

Professional Church Workers Conference
November 19-21, 2023
Breakout List

MONDAY Wellness Breakouts

Julie Burgess

Death and Taxes Don't Need to be Scary: How Creating a Gift Plan Puts Your Mind at Ease

Description: As the saying goes, only two things are certain ... death and taxes. But these don't need to cause fear in us as Christians, nor for those hoping to provide for family and ministries. Julie Burgess, gift planning counselor with the LCMS Foundation and the Michigan District Church Extension Fund, will walk you through what you need to have prepared now to ensure your family and your favorite ministries and/or charities will be provided for after you are called home to Heaven.

Paul Clark

Abiding in the Lord of Life: Reflections on the Gifts of God as we Cherish and Defend Life

Description: Beginning with Psalm 25:13, we will look at what it means for our soul to abide in well-being. How is this done? Through the holy gifts of God that bring us true and everlasting life: the Means of Grace. How does this relate to our outlook on the sanctity of human life? We will reflect on various Life issues confronting the Church today; courage and endurance in the face of adversity and resistance; and looking to the future with hope.

Luke Esselman

To Take the Call or not to Take the Call, THAT is the Question!

Description: If you're a full-time, rostered worker in the LCMS, chances are you WILL experience the Call process at one point in time or another. Whether you've been in ministry for a couple of years or you've been serving for a couple of decades, calls to other churches, schools, ministries, etc. come with more than a few things to prayerfully consider. Join DCE Luke Esselman as he offers his six specific areas of discussion and consideration to be worked through with each call.

Blake Flattley & Tanner Olson

Art, Faith, & Community in Practice

Join poet and author, Tanner Olson and singer-songwriter Blake Flattley for a discussion on art, faith, and community. They'll discuss how you can build community around and through creative gatherings, illustrate how art can give words to our faith, and offer practical examples of what it looks like to bring hope and rest through art.

Heidi Goehmann

Intersection of Emotional and Spiritual Health

Description: How do the emotions inside of us impact our vantage point and attachment to God? What does God have to say about our emotions? How are emotions connected to redemption and restoration? In this session, we will take a look at what the Bible says (and does not say) about emotions and how that impacts the way we see and interact with God and each other.

Christie Hansard *

Really, I'm O.K. I Don't Need Any Help

Description: How do we assess what our needs are? What do we do if we know what we need? How can we get our needs met with dignity and confidentiality?

Joshua Kittleman

Are You Still With Me? Hello??!!: Being Present in Our Family Relationships in an Age of Distraction

Description: We've become so distracted, they have terms for it now, such as "Continuous Partial Attention." It's not easy to abide with Jesus and to be present in our families with so many distractions. The pressures that face our families seem overwhelming at times. This sectional will explore how we can be more present in our family life and how we can equip the families in our churches and schools to do the same.

Pat Maier

Visual Faith: Significant Practices for Personal Benefit and Faith Teaching

Description: If we are distracted by planning and prepping, organizing and leading, schedules and (!) social media—is it even possible for us to remember how to ABIDE? This session will look at the significance of learning styles, as well as explore the effects of technology on attention spans and the ability to be still as we consider some "best practices" for teaching the faith. We will consider processes which help students to retain information and practices that encourage slowing down and focus. Learn simple visual faith practices to uplift your own personal walk with Jesus. Includes a bit of hands-on fun and an invitation to free resources to inspire your own creative ideas.

Brian Page *

Rocketing Toward Retirement: How Your Employer Powers Your Journey to Retirement Readiness

Description: Workplace retirement plans can launch workers with the best odds of retirement success. Like twin rocket boosters, your 403(b) Plan and Pension Plan power your journey to a financially secure retirement. So, strap into this session and we'll unearth how these two plans set you on the right trajectory. During our orbit we'll also uncover how Concordia Plans acts as a retirement plan NASA and explore your role in reaching retirement financially independent. You will learn, you will laugh, and you will land with a deeper appreciation and peace of mind about your financial future.

Ryan Peterson *

Energy Management, Not Time Management

Description: Many of us, especially as we serve in ministry, are interested in time management. We use planners, smartphones with calendars, and Microsoft Outlook to help us manage our time better. But have you ever considered energy management instead? This session will give you practical tools for proper energy management, thus helping you to be a better educator/leader.

Joseph Polzin

Abiding in the Parables of Jesus

Description: Abiding in the Word is important, but what about when the Word is difficult for us to understand, like the parables of Jesus? There are many that may seem confusing or hard to interpret. Jesus Himself said, "This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand" (Matt. 13:13). Abiding in the parables of Jesus involves understanding that the parables not only communicate something to us but also do something to us. Parables actively draw us closer to Jesus. The better we understand the parables of Jesus, the better we understand Him, **and the better we may teach and proclaim Him to others.**

Daniel Ramthun *

The ABC's of Healthy Living

Description: In this session, I will cover the affective, behavioral, and cognitive aspects of our being and doing. I will also cover the awareness, balance, and connection needed to stay healthy ... physically and spiritually. God's grace is sufficient for us ministers of the Gospel!

Thomas Winterstein

Oil for Your Lamp: Burnout, Health, & Wellness in Ministry

Description: Do you believe that your physical well-being matters just as much to God as your spiritual well-being? Do you believe that running yourself ragged in the name of ministry is what Jesus had in mind when he placed a call on your life? Do you believe that our congregations need us to lead by example in more than just church attendance and participation? Join me for a conversation about faith, ministry, burnout, health, and wellness, where we can challenge a status quo that's preventing our church workers and our congregations from living with the vibrancy that our Creator intended.

MONDAY Breakout 1

Randy Bickel

Under the Radar and in the Hot Seat

Description: An open discussion on being the commissioned church worker at church and not being the pastor or teacher, yet there are expectations on you and your roles. Serving as God's steward in between the pastor and the congregation will have its own dynamics and impacts.

Tim Bollinger/Ron Kuczera

Stepping Out to Serve: Reach Your Community Through Serving

Description: Now, more than ever, it's critical that people in our communities SEE and EXPERIENCE the love of Jesus through the body of Christ. Discover a powerful way to step outside the walls of your church to reach your surrounding community with the love of Jesus. Your presenters will teach you how to identify those in need around you and partner with local organizations, how to unlock mission funds with "boots on the ground," and how to activate your congregation ... and encourage your community ... to serve. The presentation will include many ideas for "step out" groups, events, and initiatives that have been successful at Shepherd's Gate Church.

Jacquelin Brooks/Kelli Kapp-Heifner *

"But We've Always Done it That Way!" Mixing Innovation and Tradition in our Lutheran Schools

Description: Our Lutheran schools are blessed to have a wide variety of educators—new teachers, seasoned teachers, and everything in between. It is easy to fall into the trap of doing things the same every year because that's what has always been done. Our presentation will encourage school leaders and teachers to stop and evaluate the what, where, and why of what they are doing and look for ways to update and change what they do to meet the needs of current families.

Kyle Chuhran *

Using Rubrics for Assessment and for Better Teaching

Description: Are your students really learning what you want them to learn? How do you know? In this session, we will discuss the use of rubrics for both formative and summative assessment. We will explore ways to create valid and reliable tools to make evaluation and grading accurate, purposeful, and unbiased. We will also consider how rubrics can help you to monitor students' progress and to make instructional decisions that promote learning.

David Davis

Leadership Pathway

Description: Every path is made easier with signposts. Leadership Pathway provides monthly resources to help congregational leaders take a group of potential leaders down a pathway toward significance. In this year-long system, participants will build relationships with Jesus, a congregational leader, and a cadre of future leaders. Components include: agendas for all meetings, a personalized Bible reading plan, a reading list, and 48 weekly emails that address faith, life, and leadership.

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Joel Eden*Church Workers as Everyday Apostles*

Description: The “work” of an everyday apostle begins and ends with abiding in the Word of God, but that Word never stays only with them; it is to be shared so that it may bring about the “obedience of faith” in others, as Paul speaks of in Romans 1:5. This session will give participants an opportunity to discuss together what it looks like from a biblical perspective to 1) abide in Jesus as church workers; 2) begin our ministry with our own family; 3) serve parents in their vocation rather than usurp them; and 4) disciple all nations as everyday apostles.

Jonathan Eifert*Teaching the Faith Through Hymnody*

Description: We are all called to teach the faith, and we have all been trained in how to use Bible and Catechism as tools to accomplish this mission. We have another great educational treasure in our hymns. This sectional will examine how we can use hymn texts to teach the basics of the faith, why these texts are worthy of study, and look at one school’s example of how these hymn studies are making a difference across all grade levels.

Blake Flattley & Tanner Olson*Let’s Write Something*

Whether you consider yourself a poet, author, speaker or songwriter, sometimes we just have things we need to get out of our head to be able to think clearly, and writing can be a great way to do that. Join poet and author, Tanner Olson and singer-songwriter, Blake Flattley as they share their work and offer creative exercises to help you take what’s in your head and heart and put it on a page.

Megan Gallagher **Picture Books You Anticipate? These Are Some That Resonate! (Your students will thank you.)*

Description: I would like to just share some really great picture books! I read to my first-grade students every day and over the years I have found (and am STILL finding) some wonderful books. Sometimes we get bogged down with all of our curriculum and other things that we need to do, and we lose sight of how many great books are out there.

Heidi Goehmann*Helping Students & Youth Grow Resilient Faith*

Description: In this session, we will talk about what resilience is and what it is not, as well as how to help those we teach and mentor build five specific kinds of resilience from a biblical and mental health perspective.

Theodore Hopkins*Unity Without (Human) Enemies: The Church as Community of Welcome*

Description: The unity of the church is an underappreciated resource for mission. Most people today think of unity in political terms, as ideological agreement against dissenters. Such a political notion of unity demands and creates enemies. When the church understands its unity in political terms, God’s mission is reduced to fighting against dissenters and only witnessing to those in agreement with us. The Scriptures, however, recognize the church’s unity as a theological reality with no human enemies at all. Jesus Christ is our peace and our unity (Eph. 2:14), and he calls us into mission also to our enemies so that they become part of God’s family with us. What should the church look like that lives as a community of welcome? Let’s explore this together.

Todd Jones*The Gospel Comes With a House Key*

Description: We know that we are called to be witnesses in our homes and in our neighborhoods, but we often struggle to know what we do to be witnesses. The participants in this session will hear an overview of the concept of “Radically Ordinary Christian Hospitality.” Additionally, we will explore topics like our practice of Christian hospitality when friends or family members come out as gay or transgender. The presentation will include an overview of a resource to equip congregation members in the practice of Radically Ordinary Hospitality.

Gabe Kasper/Marcus Lane **Cultivating a Staff Culture Where Young Leaders Thrive*

Description: It’s no secret that our church body is aging. As we remain grateful for the faithful service of older saints, it seems prudent to recognize the need to invest in the next generation of church leaders. In this session, we offer practical resources and tools that can help you build a ministry staff culture that young leaders love being part of.

Tina Kassebaum **There’s Hope ... For Peace in Your Classroom*

Description: Are you exhausted dealing with the low-level behaviors that rob your time to teach? Do you wish the students in your class were engaged and motivated to learn, rather than seemingly indifferent to the time you put into making a lesson that was to draw their interest and curiosity? I will be sharing evidence-based strategies and proven tools that can be implemented the next day and return joy to your teaching.

Chris McKenna **Pornography and Self-Generated Content: Harms and Hope*

Description: In this presentation, we dive deeply into the effects pornography has upon the developing brain and one’s view of self and others. Why? Because we no longer live in a world where we need to go find pornography. It now comes looking for us, and for kids; it lives in many places where we ask them to spend time doing other activities like school, friends, and movies. We have a complicated intersection between technology, children, predators, financial sextortion, and trauma on a massive scale. Ministry leaders must engage this topic. “It is easier to raise strong children than to fix broken men” (Stephen Douglass). Are your families ready to raise strong children in today’s hyper-sexualized digital world?

Jim Pingel **Innovation and Continuous Improvement: Ten Top Tips, Concepts, and Research Insights for Your Personal and Professional Vocations*

Description: Someone once said the success road is always under construction. Moreover, Jesus reminds us that “to whom much was given, of him much will be required” or expected (Luke 12:48). Participants in this sectional will explore the latest and greatest findings and best practices in innovation and continuous improvement. The takeaways and lessons learned will be applicable to the teaching or administrative vocation as well as many other vocations in life.

Lauren Schaidt*Integrating the Faith in All Content Areas*

Description: As God’s beloved children, we abide in His Word in all areas of life—and we need it! This presentation will discuss how we can introduce our students to a daily rhythm of abiding in Christ and seeing God’s good gifts in all content areas as our gracious Lord cares for our students and for us. Based on almost two decades of experience, wisdom from colleagues, and a biblical foundation, it will focus on practical ideas for teachers with all levels of experience.

Aaron Vergin/Andrew Johnson

Abiding in Christ Together as a Circuit

Description: In this presentation, representatives from the Kensington Circuit will explore how we can develop our walk together within our circuits so that we might better abide together in Christ. Here, we will consider: For what purpose did the LCMS institute circuits, and how is this in keeping with the Scriptures? What might stand in the way of godly cooperation within our circuits, and how can these roadblocks be addressed? And, finally, what specific strategies might our circuits implement to help them grow in Christian cooperation, and thus abide together even more abundantly in Christ?

Richard Zeile *

Articulating the Natural Law Understanding of the Transgender Issue

Description: Christians agree that the state should not impose sectarian religious values, but in matters of sexuality, many of our people have difficulty articulating the here-to-fore shared understanding of the natural law of the development of sexual identity. The goal of the presentation is to equip Lutheran leaders to articulate an overall understanding of sexual social development that should inform school policy, culture, and instruction.

MONDAY Breakout 2

Craig Bickel

Meditation on God's Word

Description: Be still and know that I am God. We know Psalm 46, but do we live it out? In this busy world, 'being still'/meditating on God's Word is challenging. It is not a spiritual discipline often taught in the western Christian church. In this session we will look at different tools one can apply to their life to meditate on God's Word, the focus of meditation for God's people.

Todd Biermann

Family Discipleship ... Helping Families Abide in Jesus' Love Forever

Description: Families are hurting. Church workers. Parishioners. Students and parents. Far from abiding in Jesus' love, they're dwelling in despair. There's hope! We can be forgiven, hopeful, joyous disciples of Jesus who are making such disciples of Jesus in every home. That's where it starts. Abiding in Jesus IN OUR HOMES. Concordia Center for the Family (CCF) will give you the resources, connections, and encouragement to practice and share family discipleship every day. It's not hard when you have the RIGHT PRIORITIES and the SIMPLE TOOLS. Abide in Jesus! Lead your own family to abide in Jesus! Lead all the families around you to abide in Jesus! There's hope ... abiding as disciples of Jesus in our homes every day ... and in His home for eternity!

Jacquelin Brooks/Kelli Kapp-Heifner *

"But We've Always Done it That Way!" Mixing Innovation and Tradition in our Lutheran Schools

Description: Our Lutheran schools are blessed to have a wide variety of educators—new teachers, seasoned teachers, and everything in between. It is easy to fall into the trap of doing things the same every year because that's what has always been done. Our presentation will encourage school leaders and teachers to stop and evaluate the what, where, and why of what they are doing and look for ways to update and change what they do to meet the needs of current families.

Dr. Sara Clemm von Hohenberg*Abiding in Jesus: New Ways to Drive Faith Exploration With Students*

Description: Come learn innovative ways to involve students in faith exploration! You will serve as an active participant in this session which will give you practical tools to use immediately in your classroom. You'll hear about how to create faith-focused theme days as well as hand-on activities such as circle prayers, pass-it-on prayers, and line-'em-up prayers. This presentation will focus on how to make prayer and faith formation fun and engaging for students and teachers alike.

David Davis*Leadership Pathway*

Description: Every path is made easier with signposts. Leadership Pathway provides monthly resources to help congregational leaders take a group of potential leaders down a pathway toward significance. In this year-long system, participants will build relationships with Jesus, a congregational leader, and a cadre of future leaders. Components include: agendas for all meetings, a personalized Bible reading plan, a reading list, and 48 weekly emails that address faith, life, and leadership.

Paul Doellinger*Abiding in Prayer: Life in the Psalms*

Description: Our Lord Jesus prayed the Psalms—we should too! The Psalms are all about Jesus (Luke 24:44), so what better way to abide in Him than to pray His Words along with Him? In the Book of Psalms, the Holy Spirit blesses us with 150 prayers that are pleasing to our Father in heaven. This session will explain the benefits and blessings of praying the Psalms as part of one's devotional life. We will explore some of the categories and types of Psalms, including some of the more difficult words and misunderstood phrases in the Psalms. General and practical tips will be provided for incorporating the Psalms into the liturgical and devotional life of a congregation, including monthly reading/prayer plans and devotional materials.

Ed Doerner/Lyndsay Smokovitz*Beyond the Breakwater*

Description: Beyond the Breakwater is a podcast from the leadership of Messiah, Midland and Elevate Community Ministries. In this session you will be taken beyond the breakwater—where just beyond the crashing waves of fear, discomfort, and doubt lies the greatest potential for life transformation. We want to guide you into the open waters where the calculated risk you take becomes the turning point for you and your ministry to thrive. We will explore a proven and successful model of ministry through the “beyond the breakwater” analogy. This is all about reaching one more life with Jesus and throwing out a lifeline to those in your community who will otherwise never walk through the doors of your church and drown.

Check out the podcast prior to attending: <https://www.youtube.com/@BeyondtheBreakwaterPodcast>

Greg Finke*Joining Jesus as a Family: How to Raise Your Children to Abide with Jesus*

Description: Every Christian family and church have the same goal: to raise their children to become life-long followers of Jesus. But many families experience the pain of their children growing up, leaving home, and walking away from the faith. What went wrong? And how can a new generation of parents avoid the same result? In this session, we will identify what Jesus shows us in the gospels about how to be more practical and intentional as we raise children to abide with Jesus and follow Him.

Heidi Goehmann*Helping Students & Youth Grow Resilient Faith*

Description: In this session, we will talk about what resilience is and what it is not, as well as how to help those we teach and mentor build five specific kinds of resilience from a biblical and mental health perspective.

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Jim Jensen*Your Secret Weapon for Worship Service Planning*

Description: Many pastors and worship leaders struggle to find a healthy rhythm of weekly service planning. Inevitably, many rush into the weekend working overtime to make it happen and then collapse Sunday afternoon ... only to do it all over again the next week. If you would like to explore another way to plan worship that is healthier, easier on the schedule, more creative, and sustainable, this presentation is for you. Discover a secret weapon for worship service planning available to any church, large or small. Based on the presenter's book, *The Creative Arts Ministry Field Guide*. Attendees will have the opportunity to purchase a copy of the book at the author's price. Also available on *amazon.com*.

Tina Kassebaum **Maintaining Peace in Critical Conversations*

Description: A conversation can move from routine and peaceful to tense and critical in a moment, whether the conversation is with a parent about their child or a church member who had a question after Bible study. It is hard to imagine being able to be 100% respectful and 100% honest at the same time. In this session, we will explore how being a child of God, enabled with the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5, allows us to do just that and maintain peace in the relationship—and many times strengthen it as well.

Justin Krupsky*Song of Songs*

Description: With all the confusion that exists with regards to our sexuality, God's truth is needed more than ever. God's Word is our source for clarity and life. This sectional is for church leaders and for parents who are looking for biblical ways to teach the "art of sexuality" to the next generation. You will be equipped to lovingly and boldly teach God's Word about this confusing and controversial area of God's creation. As we open up "Song of Songs," you will learn the truth of this divinely inspired Hebrew Wisdom Poetry and how to apply it to our culture today.

Ryan Peterson **Moments Matter*

Description: Sometimes it feels like the days are long. The hours to accomplish tasks are short. The list is endless. Yet, each day includes moments that help to shape us and give us opportunities to bless others. In this session, Rev. Dr. Ryan Peterson will help us to see the power of moments and the unique privilege we have to lead, love, and serve others in the many moments we share together.

Jim Pingel*The Future That Has Come: Embracing the Latest Trends, Temptations, and Truths of Christian Education Today*

Description: We live in VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous) times. And while there has never been, perhaps, a more challenging time to teach and lead in a Lutheran school, there has also never been, perhaps, a more opportunistic time to make a greater and more significant impact. Our God is bigger than the obstacles we face, and Jesus Christ remains "the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). In this sectional, we will explore some of the latest and most important trends and research on student learning and best practices in leadership. We will also expose the temptations, traps, and tests which are particularly noteworthy to recognize and confront for Lutheran teachers and administrators in these contemporary times. Participants will leave this sectional with tools and instruments for their teacher and/or administrator toolbox as well as renewed confidence and inspiration that they have been chosen by God to lead "for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14).

Charles Schulz

“Apart From Me You Can Do Nothing:” A View From the Church Fathers

Description: The Church Fathers endeavored to proclaim Christ through the Scriptures. Their concerns were doctrinal but also pastoral and spiritual. John 15:5, “Apart from me you can do nothing,” appears dozens of times in the extensive works of the Fathers. In reviewing their conclusions about the meaning of this verse, we will discover some we agree with, some we disagree with, some that perplex us, and some that inspire us. We’ll observe how their social and cultural contexts shaped their emphases and consider how our own place in history impacts ours. This session will serve those Christians who would like an introduction to the thought of the Fathers (“patristic studies”) as well as those who know the Fathers well and would like to explore their insights on this particular passage.

Rebecca Sugden *

Power Tools for Learning

Description: Why do we keep re-inventing the wheel with how we teach? Why can we remember every lyric to a song from middle school but struggle to remember our online grade book password? Based on the book *Powerful Teaching*, we’ll unpack four Power Tools based on the science of learning. These basic, fundamental concepts will be paired with strategies that can be authentically incorporated into any classroom without completely flipping or changing your teaching style.

Bobbie Upton

The Multi Hat Music Director

Description: From working with the people who “make a joyful noise to the Lord,” elderly choir members who can’t see to drive let alone read the music, to the pianist playing the organ without using the foot pedals—tips and tricks of the trade to maintain a music ministry that has God at the center.

Bill Wangelin/Matthew Couser

Tool Time with Pastor and Principal

Description: Could your church and school work more closely together to carry out the Great Commission? When a church and school are mission-minded, they can work together in amazing ways for the Kingdom of God. Teachers, students, church members, pastors, and principals all have a valuable role. Using the “churchschool” concept of a unified ministry, this session will share practical tools for your toolkit to build a stronger partnership between church and school that impacts the broader community.

Jennifer Welch *

Finding the Magic Beyond the Mouse: Bringing Fairy Tales Back to the Classroom

Description: Let’s bring the fun and fantasy of fairy tales back to the early childhood classroom. We will discuss fun ways to use these stories (and their many adaptations) across the curriculum throughout the school year.

TUESDAY Breakout 3

Terry Baughman

Being Small Doesn’t Mean Stop

Description: “We are too small to do that.” “We can’t do that because ...” Small churches have a tendency to seeing their size as a hindrance to moving forward in ministry. Let’s take a look at how even a small church can focus on ministry and strategic planning to direct their ministry in their congregation and community.

Todd Biermann*Family Ministry: Not 'A' ministry of the Church, but the Heart of ALL Ministry*

Description: Some may think family ministry is an optional add-on to all the many other things we should seek to accomplish as the church. As such, it often gets placed on a lower level of importance behind things like worship, curriculum development, crisis care, or evangelism. However, God's Word teaches us a different approach. Family ministry done God's way is integrated into ALL ministry that takes place in the church and ALL of life lived out in the world by God's children. It's not "an" option. This session will get you on the right track, showing how to integrate family ministry into what you're already doing.

Tim Bollinger/Ron Kuczera*Stepping Out to Serve: Reach Your Community Through Serving*

Description: Now, more than ever, it's critical that people in our communities SEE and EXPERIENCE the love of Jesus through the body of Christ. Discover a powerful way to step outside the walls of your church to reach your surrounding community with the love of Jesus. Your presenters will teach you how to identify those in need around you and partner with local organizations, how to unlock mission funds with "boots on the ground," and how to activate your congregation ... and encourage your community ... to serve. The presentation will include many ideas for "step out" groups, events, and initiatives that have been successful at Shepherd's Gate Church.

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Barbara Doyle **The Marriage of Math and Mastery*

Description: A 25-year teaching veteran will share experiences with implementing mastery learning to varying degrees in math classes. This session includes honest discussion of everything from the "honeymoon stages" to the reality of the day-to-day grind. Target audience includes 5th-12th grade teachers and administrators who are interested in the implementation and impact of mastery learning in mathematics.

Dr. Mark Hannemann*Pastoral Counseling: Knowing When and How to Refer*

Description: The focus of this session is on the importance of pastors and other church workers developing a referral network of mental health professionals in their community or region to whom they can refer individuals, couples, and families for care that may be beyond the scope of the training, competency, availability, experience, vocation, or comfort-level of the pastor or other church professional. Special attention will be paid to issues such as boundaries, the person of the caregiver, avoiding compassion fatigue and burnout, dual relationships, mandated reporting, and ethics in caregiving.

Jeff Heisner*Connecting to your Community Through Storytelling*

Description: We have the greatest story ever told in Jesus. His story and the many others from the Bible continue to do much more than just captivate readers: they change lives. Good storytelling can do this too. Storytelling was Jesus' favorite technique when speaking to the crowd: "Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable" (Matthew 13:34). Storytelling and your story should play a critical role in your church or school's mission. In this session, we will show why storytelling is important, how to spot your story, and how to develop it to grow your ministry.

Al Kaul/Trevor Sutton **Scenario Planning for Critical Incidents*

Description: Though we'd prefer not to think about it, critical incidents can and will happen within our congregations. How prepared are you for a critical incident such as a criminal accusation, suicide, embezzlement, tragic injury, or any other unexpected and emotionally charged event? This session, co-led by a clinical social worker and a pastor, will provide you with essential tools, checklists, and resources for responding to critical incidents within a congregation. A case-study of a real congregation dealing with a criminal incident will help put these elements together to better prepare you.

Marcus Lane/Gabe Kasper*Gospel Proclamation for the Next Generation*

Description: While many of us grew up in a world in which faith was an assumed position, Millennial and Gen Z Christians have grown up in a very different world, one in which Christianity is not only one option among many, but also one of the most contested options available. How do we preach the truth of the Gospel in a way that connects with those most heavily shaped by our secular age?

Tanya Leon/Jill Kopper **Growing Your Tech Toolbox: Formative Assessment Tools to Engage Students*

Description: Looking for new ways to engage students, assess their level of understanding, and review content? This session will help grow your tech toolbox with over 15 tools that will help you determine what your students know so that you can adjust/inform your instruction and captivate the attention of your learners. Good for teachers from early elementary all the way through high school.

David Maier/Robert Newton*"ABIDE in Me, and I in You."*

Description: With His words in John 15:4-5, is Jesus issuing an invitation or a proclamation? Is He sharing an observation, opening our eyes to a realization, or is He insinuating a type of transformation? In this sectional, we will examine Jesus' words and the analogous words of the Apostle Paul which refer to abiding in Jesus: "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13); "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17); or Paul's great discussion on how, when, and where we were united with Christ in Romans 6:1-14. Let's see if we might discover—or recover—some incredible freely given gifts of Gospel truth to live for God's glory to impact the world.

Valerie Matyas/Andrea Dent **Literacy Block: Effectively Reaching Y5-4th Grade Readers*

Description: An increase in enrollment, a widening range of skills, and a desire to reach all students right where they are helped St. Paul, Bay City, to launch a new practice during the 2022-2023 school year: Literacy Block. Join First and Second Grade Teacher Mrs. Andrea Dent and Principal Valerie Matyas as they share how 3 teachers, 2 aides, and an administrator worked to meet young readers no matter where they were to get them where they needed to be.

* Indicates Eligible for 1 SCECH hour

Jessica Meier*Visual Faith Tools*

Description: Did you know you have a spiritual life IEP? Have you ever thought about what your own individualized education program is for your faith? Visual faith tools are learning extensions that become practices that become a lifestyle. The practices shared (secret code prayer, prayer cards, prayer centers, one-name prayer, and many more) can easily be integrated into your current classroom or individual faith walk. Come to learn how you can create a culture of prayer, try out a few of the practices, and spark some new excitement for sharing the love of Jesus with your students.

Lindsay Mueller*Teaching Resilience Through Biblical Characters*

Description: Resilience is the ability to pick yourself up and move forward after adversity—a necessary skill for children and adults alike. And just like any other skill, it can be developed and matured with intention. Come learn how Valley Lutheran High School in Saginaw is pairing Dr. Ginsburg's 7 C's of Resilience with characters throughout the Bible to encourage our students to pick themselves up, dust themselves off, and lean on their loving Lord and Savior to move forward again.

Wendy Nimtz/Tammy Sellers **Multisensory Instruction - Engaging All Students*

Description: Multisensory instruction increases connections between neurons in the brain and leads to improved cognition and memory. Discover the learning styles of your students to create instruction that is more engaging and leads to better retention. Key takeaways: 1) Identify the main types of multisensory instruction and what visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile learners need. 2) How to determine your students' learning styles using a student learning inventory. 3) How to easily add multisensory instruction to your current lessons and ways to keep this approach going in your classroom and school.

Ryan Peterson **Energy Management, Not Time Management*

Description: Many of us, especially as we serve in ministry, are interested in time management. We use planners, smartphones with calendars, and Microsoft Outlook to help us manage our time better. But have you ever considered energy management instead? This session will give you practical tools for proper energy management, thus helping you to be a better educator/leader.

Justin Rossow*What's My Next Step?*

Description: A branch doesn't bear fruit unless it abides in the vine. But what does abiding and bearing fruit look like, day in and day out, over time? Rev. Dr. Justin Rossow, pastor, author, and founder of Next Step Press, shares a simple and repeatable discipleship model designed to increase personal engagement and dependence on Jesus. You can use these reflection questions and prayers with youth, new members, small groups, lay leaders, or staff. These tools equip your people to take small next steps, following Jesus more intentionally and more regularly. Rather than a separate discipleship initiative or ministry, this shared language helps bring alignment across diverse ministry areas regardless of age group, church season, or current emphasis. Based on the three-volume book series, *My Next Step: A How-To Companion for People Who Want to Follow Jesus (But Sometimes Get Stuck)*.

Charles Russell*Abiding in Song: Voices Proclaiming the Word*

Description: The Lord speaks and the Lord gives. Among the many gifts that God gives to us, He specifically calls in His Word for us to sing. When we gather in worship, we proclaim God's Word in music and offer our praise and thanksgiving in response to what the Word written and the Word Incarnate has done for us. Joining our hearts and voices not only with each other, but with the Church Triumphant, we abide and remain in God's Word and tell again the marvelous works of Christ Jesus, the "one thing needful" who comforts, forgives, and strengthens us.

Charles Schulz*"Apart From Me You Can Do Nothing:" A View From the Church Fathers*

Description: The Church Fathers endeavored to proclaim Christ through the Scriptures. Their concerns were doctrinal but also pastoral and spiritual. John 15:5, "Apart from me you can do nothing," appears dozens of times in the extensive works of the Fathers. In reviewing their conclusions about the meaning of this verse, we will discover some we agree with, some we disagree with, some that perplex us, and some that inspire us. We'll observe how their social and cultural contexts shaped their emphases and consider how our own place in history impacts ours. This session will serve those Christians who would like an introduction to the thought of the Fathers ("patristic studies") as well as those who know the Fathers well and would like to explore their insights on this particular passage.

Paul Snyder*Financial Wellness: Benefits and Savings Tips for Rostered Workers*

Description: Rostered workers serving LCMS ministries have unique financial challenges, but also opportunities. This session is designed to help them understand how their status as a minister of religion impacts certain taxes and benefits, but also creates savings opportunities.