



Presented by

**Michigan District**

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

#theological23

# *The Word Works*

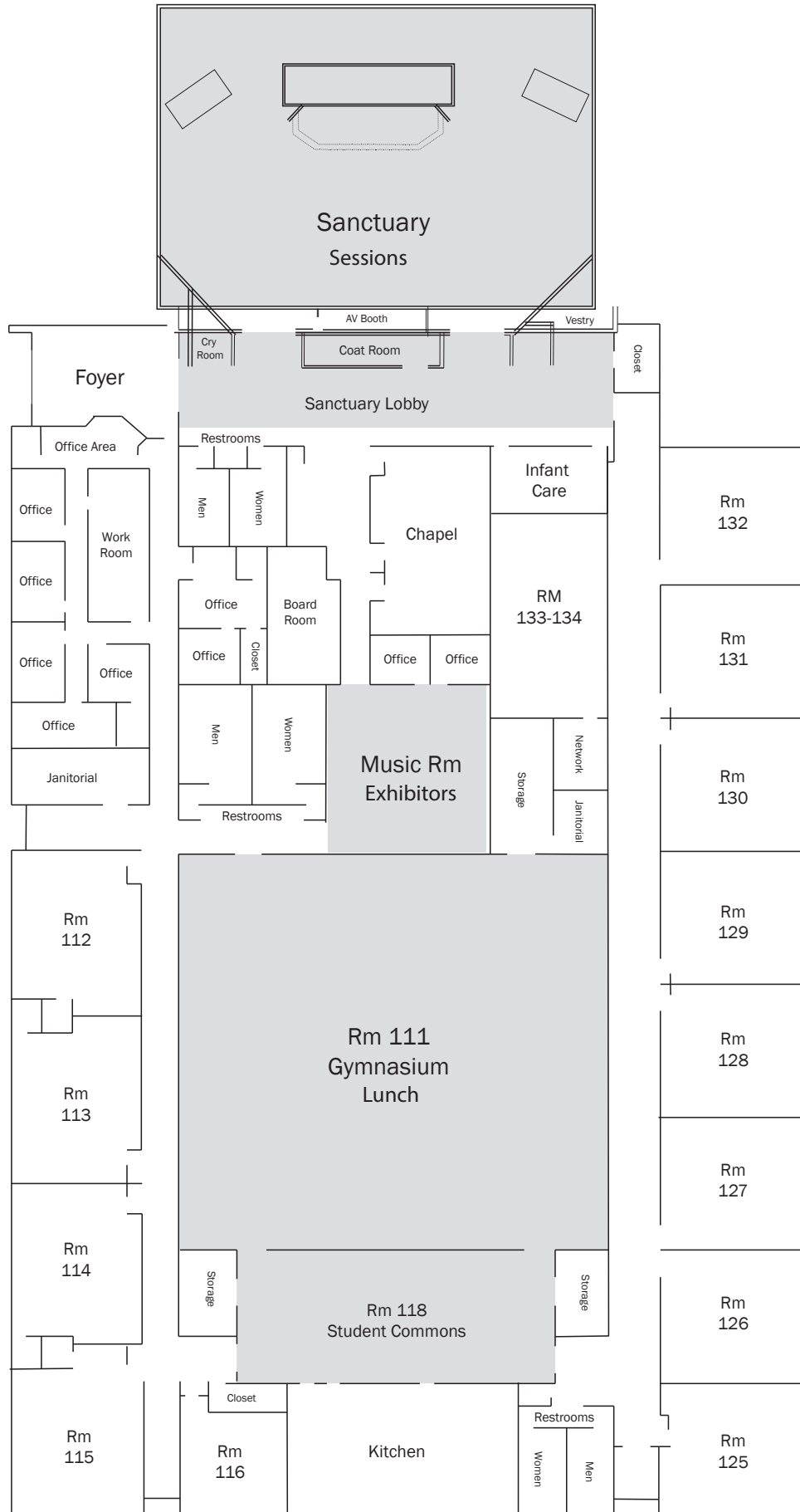
## **Building an Ethic of Bible Reading**

*“So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11).*

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**Saturday, February 4, 2023**  
**Our Savior Lutheran Church, Lansing**

# Map of Our Savior



# President's Welcome

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Welcome to this year's Theological Conference, *The Word Works: Building an Ethic of Bible Reading*. Through a combination of speakers, testimonials, shared experiences, displays, and a free book to take home, our day together could just change your life, your congregation ... and hopefully your community.

Let me capture your imagination: how would things be different if more and more of us annually read through the entire Scripture? Would that change us? How would that change us?

- Yes, this is not the same as “studying” it.
- No, this is not Law any more than when we are invited “take and eat” or “rise and be baptized.”
- Sure, there are things you will not understand, but who fully knows the mystery of God?
- And yes, it takes some practice to build a habit.

We join together with expectation.

*“So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11).*

Thank you to Our Savior congregation for again hosting this conference. We are grateful to her leaders, volunteers, and Pastors Wangelin and Deneen.

...eyes on Jesus...



Rev. David A. Davis, President  
Michigan District, LCMS



# Keynote Speakers

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## Rev. Dr. Jeffrey J. Kloha

Dr. Jeffrey Kloha joined the Museum of the Bible in the summer of 2017. He manages the Museum of the Bible Education, Scholars Initiative, Exhibits, Curatorial, and Collections departments. Kloha previously served 18 years as professor of New Testament as well as provost/chief academic officer at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Leeds. Kloha is co-editor of *Texts and Traditions: Essays in Honour of J. K. Elliott* (Brill, 2014) and *The Press of the Text: Biblical Studies in Honor of James W. Voelz* (Pickwick, 2017). He is a frequent conference presenter, radio guest, and television documentary commentator.



## Dr. Thad A. Polk

Dr. Thad A. Polk is the Samuel D. Epstein Collegiate Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Michigan. His research combines functional imaging of the human brain with computational modeling and behavioral methods to investigate the neural architecture underlying cognition. Prof. Polk regularly teaches large lecture courses as well as small seminars on topics ranging from The Human Mind and Brain to Cognitive Psychology to Computational Modeling of Cognition. He has also produced several lecture series on neuroscience and psychology for the general public through *The Great Courses* company.



### Rev. Dr. Mark R. Hoehner

Pastor Hoehner grew up primarily in Michigan and Wisconsin, the son of a Lutheran pastor. He is an avid Detroit and Michigan fan. He graduated from Concordia Wisconsin in 1996 with a degree in Secondary Education-History. He graduated from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Mo. with his M.Div. in 2000 and continued graduate work in Old Testament. In 2003 he was called to Chapel of the Cross Lutheran Church in St. Peters, Mo. where he is still serving. He has taught in Lutheran High School classrooms and at the Seminary, primarily in Biblical and Old Testament Studies. In 2011 he completed his Ph.D. in Old Testament and has since published four books on how to read the Old Testament in a series called *Knowing God Knowing Me*. Pastor Hoehner is married to Erin, who serves Chapel of the Cross as Preschool Director and Teacher. They have three sons.

## Schedule

2023 Michigan District, LCMS Theological Conference

### The Word Works: Building an Ethic of Bible Reading

Please visit the Exhibitors in the Music Room during breaks/lunch.

- 8:30 a.m. Registration/Fellowship
- 9 a.m. Opening | Rev. David A. Davis, President
- 9:20 a.m. Session 1  
From Manuscripts to Modern Translations | Rev. Dr. Jeffrey J. Kloha
- 10:20 a.m. Break
- 10:40 a.m. Session 2  
Bible Reading and Biblical Expertise: Lessons from Psychology & Neuroscience | Dr. Thad A. Polk  
Book Introduction | Ten Questions to Ask Every Time You Read the Bible
- 11:45 a.m. Lunch
- 12:45 p.m. Session 3  
Do I Have to Read the Old Testament Too? | Rev. Dr. Mark R. Hoehner
- 2:00 p.m. Break
- 2:15 p.m. Session 4  
Panel Discussion
- 2:50 p.m. Final Comments / Closing Prayer

*We hope you find the various personal testimonies, the congregation experiences, and music from Living Water (Peter Prochnow and Maggie Gifford) shared through the conference helpful.*

#### Compassion Ministry - Provide others with the Word of God!

Your donations will help provide a Bible to those who need one. Visit [michigandistrict.org/theodonation](http://michigandistrict.org/theodonation) (or scan QR Code at right) to make a donation today.



→ Video recordings of sessions will be available after the conference.  
You will be notified by email of their availability.  
→ A conference evaluation will be emailed to you today; please take a moment to share your comments with us. Thank you.



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**Lutheran Adult Gathering**  
**October 11-13, 2024**  
**Save the Date!**



**WE ARE MESSENGERS**  
 Friday, July 21, 2023

Leonidas, MI

**Rend Collective**  
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## **Bible Reading and Biblical Expertise: Lessons from Psychology and Neuroscience**

Dr. Thad Polk

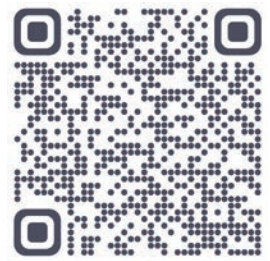
How would reading the Bible consistently over a long period of time change your brain? In this talk, we will discuss several scientific studies that are relevant to that question. We will begin by reviewing the extraordinary, sometimes unbelievable, effects that long-term consistent practice can have on behavior. We will then turn to studies exploring how consistent practice changes the mind and brain and the implications of those findings for regular Bible reading. Finally, we will discuss a few specific strategies that have been scientifically demonstrated to help promote the formation of positive habits like Bible reading.

1. The power of practice
  - Consistent practice can lead to amazing abilities
  - Even mental abilities like how much information you remember can change dramatically after consistent practice
  
2. How consistent practice changes the mind and brain
  - Practice leads to rich long-term memory structures & frees up working memory
  - Makes it possible to see a bigger picture, draw more connections, and leads to relevant associations springing to mind quickly and automatically
  
3. How to promote positive habits like Bible reading
  - Read the Bible in the same way every day for many days in a row
  - Read in the same place and after the same habitual event (e.g., coffee)
  - Make an explicit plan for what, when, and how you will read and for how you will deal with obstacles and setbacks
  - Enlist the social support of friends and colleagues
  - Adopt some fun, personal gimmick that works for you





# Join a Ministry



The Michigan District welcomes volunteers on a regular basis at several ministries around the state. Take a look at our volunteer opportunities, complete an interest form online, and you will be contacted by someone from that ministry!



MEALS



PRE-NATAL CLINIC



TUTORING

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or contact Dr. Theodore Hopkins

(734) 995-7480 | [Theodore.Hopkins@cuaa.edu](mailto:Theodore.Hopkins@cuaa.edu)



CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

Ann Arbor, Michigan

## Do I Have to Read the Old Testament Too?

Rev. Dr. Mark R. Hoehner

I. Debunking myths of why you should not read the Old Testament

II. Reading the Old Testament for Jesus

A. In Prophecy

B. In Typology

C. Pre-Incarnate Jesus

III. Developing a deeper love for how God does things

A. Language

B. History

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Lutheran Bible  
Translators

“As I follow  
along with  
the written  
Word in front  
of me, it truly  
touches all of me  
— my mind, heart  
and spirit.” - Jan G

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**Michigan District blogs** support the District's critical targets: Great Commission, Great Compassion, Healthy Congregations, and Healthy Workers. The blog can be easily shared through social networks and email. We are always looking for guest writers; to submit your article visit [michigandistrict.org/storybucket](https://michigandistrict.org/storybucket).

**The Michigan In Touch supplement to The Lutheran Witness** is the printed version of the blog. It also contains news and events. Discount subscriptions are available. For more information, visit [michigandistrict.org/lutheranwitness](https://michigandistrict.org/lutheranwitness).



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Contact: Linda Ekong, Development Department; 734.665.3791



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