people of rural and small town Missouri. Four preaching stations have been begun in homes, neighborhood clubhouses, local family restaurants, and, yes, community churches left abandoned after covid. Christians living in service and support of their neighbors counter the common narrative that Christians do not really care, that churches just want your money, that the Christian faith is a fraud. We'll share how we're flipping the script and why we need more Seminary based distance education to serve these rural communities and small towns.

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B-08: The Chosen as a Tool for Bible Study

Presented by [Rev. James Uglum](#)

The Chosen is a hit crowd-funded television series on the life of Jesus Christ. It is arguably one of the most engaging and powerful portrayals of the Gospel and in its third season has been seen by millions of people. This presentation will walk through how to use The Chosen as a resource for Bible study. You will learn how to break the episodes down into manageable chunks for use in Bible study and how to guide others as they watch The Chosen to be discerning about what they are viewing.

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Wednesday, October 11

8:50–9:50AM

Plenary II

Wednesday, Oct 11

“On Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity: A Reason for Hope” Winsome Conviction: Hard Topics in Contentious Times

Presented by [Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford](#)

American Christians live in a sexually explicit society. Marriage, family, and human identity have all been undermined. Transgender ideology pulls biological sex apart from gender. Social media mainstreams once unthinkable behaviors while canceling those who disagree. Yet the church is to be a haven for the broken. How can Christians talk with others, including non-Christians, about hard topics in contentious times? How do we disagree without destroying our witness to an unbeliever? This session explores how to maintain a winsome conviction for difficult conversations on sexual orientation and gender identity, rooted in our Lutheran theology of the body, so we can give a reason for our hope even amid contentious times.

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10:10–11:00AM

Sectional C (Pastors)

Wednesday, Oct 11

Sectional	Title	Presenter
C-01	Practical Points for Pastors in Multi-Church Partnerships	Rev. Dr. Paul Winingham
C-02	Variation on the Consolations: How Luther Can Help You Endure What Must Be Endured	Rev. Erik Rottmann
C-03	"I Will Shepherd..." Ezekiel 34:11-24	Rev. Elden Kohn
C-04	The Resurrection - "The Reason for Our Hope"	Rev. Matthew Berry
C-05	Hope in Christ through Sickness and Death	Rev. Weston Wildauer
C-06	Effectively Ministering to Those Who Struggle with Pornography Addiction: A Suggested Christocentric and Practical Approach	Rev. Chris Heaton
C-07	Words of Hope in Pregnancy and Infant Loss: The Need for Christian Care and Witness	Rev. William Marler & Dr. Elizabeth Fuemmeler
C-08	We've Always Done It That Way: Leading Effective Change in Your Ministry	Matthew Bergholt

C-01: Practical Points for Pastors in Multi-Church Partnerships

Presented by [Rev. Dr. Paul Winingham](#)

Nothing quite prepares a Pastor for the complexities that comprise dual or multiple-parish ministry. We will note many of the unique challenges, as well as consider best practices to engage in as we meet those challenges, seeking to carry on this ministry with joyful hope.

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C-02: Variation on the Consolations: How Luther Can Help You Endure What Must Be Endured

Presented by [Rev. Erik Rottmann](#)

Let's talk about the sorts of things we must endure in our persons or in our offices. Let's also talk about the concrete ways that Luther can help. In 1520, Frederick the Wise had become mortally ill and many people feared that he would die. Having been asked to write a spiritual tract to comfort his prince, Luther penned his Fourteen Consolations. Pastor Rottmann has (presumptuously) re-cast Luther's comforts into an image and framework that will perhaps help you draw a deeper connection to the fine, spiritual comforts offered in the Fourteen Consolations, so that you may be more able to endure.

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C-03: "I Will Shepherd..." Ezekiel 34:11-24

Presented by [Rev. Elden Kohn](#)

Starting with God's prophecy through Ezekiel to shepherd His people, participants will trace the themes of the Shepherd and His sheep through Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation.

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C-04: The Resurrection - "The Reason for Our Hope"

Presented by [Rev. Matthew Berry](#)

This presentation will explore the whole of Peter's letter to the church on the conference theme, specifically how a right understanding of the resurrection is THE reason for our hope. A right resurrection theology provides immediate relief and reinforcement to the Christian and he/she brings the saving knowledge of the Gospel into his/her various vocations, while doing so with gentleness and respect. Come learn the simple truths of the resurrection and how you can prepare your people in the pulpit, classroom, home, and in the world so others have a more faithful confession for the hope that is in them.

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C-05: Hope in Christ through Sickness and Death

Presented by [Rev. Weston Wildauer](#)

In the midst of illness and death the world has placed hope in science and medicine above the hope in Lord through his Son Jesus Christ. God's people get to share hope in Christ through words and actions to those who are sick as well as those who are grieving. By looking at the broader picture of hope and specific examples, tools will be given in proclaiming the message of hope.

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C-06: Effectively Ministering to Those Who Struggle with Pornography Addiction: A Suggested Christocentric and Practical Approach

Presented by [Rev. Chris Heaton](#)

Continuing on my presentation from last year, Mentioning the Unmentionables. Part of the battle against sexual immorality in all forms is to be aware. However, another part is the very practical ways we can offer the forgiveness of Christ and a path forward to those who are afflicted with sexual sin, especially engagement with porn. This presentation will offer a sketch with how one in the ministry might counsel one afflicted, rooted in the absolutism in Jesus and how are habits/life/practices must be changed. The design of this talk is to be supremely practical, that people might take away resources, approaches, and ways to engage this difficult topic.

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C-07: Words of Hope in Pregnancy and Infant Loss: The Need for Christian Care and Witness

Presented by [Rev. William Marler](#) and [Dr. Elizabeth Fuemmeler](#)

Our Synod has given a consistently faithful witness to God's design for the sanctify of human life in our contemporary culture of death. In the wake of "Dobbs v Jackson. . ." we need to sharpen and expand our vocabulary and our ministry of care. This presentation will make a case for a Christian witness that retires words which when used outside of scientific research and medical venues, devalue human life—words such as miscarriage, stillbirth, born sleeping, zygote, fetus, fetal tissue, spontaneous abortion, pregnancy termination, pro-choice, and the like. Examining the Biblical viewpoint on human life, an overwhelming case will be made for the lovely way Scripture has of speaking of God's design for His gifts of life, babies, and parents. In addition real-life experiences and emotions will be shared which will change the way we think, speak, and act, and will call for attention today where there has been a social vacuum of silence. The opportunity for Christians and Christian congregations and agencies to bring true comfort and hope is ripe!

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C-08: We've Always Done It That Way: Leading Effective Change in Your Ministry

Presented by [Matthew Bergholt](#)

Have you ever tried to make a change in your organization and it didn't go as well as you had hoped? Let's be honest, any change is hard, and it is especially difficult within many ministry contexts since "we've always done it that way." Join us as we explore the challenges of change management and work through a number of best practices for leading effective change within your organization. When led effectively, change can be transformative for any ministry, so come prepared to walk away with some great ideas of how to better set yourself up for success the next time you make an improvement or try something new!

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11:10–12:00PM

Sectional D (Pastors)

Wednesday, Oct 11

Sectional	Title	Presenter
D-01	Family Discipleship Coaching - Why, What, How	Pam Nummela
D-02	The Conscience - What it is, How it Works, Why a Good One is Critical	Rev. Dr. Craig Meissner
D-03	Compassionate Communication for Christians in Conflict	Heath Luehmann
D-04	Lively Words for Changing Times: Martin Luther's Lectures on Genesis	Rev. Wayne Huebner
D-05	Living Together Before Marriage - A Gospel-Centered Approach	Rev. Frank Greene & Rev. Daniel Clemens
D-06	Developing Parish and School Bible Study Education That Inspires All Ages to Want to Read the Bible	Rev. Dr. Mark Hoehner
D-07	CPS Financial Benefits: What can I use now and what can I use to build for the future?	Leslie Rudzinski
D-08	Dynamics of Team Ministry	Larry Yochum & Rev. Andrew Nelson

D-01: Family Discipleship Coaching - Why, What, How

Presented by [Pam Nummela](#)

It is God's plan and will that Christian parents/caregivers share our hope in Christ in the household especially to the children. Learn how trained coaches help pastors, congregations, and schools shift to a home-centered, church-supported culture and practices to equip families for vital and vibrant faith formation in the home.

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D-02: The Conscience - What it is, How it Works, Why a Good One is Critical

Presented by [Rev. Dr. Craig Meissner](#)

A good conscience and the love issuing therefrom are what Christ provides, and the aim of faithful pastors and Church workers in all their duties. Guilt and a bad conscience are why people avoid hearing the Word of God. But just what is the conscience, and how does it function? The faithful of your congregation are rightly concerned with increased societal threats to their conscience, and desiring forgiveness and direction after enduring a pandemic among other trials they face. Drawing on the Scriptures and resources from Lutheran Church fathers, this presentation will cover a short Bible study suitable for Church groups. Answer guide and references provided.

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D-03: Compassionate Communication for Christians in Conflict

Presented by [Heath Luehmann](#)

Leaders in the church can feel isolated and attacked from various sides. Finding clarity about the conflict and finding a way forward can bring lasting grace and healing which will strengthen God's Kingdom. But how do you start? Exploring the steps of communicating with compassion will be an engaging and interactive way to approach challenging situations God's people encounter every day. Come be part of the experience!

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D-04: Lively Words for Changing Times: Martin Luther's Lectures on Genesis

Presented by [Rev. Wayne Huebner](#)

Martin Luther's Lectures on Genesis (1535-1545) offer a fascinating look at how he interpreted the Scriptures, viewed the changing world of the 16th century, and helped prepare young men to serve in the evangelical Office of the Ministry. This presentation will give an overview of the scope and nature of these lectures, which fill the first 8 volumes of the American Edition of Luther's Works. Luther interpreted narratives on Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham and Sarah, Jacob, and Joseph in light of the Savior promised to them, whom we know as Jesus Christ. He does not gloss over their sins, but always sees God's grace covering their faults--and ours--through faith alone. Luther also shares his common sense observations on society, family life, science, economics, and the Church. The Genesis lectures are excellent for anyone who wants to begin or continue reading Luther in his own words.

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D-05: Living Together Before Marriage - A Gospel-Centered Approach

Presented by [Rev. Frank Greene](#) and [Rev. Daniel Clemens](#)

Over the last several decades, pre-marital cohabitation has become the new "normal" for couples prior to or instead of marriage. As the Lord's called servants, we each have a responsibility to teach God's design for marriage and the importance of our Christian witness to the world. In this presentation, we will think about Christian marriage as a living parable, evaluate case studies from the presenters' ministries, share our own successes and failures, and encourage one another to guide the Lord's flock in His truth.

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D-06: Developing Parish and School Bible Study Education That Inspires All Ages to Want to Read the Bible

Presented by [Rev. Dr. Mark Hoehner](#)

"I don't read my Bible because it is too hard to understand." "I don't read my Bible because I already know what it says." In between these two extreme reasons for why people lack the desire to read their Bibles, stand a host of people thirsting for meaningful Bible Study. They want to learn more about what the Bible really says, but they don't know how to start. Even among those who self-identify to these two negative responses on why they don't read their Bibles stand a host of people who want to know why they should read their Bibles. Why is this? The simple reasons are that the Bible is full of hard to read portions and people are scared to have to try to "figure it out." Others are "scared" that they will look dumb in front of others who have more knowledge of the Bible. Still others, even LC-MS Lutherans who are supposed to know that all Scriptures point us to Jesus Christ, don't know that the Bible really is all about Jesus. This session will discuss ways to encourage you to be intentional about developing a love for studying God's Word with your people.

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D-07: CPS Financial Benefits: What can I use now and what can I use to build for the future?

Presented by [Leslie Rudzinski](#)

This presentation will review the Concordia Retirement Program include the Concordia Retirement Savings Plan (CRSP/403b), the Concordia Disability and Survivor Plan, Life Insurance options, identity protection, student debt resources, the new BeFine™ financial wellness app, and other tools available to members. Members can earn 100 Vitality Points™ for attending!

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D-08: Dynamics of Team Ministry

Presented by [Larry Yochum](#) and [Rev. Andrew Nelson](#)

Team ministry is important for any congregation. Whether is pastors, DCEs, Deaconesses, Teachers, Administrators, or volunteers, there has to be a healthy ebb and flow for a team to thrive. We'll share some ideas and thoughts around maintaining healthy teams and share some resources that are worth having.

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1:30–2:20PM

Sectional E (Everyone)

Wednesday, Oct 11

Sectional	Title	Presenter
E-01	Set Apart to Serve	Rev. Dr. James Baneck
E-02	The Apocalypse of John	Rev. Steve Andrews, Jr.
E-03	Defending Hopeful Discipline in the Congregation	Rev. Tom Baker
E-04	Sssschimple Tools for Effective Witnessing	Rev. Bill Schroeder
E-05	Music and Evangelism: How Music Brings Christ to the World	Rev. Dr. Gregory Truwe & Heidi Perling
E-06	Pieces of Peace for Your Physical and Mental Health	Kelly Menke & Rev. Marty Hasz
E-07	Speaking the Truth in Love...and That Ain't Easy!	Rev. Jake Sletten & Amanda Moennig
E-08	Helpful Tools with Easy Implementation	Dave Timmerman



E-01: Set Apart to Serve (SAS)

Presented by [Rev. Dr. James Baneck](#)

The Synod-wide, collaborative, long-term church work recruitment initiative: Forming and recruiting our children and adults to consider serving as full-time ordained and commissioned church workers in our LCMS congregations and schools.

Current LCMS ordained and commissioned workers identify pastors, teachers, DCEs, parents, laity, and other commissioned workers as those who influenced them most to consider full-time church work. SAS strategies/resources are being developed through ongoing collaboration with our seminaries, universities, district presidents, district pilot project, CPH, LCMS worker wellness, LCMS School Ministry, LCMS Youth, Higher Things, NLOMA, LCEF, LWML, ordained and commissioned workers, KFUE, donors, and more! This presentation will report on the progress of SAS and share the resources SAS developed specifically for church workers and their engagement with our youth and adults. It will also share the long-range vision of forming and recruiting workers for the Lord's harvest, as He calls us to pray the Lord of the harvest to send out workers until His returns so that all may have life and salvation through His death and resurrection.

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E-02: The Apocalypse of John

Presented by [Rev. Steve Andrews, Jr.](#)

Jesus Christ promised that He is coming soon. Even though the beautiful book of Revelation is lost to most of the Church today because it has been taught falsely as a hidden book of codes and terrifying destruction, the Spirit inspired John to write this letter to give His suffering Church comfort and hope in the midst of persecution and death. This is a Bible study on Revelation 12, "The Dragon, the Woman, and the Child" as an example of how to read Revelation, with a brief overview of the book, its common symbols, and its overall message of hope.

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E-03: Defending Hopeful Discipline in the Congregation

Presented by [Rev. Tom Baker](#)

A law and Gospel approach to defending the need for hopeful discipline and gracious forgiveness prepared for a world increasing in nones, unrepentant behavior and disagreement with Biblical values.

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E-04: Sssschimple Tools for Effective Witnessing

Presented by [Rev. Bill Schroeder](#)

The presentation will demonstrate that most Christians do know what to say. The problem is more in the 'how' to apply what you know. But the answer to that is SSSSSSchimple too. After explaining the differences between an evangelist and a witness, the presentation will look at the four basic needs of all people. It will then give insights on how and when to address those needs. Time permitting, the session will end with role playing scenarios. This is so SSSSSSchimple, even a [fill in the blank] can do it.

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E-05: Music and Evangelism: How Music Brings Christ to the World

Presented by [Rev. Dr. Gregory Truwe](#) and [Heidi Perling](#)

Does your church have classrooms that aren't being used during the week? Would the musicians in your school benefit from private instruction? Is there a need in all our congregations and schools for Christian musicians? What if there was a way to arrange already existing resources to serve a wonderful role in our Christian witness while also raising up young musicians for service to the Church? In fact, this opportunity already exists, and this breakout session will tell you all about it. Join us as Pastor Truwe and Heidi Perling share their experiences in establishing music conservatories as centers for Christian mission and outreach.

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E-06: Pieces of Peace for Your Physical and Mental Health

Presented by [Kelly Menke](#) and [Rev. Marty Hasz](#)

A variety of wellness activities supports our physical and mental health. Come discuss ways to care for your physical health through activity and balanced nutrition. In addition, we'll talk about the importance of supporting mental health through self-care -- and even try a simple exercise you can do anytime. Gain understanding of how different areas of health and wellness intersect and affect each other, as well as how to remove barriers to incorporating healthy practices into each day.

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E-07: Speaking the Truth in Love...and That Ain't Easy!

Presented by [Jake Sletten](#) and [Amanda Moennig](#)

Church and school ministry means working with families who have real struggles. This can make speaking the truth in love more difficult than we care to admit. This presentation will address some of the difficult topics that churches and schools face regularly. How do we talk to the middle schooler at our Lutheran school who is confused about their gender? How do we speak God's truth in love to a church and school family experiencing a messy divorce? How do we help the single parent when they find out they are pregnant? What about speaking the truth in love to people within our own walls when we face budget and money issues? All of these questions (and more!) are difficult to answer. Attendees will hear real stories and Biblical solutions from a church and school ministry team. There will be time at the end for participants to ask anonymous questions. We will also leave time for group feedback and encouragement.

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E-08: Helpful Tools with Easy Implementation

Presented by [Dave Timmerman](#)

This session gives you information about four Lutheran Hour Ministries resources to use and how to implement in your congregation. Lutheran Hour Ministries utilizes their own resources, along with a Barna partnership to bring these tools directly to you. •Spiritual Conversations in the Digital Age - How Christians' Approach to Sharing Their Faith Has Changed in 25 Years •Households of Faith - The Rituals and Relationships that Turn a Home into a Sacred Space •Better Together - How Christians Can Be a Welcome Influence in Their Neighborhoods •Gifted for More - A New Framework for Equipping Christians to Share Their Abilities and Skills in Everyday Life

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2:30–4:00PM

Plenary III

Wednesday, Oct 11

“The Anti-Fragile Church Worker: Relational Health in Ministry”

Presented by [Rev. Dr. Justin Hannemann](#)

Much attention is being paid to the health of professional church workers in recent years, and for good reason. This presentation will explore some of the challenges facing Pastors, DCEs, Educators, and Administrators and a model for addressing those challenges.

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Thursday, October 12

8:50–9:50AM

Plenary IV

Thursday, Oct 12

“Childhood & Youth Mental Health: ACE’s, Trauma, and Best Practices for Care”

Presented by [Rev. Dr. Justin Hannemann](#)

This presentation will focus on the state of mental health of our children and youth. We will explore some of the primary causes of the mental health decline we are seeing and what our Lutheran Churches and Schools can do to address these challenges.

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1:00–1:50PM

Sectional F (Everyone)

Thursday, Oct 12

Sectional	Title	Presenter
F-01	Tomorrow’s Teachers & Preachers – Recruiting the Next Generation of Church Workers	District President Rev. Dr. Lee Hagan
F-02	25 Student Centered Games to Incorporate into Your Elementary Curriculum	Allyson Bohlmann
F-03	Teaching Our Hope in Lutheran Schools	Lisa Clark
F-04	Climate and Culture of the Early Childhood Environment	Cheryl Haun
F-05	Encouraging Speech and Language Development Through Play	Dr. Dawn Callahan Dennis
F-06	Dynamics of a Team Ministry	Larry Yochum Rev. Andrew Nelson
F-07	Pieces of Peace for Your Physical and Mental Health	Kelly Menke Rev. Marty Hasz
F-08	Let’s Talk!	Rev. Elden Kohn
F-09	Write Right-Right Now	Dr. Cary Stelmachowicz



F-01: Tomorrow's Teachers & Preachers – Recruiting the Next Generation of Church Workers

Presented by [Rev. Dr. Lee Hagan](#)

This presentation will focus on the Missouri District's first critical target, Church Worker Recruitment and Retention. We will discuss creative approaches to recruiting church workers, but also focus on how you can help.

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F-02: 25 Student Centered Games to Incorporate into Your Elementary Curriculum

Presented by [Allyson Bohlmann](#)

Are you tired of teaching content the same way every year? Use these 25 games to enhance student engagement with your curriculum. These games can be used with any content area and involve little to no technology. They ensure student engagement and are a great way to informally assess students' learning. Learn about Bible Baseball, Lucky Duck, Matamoscas, Fish Race, and Stinky Feet. Your students will be begging you to play again!

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F-03: Teaching Our Hope in Lutheran Schools

Presented by [Lisa Clark](#)

Lutheran Religion Standards were recently made available for Lutheran Schools to use in curriculum planning and mapping. In addition, the Missouri District has provided Lutheran schools in the district access to Atlas for curriculum mapping. How can schools and teachers utilize these resources to integrate the faith in the classroom? Lisa M. Clark, senior editor of curriculum resources at Concordia Publishing House, will present an overview of the Lutheran Religion Standards as well as strategies for how to align these standards with other subjects and consider ways to integrate the faith while meeting and mapping subject standards.

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F-04: Climate and Culture of the Early Childhood Environment

Presented by [Cheryl Haun](#)

How do we plan for early childhood environments, routines, schedules and conversations that nurture children and families in the faith, while supporting children's learning? When you walk through the classrooms and hallways, how do you see, feel or hear our response to Christ's great love for us? In an essay from Pedagogy of Faith, Rathman (2016) challenges us to ask ourselves, "Do our classrooms reflect Gospel-centered learning in an environment where teachers are intentional about how they develop & grow relationships, as the Holy Spirit brings each child to faith?" We provide the context for a child's faith to grow, but only God provides the power for it to grow. Participants will have an opportunity to "think-pair-share" throughout the training session. This module is part of a five session training in equipping our ECE educators in the LEA's Spiritual Nurture in the Lutheran Early Childhood Classroom.

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F-05: Encouraging Speech and Language Development Through Play

Presented by [Dr. Dawn Callahan Dennis](#)

This presentation will review evidenced-based techniques that enhance speech and language skills in children ages two years through five years. Teachers will learn ways to encourage children to expand vocabulary, grammar, social-pragmatic and articulation skills in play-based learning scenarios. Developmental Norms will be reviewed, in addition to signs of delays and disorders, for both speech and language skills.

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F-06: Dynamics of a Team Ministry

Presented by [Larry Yochum](#) and [Rev. Andrew Nelson](#)

Team ministry is important for any congregation. Whether is pastors, DCEs, Deaconesses, Teachers, Administrators, or volunteers, there has to be a healthy ebb and flow for a team to thrive. We'll share some ideas and thoughts around maintaining healthy teams and share some resources that are worth having.

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F-07: Pieces of Peace for Your Physical and Mental Health

Presented by [Kelly Menke](#) and [Rev. Marty Hasz](#)

A variety of wellness activities supports our physical and mental health. Come discuss ways to care for your physical health through activity and balanced nutrition. In addition, we'll talk about the importance of supporting mental health through self-care -- and even try a simple exercise you can do anytime. Gain understanding of how different areas of health and wellness intersect and affect each other, as well as how to remove barriers to incorporating healthy practices into each day.

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F-08: Let's Talk!

Presented by [Rev. Eldon Kohn](#)

From Scripture to Icebreakers to hot topics, this sectional shares ideas and resources for engaging adults and youth in conversation.

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F-09: Write Right- Write (Right) Now

Presented by [Dr. Cary Stelmachowicz](#)

This is a presentation examining writing in and out of the classroom. Engage students to want to write more and to write more efficiently and effectively. The importance of developing a philosophy of writing, factoring in the instruction of grammar, evaluating the written word, and managing time in and out of the classroom will all be discussed. The use of the written word will be presented as a positive activity, a therapeutic activity used to stimulate higher level learning and expression. Many classroom examples will be shared.

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Sectional	Title	Presenter
G-01	CPS Financial Benefits: What Can I Use Now and What Can I Use to Build for the Future?	Leslie Rudzinski
G-02	Set Apart to Serve	Rev. Dr. James Baneck
G-03	Building Up or Breaking Down	Cheryl Haun
G-04	Five Strategies to Build Christ-like Character in the Classroom	Brandi Hallemeier & Dr. Melissa Sandfort
G-05	Speaking the Truth in Love...and That Ain't Easy!	Rev. Jake Sletten & Amanda Moennig
G-06	The "Gifted" Special Education Student - How We Help Them Thrive!	Dr. B.J. Wiemer
G-07	One School's Journey in Professional Development	Ken Holland, Kim Brunkhorst, & Dr. Dawn Callahan Dennis
G-08	Meeting the Needs of Students; Resource to Enrichment – Intervention from a Lutheran Schools Perspective	Mary Beth Self
G-09	Sssschimple Tools for Effective Witnessing	Rev. Bill Schoeder

G-01: CPS Financial Benefits: What Can I Use Now and What Can I Use to Build for the Future?

Presented by [Leslie Rudzinski](#)

This presentation will review the Concordia Retirement Program include the Concordia Retirement Savings Plan (CRSP/403b), the Concordia Disability and Survivor Plan, Life Insurance options, identity protection, student debt resources, the new BeFine™ financial wellness app, and other tools available to members. Members can earn 100 Vitality Points™ for attending!

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G-02: Set Apart to Serve (SAS)

Presented by [Rev. Dr. James Baneck](#)

The Synod-wide, collaborative, long-term church work recruitment initiative: Forming and recruiting our children and adults to consider serving as full-time ordained and commissioned church workers in our LCMS congregations and schools.

Current LCMS ordained and commissioned workers identify pastors, teachers, DCEs, parents, laity, and other commissioned workers as those who influenced them most to consider full-time church work. SAS strategies/resources are being developed through ongoing collaboration with our seminaries, universities, district presidents, district pilot project, CPH, LCMS worker wellness, LCMS School Ministry, LCMS Youth, Higher Things, NLOMA, LCEF, LWML, ordained and commissioned workers, KFUE, donors, and more! This presentation will report on the progress of SAS and share the resources SAS developed specifically for church workers and their engagement with our youth and adults. It will also share the long-range vision of forming and recruiting workers for the Lord's harvest, as He calls us to pray the Lord of the harvest to send out workers until His returns so that all may have life and salvation through His death and resurrection.

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G-03: Building Up or Breaking Down: The Challenges of Faith-Based Reviews & Professional Development for Educators.

Presented by [Cheryl Haun](#)

Participants will consider ways to review and reflect on faith-based "professional development" for educators. How do we build up faith understandings and practices in our Lutheran classrooms? What do we look for, what do we ask and how do we help our teachers move forward in their own faith life and in the lives of the children and families they are called to serve? Participants will have opportunities to "think-pair-share" throughout the session.

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G-04: Five Strategies to Build Christ-like Character in the Classroom

Presented by [Brandi Hallemeier](#) and [Dr. Melissa Sandfort](#)

This presentation will highlight five practical strategies that can immediately be used by educators to foster Christ-like character in their students for little to no cost. Chasing new, shiny programs and resources stops here. Instead, these five evidence-based strategies will help educators authentically integrate character development in their classrooms. After this presentation, participants will discover character development is not something else on their plate, rather it is the plate.

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G-05: Speaking the Truth in Love...and That Ain't Easy!

Presented by [Rev. Jake Sletten](#) and [Amanda Moennig](#)

Church and school ministry means working with families who have real struggles. This can make speaking the truth in love more difficult than we care to admit. This presentation will address some of the difficult topics that churches and schools face regularly. How do we talk to the middle schooler at our Lutheran school who is confused about their gender? How do we speak God's truth in love to a church and school family experiencing a messy divorce? How do we help the single parent when they find out they are pregnant? What about speaking the truth in love to people within our own walls when we face budget and money issues? All of these questions (and more!) are difficult to answer. Attendees will hear real stories and Biblical solutions from a church and school ministry team. There will be time at the end for participants to ask anonymous questions. We will also leave time for group feedback and encouragement.

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G-06: The "Gifted" Special Education Student - How We Help Them Thrive!

Presented by [Dr. B.J. Wiemer](#)

How do we as Lutheran educators program for the gifted special education student? What are common characteristics of twice-exceptional students? How do we identify these unique learners and what strategies are needed to help these students reach their God-given potential? This presentation, by B.J. Wiemer, Ph.D, will highlight the common myths around twice-exceptional students, how they are commonly misunderstood, and provide a toolbox of strategies to help support them within the general classroom setting.

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G-07: One School's Journey in Professional Development

Presented by [Ken Holland](#), [Kim Brunkhorst](#), and [Dr. Dawn Callahan Dennis](#)

This presentation will discuss the journey Timothy Lutheran School took to create a robust and meaningful Professional Development program for staff. Presenters will discuss the journey from the perspective of School Administrator, School Teacher, and Professional Development Leader. Participants will learn how to identify areas of need based on student achievement data, school culture and student profiles. Additionally, they will learn the benefits and struggles of putting a professional development program in place, how professional development can be driven by teacher needs, and how to shift learning into true implementation of practice in the day to day education of our students. Participants will learn the value of collaboration, creating a culture of psychological safety, and understand the value of specific, targeted learning.

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G-08: Meeting the Needs of Students; Resource to Enrichment – Intervention from a Lutheran Schools Perspective

Presented by [Mary Beth Self](#)

How does your Lutheran school attempt to meet the needs of all of your students? There are students who may need intervention from the resource or enrichment perspective. A review of “5 W’s and 5 H’s” will help guide the discussion on WHO is a candidate for this style of education, WHAT happens in the classroom, WHAT concerns bring this option to the table, and WHAT are the guidelines for service? WHEN do the students come to the classroom and WHERE is there extra space for this service? WHY would a Lutheran school want to have a Resource Room? HOW do the schedules work? HOW do teacher, parents, and volunteers collaborate for the good of the students? HOW are these classes graded, or are they? HOW does this really benefit the student as well as other students in the general classroom? HOW does this extra salary fit into the school budget? Come prepared with questions and comments for discussion!

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G-09: Sssschlimple Tools for Effective Witnessing

Presented [Rev. Bill Schoeder](#)

The presentation will demonstrate that most Christians do know what to say. The problem is more in the 'how' to apply what you know. But the answer to that is SSSSSSchlimple too. After explaining the differences between an evangelist and a witness, the presentation will look at the four basic needs of all people. It will then give insights on how and when to address those needs. Time permitting, the session will end with role playing scenarios. This is so SSSSSSchlimple, even a [fill in the blank] can do it.

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3:00–4:00PM

Plenary V

Thursday, Oct 12

“The ABC’s of Defending Your Faith”

Presented by [Dr. Brad Alles](#)

Apologetics, or defending the faith, is as easy as ABC: A is for Archaeology, B is for Bible, C is for Christ Jesus...Find out more and get answers to these common questions so your students are always ready to give a reason for the hope they have (1 Peter 3:15)!

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Friday, October 13

9:00–9:50AM

Sectional H (Educators)

Friday, Oct 13

Sectional	Title	Presenter
H-01	Play Based Learning	Janelle Hendricks
H-02	Volunteer Development and Recruitment	Larry Yochum
H-03	Linking Literacy and Bible Stories	Connie Christen
H-04	Encouraging Speech and Language Development Through Play	Dr. Dawn Callahan Dennis
H-05	Organized Chaos: Middle School Classroom Management	Kristyna Meier
H-06	The Chosen as a Tool for Bible Study	Rev. James Uglum
H-07	State of Lutheran Schools	Dr. Alan Freeman
H-08	Family Discipleship Coaching - Why, What, How	Pam Nummela
H-09	We've Always Done It That Way: Leading Effective Change in Your Ministry	Matthew Bergholt

H-01: Play Based Learning

Presented by [Janelle Hendricks](#)

What is expected in a preschool environment? Who's expectations are they? Are those expectations developmentally appropriate? Are we listening to the science about the young brain? About how children learn? About how their little bodies develop? Are appropriate learning expectations met when we step back and release our own agenda? Come and ponder these questions together and discuss how trusting children to lead their own play and learning can provide an environment where learning standards are naturally met with less stress and more joy.

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H-02: Volunteer Development and Recruitment

Presented by [Larry Yochum](#)

Warm bodies, short term servants, or long term ministers. Many ministries struggle to fill in ministry roles let alone keep them filled. There can be many reasons for this difficulty including our own assumptions and blind spots when it comes to developing volunteers and recruiting them. In this presentation, we will look at how we can change our view of ministry roles, see opportunity to disciple people, and work toward developing our people to serve.

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H-03: Linking Literacy and Bible Stories

Presented by [Connie Christen](#)

This presentation will demonstrate how to teach emergent language skills through the use of Bible stories, nursery rhymes, syllabification, sound letter association, retell, print awareness, mystery box, letter crafts, alphabet, library, and writing centers are all used to encourage pre-kinder students to develop language and literacy at a developmentally appropriate level.

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H-04: Encouraging Speech and Language Development Through Play

Presented by [Dr. Dawn Callahan Dennis](#)

This presentation will review evidenced-based techniques that enhance speech and language skills in children ages two years through five years. Teachers will learn ways to encourage children to expand vocabulary, grammar, social-pragmatic and articulation skills in play-based learning scenarios. Developmental Norms will be reviewed, in addition to signs of delays and disorders, for both speech and language skills.

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H-05: Organized Chaos: Middle School Classroom Management

Presented by [Kristyna Meier](#)

It is every teacher's hope to have a loving, trusting, Christ-centered classroom where students can grow and learn the skills necessary to be successful in life. Sadly, most middle school and junior high school classrooms come with their own level of chaos due to changing hormones, multiple teacher expectations, and unclear procedures. This presentation will focus on how to build honest, positive relationships with students while maintaining control over classroom situations. Part of this control stems from clear expectations and procedures and the grace given when mistakes are made. This presentation will touch on behavior management techniques as well as precise language for expectations and procedures.

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H-06: The Chosen as a Tool for Bible Study

Presented by [Rev. James Uglum](#)

The Chosen is a hit crowd-funded television series on the life of Jesus Christ. It is arguably one of the most engaging and powerful portrayals of the Gospel and in its third season has been seen by millions of people. This presentation will walk through how to use The Chosen as a resource for Bible study. You will learn how to break the episodes down into manageable chunks for use in Bible study and how to guide others as they watch The Chosen to be discerning about what they are viewing.

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H-07: State of Lutheran Schools

Presented by [Dr. Alan Freeman](#)

An examination of the State of Lutheran Schools nationally: trends, successes, and challenges impacting Lutheran schools. Dr. Freeman will discuss Lutheran school statistics, provide and celebrate the many successes our Lutheran schools are experiencing, and present the challenges Lutheran schools face and how we can successfully address those challenges.

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H-08: Family Discipleship Coaching - Why, What, How

Presented by [Pam Nummela](#)

It is God's plan and will that Christian parents/caregivers share our hope in Christ in the household especially to the children. Learn how trained coaches help pastors, congregations, and schools shift to a home-centered, church-supported culture and practices to equip families for vital and vibrant faith formation in the home.

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H-09: We've Always Done It That Way: Leading Effective Change in Your Ministry

Presented by [Matthew Bergholt](#)

Have you ever tried to make a change in your organization and it didn't go as well as you had hoped? Let's be honest, any change is hard, and it is especially difficult within many ministry contexts since "we've always done it that way." Join us as we explore the challenges of change management and work through a number of best practices for leading effective change within your organization. When led effectively, change can be transformative for any ministry, so come prepared to walk away with some great ideas of how to better set yourself up for success the next time you make an improvement or try something new!

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10:00–11:00AM

Plenary VI (Educators)

Friday, Oct 13

Plenary VI

"God's TIP: Truth, Identity, and Purpose in Post-Christian America"

Presented by [Dr. Brad Alles](#)

How do we prepare students to engage a culture that says there is no truth, their identity is bound in their race, class, and gender, and their purpose is to fight the oppressors? Learn why this has occurred and what to do.

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Plenary Speakers



Rev. Dr. Lucas V. Woodford serves as President of the Minnesota South District and the Associate Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Farmington,

Minnesota. Dr. Woodford is a prolific author and serves as a member of the Board of Regents of Concordia University, St. Paul, an adjunct instructor for Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne and the Institute of Lutheran Theology in Brookings, South Dakota. He is also a Fellow in the Collegium of DOXOLOGY: The Lutheran Center for Spiritual Care and Counsel. He is married to his bride, Becca, and they have seven precious children.

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Rev. Dr. Justin Hannemann, his wife Katherine, and their four children live in Seward, Nebraska. He is the Cofounder and CEO of GracePoint Institute for Relational Health. He is also Executive Assistant to the Nebraska District President, with a special emphasis on Ministerial Health. Dr. Hannemann has a passion for helping people develop and maintain healthy relationships in the name of Christ. You can find more information about Dr.

Hannemann and GracePoint at www.relationalhealth.org

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Dr. Brad Alles is an Associate Professor of Education at Concordia University Wisconsin, and is in his 36th year of teaching. He has won the Concordia University Nebraska Outstanding Student Teacher Award, the Milwaukee Lutheran HS/Heartland Funds Teacher of Merit Award, the South Wisconsin District Teacher of the Year Award, and the CUW Master Educator Award. You can visit his website which focuses on apologetics and worldviews at bradalles.com.

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Sectional Speakers

Rev. Steve Andrews, Jr. is a baptized child of God, husband, and father of five. He serves as the associate pastor of St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Lee's Summit. A couple of years ago, he answered the common request of his congregation to lead a Bible study through the book of Revelation and compiled his notes into a commentary that is available free online.

Return to [E-02](#)

Rev. Tom Baker has been a radio host on three stations – the last still on LCMS radio station KFJO in St. Louis for 28 years, Monday through Friday, entitled “Law and Gospel.” Currently serving as interim pastor for four congregations including a university for three and a half years.

Return to [E-03](#)

Rev. Dr. James Baneck is the Executive Director of LCMS Pastoral Education and Executive Director of Set Apart to Serve, the LCMS church work recruitment initiative. Under LCMS Pastoral Education, Baneck oversees the Synod's PALS program, serves on the LCMS Pastoral Formation Committee, oversees Preach the Word, chairs the Global Seminary Initiative, and assists LCMS MADV with the Joint Seminary Fund. Baneck is married to Myrna, a Lutheran school teacher. He is also the father of four married children and nine grandchildren.

Return to [E-01](#), [G-02](#)

Matthew Bergholt is the Continuous Improvement Specialist for the Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF). A graduate of Concordia University Chicago, he was previously the Manager of Online Support and Services for the LCMS School Ministry Office in St. Louis, the Classroom Technology Instructor at St. Luke's Lutheran School in Oviedo, FL and the 6th grade homeroom teacher and Director of Technology at Trinity Lutheran School in Orlando, FL. He resides with his wife Melissa and two sons in St. Louis.

Return to [C-08](#), [H-09](#)

Rev. Matthew Berry's love for 1 Peter comes from his time at the seminary. Berry assisted (then) President Meyer expand the bibliography for his forthcoming 1 Peter Commentary collating current scholarship on 1 Peter. Berry has served Concordia, Sikeston as her pastor since July 2021 and is enrolled in the D.Min. program at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Berry is married to Deaconess Amanda Berry and has two sons.

Return to [C-04](#)

Allyson Bohlmann has served as a 3rd Grade Teacher for six years, currently teaching at Immanuel, St. Charles. Her training includes a B.S. in Elementary Education, Endorsements in Special Education and Middle School Language Arts, and a Theology minor from Concordia University Chicago in 2017. Bohlmann was awarded the LEA 2020 Outstanding New Lutheran Elementary Teacher.

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Kim Bradford, ODS Intern moved to the Missouri Ozarks after first-hand experience of patriarchy cults dressed up as Christianity. She heard the gospel through KFJO radio, connected with a Lutheran Congregation who partnered with her to conduct ministry in the Ozarks. Kim works as a rural route mail carrier and is preparing for full time church work through the Online Deaconess Studies program offered by Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Pastor John Perling of Faith in St. Robert serves as her pastor, mentor, and internship supervisor.

Return to [B-07](#)

Kim Brunkhorst is a 4th grade teacher at Timothy Lutheran School in Blue Springs. She has been a classroom teacher for 26 years, having served at Messiah Lutheran School in Independence, and Bethany Lutheran School in Overland Park, KS prior to her joining TLS in 2004. Brunkhorst also serves as athletic director and coaches cross country, track, and volleyball. She is valued as a teacher leader and actively works to implement her learning through the professional development program.

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Rev. David Burge is an Emeritus Pastor of the Missouri District, though he presently serves as Vacancy Pastor at Zion, Bolivar. A 1978 graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Burge has done graduate studies at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati. Burge served as Pastor in congregations in Southern Illinois and Missouri, and he has served congregations as an Intentional Interim Pastor in Missouri, Northern Illinois, Arizona (English District), and Texas.

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Dr. Dawn Callahan Dennis, Ed.D. CCC-SLP, is a Regional Director for a national education company and owner of Empower Language and Learning. Callahan Dennis is a successful speech language pathologist and educator often sought out for consultation and professional development on multiple topics. She has worked with Timothy Lutheran School, in Blue Springs for the past five years as a PD Leader, discussing teacher driven topics, including Teaching to the Corners, Vocabulary Development, Auditory Comprehension, Behaviors and Learning, and Data Informed Instruction.

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Lisa Clark is the senior editor of curriculum resources at Concordia Publishing House, overseeing resources for Sunday School, confirmation, grade school, vacation Bible school, home resources, and more. She earned her bachelor's degree from Concordia University Nebraska and her M. A. from the University of Missouri—St. Louis. She is currently pursuing a Ph.D. from the University of Bristol, UK. She is a published author and works collaboratively with many to provide a variety of resources to share the Gospel.

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Rev. Matthew Clark is a graduate of Concordia University in Nebraska and Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. Clark currently serves on the Board of Directors for Christian Friends of New Americans and the Board of Trustees for the Lutheran High School Association of St. Louis. He is co-host of "Wrestling with the Basics" which airs Saturday mornings of KFUE radio and is a regular writer for CPH's "Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish."

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Rev. Daniel Clemens is the Assistant Pastor at King of Kings Lutheran Church in Kansas City. As a pastor of the "Millennial" generation, he has great insight into the culture and thinking of his peers and has successfully guided multiple couples to live apart rather than cohabitate. Clemens and his wife, Erin, have been married for nine years and have served as foster parents for four children.

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Connie Christen is a pre-kinder teacher at Trinity Lutheran School, Freistatt. She is presently in her eighth year as an Early Childhood teacher at Trinity Lutheran School, teaching the pre-kinder classroom. Before coming to Trinity, she spent forty years in public education as a kindergarten and a special education teacher. She's a former Missouri State trainer for the "Early Prevention of School Failure" and the "Building a Bridge to Reading Success" programs.

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Rev. Kyle Fittje is pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Lockwood. He received his M.Div. (11) and S.T.M. (17) from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis.

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Dr. Alan Freeman currently serves as the Director of LCMS School Ministry. In his role, Freeman develops and provides support for National Lutheran School Accreditation, the School Leadership, Lutheran School Consulting Services, and The Genesis Study which provides consulting to congregations for new school starts. Previously, Freeman has taught and developed multiple high school social studies courses, plus served as Missouri District Director of Schools, as an upper school principal, and as a head of school for a 6-12 school.

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Dr. Elizabeth Fuemmeler and her husband, Drew, are active members of Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church in Lee's Summit. Drew is on the Board of Directors and leads the men's ministry, and Liz serves in small group ministry leadership. She serves as the clinical product manager at Interacoustics for global development and frequently lectures internationally. Liz serves as a board member on Lullaby of Hope, a Christian ministry based out of Kansas City serving women who have undergone pregnancy and infant loss.

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Rev. Dan Gilbert is an emeritus pastor and active member at Messiah in St. Louis city. Additionally, he works part time for Lutheran Church Extension Fund Ministry Solutions and volunteers for Lutheran Bible Translators. Gilbert grew up at Calvary in Kansas City and has previously served as a teacher at Lutheran South, a pastor in Iowa, and a District President in Northern Illinois. Gilbert is married to Jan (Broughton) and they are blessed with two daughters, two sons, and 21 grandkids.

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Rev. Frank Greene is the Senior Pastor at King of Kings Lutheran Church in Kansas City, MO. His 16 years of ministry has given him the opportunity to counsel dozens of married and unmarried couples and their families. He and his wife, Leigh, have been married for 25 years, and they have two children, aged 20 and 16.

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Rev. Dr. Lee Hagan has served as President of the Missouri District since 2015. He graduated from Concordia in Seward, NE, in 1992 and holds a Master of Divinity Degree (1996) and Doctorate of Ministry (2011) from Concordia Seminary. Hagan served as Senior Pastor of St. Paul's in Concordia and as an Associate Pastor at St. Paul's in Evansville, IN. He is married to Jill, and they have two children. *Return to [A-01](#), [F-01](#)*

Brandi Hallemeier and Dr. Melissa Sandfort

Dr. Melissa Sandfort has been the principal at Child of God Lutheran School for 12 years. Brandi Hallemeier, assistant principal at Child of God, is certified in Leadership for Character Education. Together, they have developed a unique character development philosophy with God's word at the center. They have been training Lutheran educators on developing Christ-like character and restorative practices. *Return to [G-04](#)*

Rev. Marty Hasz, PLPC has served as the Director of Church Worker Support since January 2020. Previously, he served as pastor at Eisleben Lutheran Church in Scott City and as Director of Christian Education in the Indiana District. He holds a M.A. in mental health counseling and is a National Board-Certified Counselor specializing in EFT (Emotionally Focused Therapy). He and his wife have three teenage sons and live in Cape Girardeau. *Return to [E-06](#), [F-07](#)*

Cheryl Haun, EdS serves as a ministry volunteer, a ECE Consultant for the Missouri District, an Adjunct Professor for CUNE and as a professional development trainer. Educator and administrator experiences have included teaching children ages 2 through kindergarten; program development and growth; parent education; and administrative leadership for teacher support, supervision and professional development. She is a certified trainer for the Project Approach and project manager for LEA's Spiritual Nurture in the Lutheran Early Childhood Classroom training modules. *Return to [F-04](#), [G-03](#)*

Rev. Chris Heaton is a sole parish pastor, husband, and father of two daughters. He has done extensive reading, research, and writing on the topic of sexual immorality and the problem of pornography in the Church. Heaton has had the opportunity to counsel several who are afflicted with a habituation into a life of pornography and want help to get out. Heaton also has a background with addiction and compulsive behavior. *Return to [C-06](#)*

Rev. John Hellwege, PhD is pastor of Salem, Farrar and Zion, Crosstown. Previously, he served as Associate Professor of Theology at Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton. He has presented on the topic of the Social Justice/Cultural Marxist/Woke and blogs about it, among other topics at <https://johnhellwege.substack.com>. He has also published numerous articles and contributed to several books including *Lutheranism 101*. His areas of research include Modern Historical Theology, Systematic Theology, the interaction of Theology and Philosophy, and the Church and Nazism. *Return to [A-05](#)*

Janelle Hendricks has served at Immanuel Lutheran School in St. Charles for 14+ years and as a teacher of twos-turning-three for 13+ years. She earned her Elementary degree (1999) and completed a master's in early childhood (2020) from Concordia, Seward, NE. *Return to [H-01](#)*

Rev. Dr. Mark R. Hoehner serves as senior pastor at Chapel of the Cross, St. Peters. He received his B.A. in Secondary Education from Concordia, WI; M.Div. and Ph.D. in Old Testament studies from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. He's taught theology at Lutheran High North and in St. Charles; guest professor in Old Testament, Hermeneutics, and Biblical Languages at Concordia Seminary. He's written 4 books in the *Knowing God Knowing Me* series. *Return to [D-06](#)*

Ken Holland is the School Administrator for Timothy Lutheran School in Blue Springs. His first 30 years in education were in public school, where he started as a classroom teacher and finished as a high school principal. He joined TLS in 2016 and oversees all educational programs PreK-8th grade. During Holland's time at TLS, he has grown the school to max capacity, maintained NLSA accreditation and continues to uphold a high rigor of learning to maximize student achievement. *Return to [G-07](#)*



Rev. Dr. Steven Hokana, CH, LTC, USA (Ret) serves as the Assistant Director of LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces (MAF) with over 26 years of experience as an active-duty U.S. Army chaplain, earning his M.Div. from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (1987). He is a board-certified chaplain and an active member of the Association of Professional Chaplains, a member of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE), and a Diplomate, American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress, in collaboration with the National Center of Crisis Management.

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Rev. Wayne Huebner has served Salem Lutheran Church and School, Affton since 2012. He and his wife, Crystal, are natives of Wisconsin and are blessed with three adult daughters. While at Salem, Huebner has mentored students in the MDiv and Deaconess programs at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. He has served as both a Vicarage and Resident Field Education supervisor, and as the Missouri District's PALS coordinator. He has an M.Div. from Concordia Seminary (1992) and an M.A. from Marquette University (2012).

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Rev. Peter Kirby serves as the Executive Director of Congregational Services in the Missouri District. Kirby has served as an engineer, synodical missionary (Jamaica), parish pastor, and circuit visitor in Southern Illinois and regional media director for Lutheran Hour Ministries. In his current role, he seeks to implement the Missouri District strategic plan and support congregations in their ministry.

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Rev. Elden Kohn: Child of God since March 8, 1981; husband to Molly since July 11, 2008; father of five; and pastor to the saints of Zion Lutheran in Macon, MO, since July 2013. Kohn is a former elementary school teacher who enjoys playing stringed instruments, reading about the Early Church, learning languages, running, and hanging out at home with his family.

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Rev. Paul Landgraf graduated from Concordia Seminary (1990), completed a Masters of Sacred Theology, the thesis route (1998), and he studied Luther's translation of Psalm 118. He has written and spoken about the literary structures of Genesis, the four gospel accounts, the Pauline epistles, and Hebrews. His first call was to serve as an urban missionary. He has also served suburban and rural congregations in both the UK and the US. He and his wife, Janet, have three children, and live in Eureka.

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Heath Luehmann is a growth coach with over twenty years of experience in school and church ministry. Using those skills combined with his theological degree in spiritual formations and a coaching certification through the Townsend Institute, Luehmann is able to leverage his knowledge of human growth and development to effect lasting changes in individuals and organizations. He and his wife and son live in the St. Louis area. He is actively involved in his church and community.

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Rev. William R. Marler is currently serving in his third term as First Vice-President of the Missouri District. He retired as Senior Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Springfield in 2020 after serving there 34 years and taught at Missouri State University for 26 years. Marler has been active pro-life advocate serving as a presenter for Lutherans for Life and with the Vitae Foundation. He also helped bring Lutheran Family and Children's Services to Springfield over three decades ago.

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Kristyna Meier is a graduate of Southeast Missouri State and is certified in the areas of Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Middle School and Junior High levels of ELA, and birth through high school special education. She has worked with 5th-8th grade students for the past seven years. She looks forward to sharing her experiences (struggles and successes) during this conference and hopefully help others find their voice as they lead students to success.

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Rev. Dr. Craig Meissner is pastor of Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Kansas City. Before coming to Holy Cross in 2022, he has served as pastor and worked in the Northern Illinois District. He has been published in the *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, *Gottesdienst*, and *Logia*. Craig has a M.Div. (2002), S.T.M. (2010), and D.Min. (2018) from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. He lives in Kansas City with his wife, Rebekah, and daughter.

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Kelly Menke, MSPH, CHES joined Concordia Plans in May 2022 as a Health and Wellness Educator. Menke holds a M.S. in Public Health and a B.A. in Health Education, with a Minor in Healthcare Administration, with almost 15 years of experience in health and wellness-oriented roles. As a military spouse (retired) and mother of three, she has seen first-hand the health challenges and successes of people from all over the country.

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Amanda Moennig is principal at Trinity Lutheran School where she has served for 8 years. She previously taught in public school as a teacher for 10 years and in an administrative role for 3 years. In 2016 she received her colloquy from Concordia University, Seward, NE. She has been serving with Rev. Jake Sletten of Trinity Lutheran Church in team ministry for the past seven years.

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Rev. Craig Muehler, CAPT, CHC, USN (Ret), has served as the director of LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces (MAF) since 2014. He was commissioned in the Navy as a Chaplain Candidate (1985), received his M.Div. from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (1988), and served as a Navy Chaplain from 1988 to 2014. He is currently the president of Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty and is deeply engaged with ensuring policy and law continues to protect the religious liberty for all LCMS personnel serving in the Armed Forces.

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Rev. Jacob T. Mueller serves as the pastor of Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Emma. He is the Circuit Visitor for the Concordia South Circuit and has served as a visiting instructor at the Lutheran Theological College of Uganda twice. He is the husband of Julia and father of Hannah, Zachariah, and Abigail.

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Rev. Andrew Nelson is a fresh pastor with many years of experience as a DCE in a parish with a school. He has worked with other called workers and leaders in different capacities and in specific and general ministry roles.

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Pam Nummela serves as Missouri District's Family Discipleship Coaching Facilitator connecting the District's coaches with congregations and sharing best practice of Family Discipleship. She loves Jesus and is grateful to have spent her life sharing Him with kids and adults in schools and congregations. She's grateful for her husband Tom, her kids and their spouses, and her grandkids and loves the faith in Jesus they share.

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Rev. Matt Peeples is passionate about connecting the disconnected and helping people share the unchanging gospel to an ever-changing world. He leads national webinars and speaking engagements on outreach, technology, social media, missional leadership, church planting, and the issues that affect mission and ministry in the 21st century. Founder and Director of the Kairos Network and "The Church at 10:02". Peeples' ministry experience includes church planting, revitalization, network development, mission vision development, leadership pipeline development, and custom training design for churches and districts.

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Mrs. Heidi Perling studied music education at Concordia University, St. Paul. After a long stretch as a full-time mom, she now serves as organist and choir director at Faith Lutheran Church in St. Robert, where she now serves as Executive Director and Instructor of Piano and Organ for the school of music, opened in November of 2022. She is the wife of Pastor John Perling. Together, they have three children: Molly, Lydia, and Eden. She enjoys gardening, playing with Bob the border collie, and eating sushi.

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Rev. Dr. Matthew Priem is Associate Pastor at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Raymore, his first call. Priem graduated from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in 2009 and obtained a D.Min. degree from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (2021) with a thesis project on post-confirmation youth retention. His activities at Bethlehem include the usual preaching and teaching, visitation, and youth ministry. He's basically a guy like you.

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Rev. Erik Rottmann—through mercy of the Holy Trinity and the patience of His Christians—has served Grace Lutheran Church in Versailles, for twenty-three years. He has been published by CPH and others. His dear wife Kelly has given him three sons: Aaron, Aidan, and Adam. Plan a Sunday visit sometime. He will be glad to meet you.

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Rev. Mark Rouland is the Senior Pastor of Zion Lutheran Church and School in Harvester. He's a husband, dad, and a child of God.

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Leslie Rudzinski is a Financial Educator for Concordia Plans. Prior to Concordia Plans, she worked in the financial space, owned her own business, and served in Family Life ministry at an LCMS congregation. She understands the Call process, the moves to unknown places, living on a budget, declaring housing allowances, and balancing home life with the ministry vocation. She and her husband, Kevin, have four children and are members of St. Paul's in Des Peres, where Kevin teaches.

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Rev. Bill Schroeder is a mostly retired pastor and DCO, filling in at numerous congregations during retirement, and still serving at Zion in Pevely. Previously, he has served congregations in Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri. He's authored the book, *Arguments for God You Agree With*, and looks forward to publishing children's stories. He enjoys producing Bible studies for Zion, working around the house, getting together with various old and new friends, and traveling with his wife.

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Mary Beth Self is the interventionist in the newly established Resource Room at Timothy Lutheran School in Blue Springs. She comes to this position after serving for years as a middle school homeroom and teacher for Math, Social Studies, and Religion. Prior to this, she served at the Resource Room teacher at St. Paul's Lutheran Elementary in Concordia for 9 years. She and her husband, John, have four adult children and live on their farm in the rural Higginsville/Concordia area.

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Rev. Jake Sletten received his first call as pastor at Christ Lutheran Church and School in Rancho Palos Verdes, CA where he served for seven years, before being called to Trinity, Freistatt. He is a 2009 graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. And has been serving with Amanda Moennig in team ministry at Trinity Lutheran Church and School in Freistatt for the past seven years.

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Dr. Cary Stelmachowicz serves as the emeritus executive director and principal of The Lutheran High School of Kansas City. Experience includes an undergraduate and graduate degree in English and English literature, a doctorate in educational leadership, as well as 45 years of experience teaching English at the high school and collegiate level.

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Dave Timmerman serves as a Sr. Congregation Connector with Lutheran Hour Ministries. His primary job is to work with congregations and organizations that are looking for new and research-based ways of sharing the Gospel. Before joining Lutheran Hour Ministries, he served as a DCE on Hilton Head Island, SC and Viera, FL. He is continuing to study ways churches and nonprofits can become more effective and efficient. His wife is an Assistant Principal in St. Charles and has one daughter.

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Rev. Dr. Gregory Truwe is Senior Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Cole Camp. Here the Trinity School of Music seeks to: 1) reach out to the church and community through music; 2) provide professional studio lessons and service-based music performance opportunities; and 3) to raise up the next generation of musicians. He serves on the Board of Directors for David's Harp, A Center for Musical Development. But most importantly, he is husband to Jamie, and father of six.

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Rev. James Uglum began serving the church as a DCE after graduating from Concordia University, Chicago IL (2003). He served as a DCE for three years before pursuing pastoral ministry, earning a M.Div. at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (2010). He now serves as pastor at Chapel of the Cross in St. Peters where he uses Bible studies as opportunities for conversations and growing deeper in the faith as God's Word challenges individuals and assumptions brought to the text.

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Dr. B.J. Wiemer is beginning her first year with LASE Specialized Education. She brings a wealth of expertise and a deep commitment to fostering academic excellence in specialized education. For 18 years, she served as a Special Educator, and at Kirk Day School she initiated and developed the special education program, serving as its director for 19 years. She will be developing new programmatic initiatives for the students, families and schools LASE serves, while assisting in expansion efforts to further impact children with special learning needs.

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Rev. Weston Wildauer is pastor at Good Shepherd Lutheran Chapel in Cape Girardeau. For over 17 years he has been associated in various ways with Phil's Friends. Phil's Friends is an RSO that works to provide hope to those impacted by cancer. For the last 5 years his congregation has ministered closely to those battling cancer and they continue to explore new and impactful ways of sharing Jesus Christ with hurting people.

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Rev. Guillaume Williams, Sr. graduated from Concordia Seminary St. Louis with a M.Div. and a S.T.M.. A parish pastor since 1995, he currently serves at Hope Lutheran Chapel in Osage Beach. He is also a Civil Air Patrol Chaplain and local Hospice Chaplain. He writes daily devotions at HopeLutheranChapel.org, publishes devotions on Amazon, and is the author of *Pray Unceasingly, A Briefer Breviary*.

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Rev. Dr. Paul Wunningham is currently serving in his 34th year of dual-parish ministry. Previously, he spent six years teaching in Lutheran elementary schools. In journeying toward the Doctor of Ministry degree, he completed his Major Applied Project in the study of multiple parish ministry situations across the spectrum of Christianity. This culminated with a study of the two congregations he serves to discern attitudes, perceptions, and values of various aspects of their own congregation as well as their partnered journey.

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Larry Yochum has been a DCE for over 20 years raising up leaders to serve in many different ministry roles. He currently serves at St. John's, Arnold. He has been through KINDLE Servant Leadership and is a Certified Life Coach for ministry, family, and changes. He uses leadership development with his three kids who are active leaders at St. John's as well.

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