



Office Personnel Conference 2026

April 26-28, 2026
Tentative Schedule

Main Sessions in Composer Rooms | Breakouts will be in River Rooms

Sunday, April 26, 2026

- 3-5:45 p.m. Counseling – Mrs. Cheryl Spaulding – Mozart
4-6 p.m. Registration – Composer Room Lobby
6-7 p.m. Welcome Reception
7-8 p.m. Entertainment – Mr. Brad Brown
8-9:45 p.m. Counseling – Mrs. Cheryl Spaulding – Mozart

Monday, April 27, 2026

- 8-8:45 a.m. Breakfast
8:30-8:45 a.m. Music – Mrs. Brooke Orozco & Mr. Daniel Bennett
8:45-8:50 a.m. Welcome – Mr. Rod Barodte
9-11:45 a.m. Counseling – Mrs. Cheryl Spaulding – Mozart
8:50-9:05 a.m. Devotions – Rev. Joel Eden
9:05-10:05 a.m. Opening Keynote – Mrs. Janice Henriquez
10:05-10:15 a.m. Break
10:15-11:15 a.m. Breakout #1
11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Lunch – Peace Driven Achievement – Life/Work Balance – Deaconess Christie Hansard
12:15-12:30 p.m. Music – Mrs. Brooke Orozco & Mr. Daniel Bennett
12:30-1:30 p.m. Keynote – Mrs. Ashley Paavola – Curious Hope
1-5:45 p.m. Counseling – Mrs. Cheryl Spaulding – Mozart
1:30-1:45 p.m. Church Extension Fund – Mr. Rod Barodte
2-3 p.m. Breakout #2
3-6 p.m. Free Time
6-7 p.m. Dinner
7-8 p.m. Holy & Hilarious Comedy Night – Mrs. Janice Henriquez

Tuesday, April 28, 2026

- 8-8:45 a.m. Breakfast
8:45-9 a.m. Music – Mrs. Brooke Orozco & Mr. Daniel Bennett
9-9:15 a.m. Devotions – Mr. Travis Grulke
9:15-10:15 a.m. Breakout #3
10:15-10:30 a.m. Break
10:30-11:30 a.m. Breakout #4
11:30 a.m. Closing Worship – Rev. Dr. Peter E. Larsen

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People of Hope...Vigorously Making Known the Love of Christ

Breakout Schedule



Breakout #1 Monday, April 27, 2026, 10:15am

- 1) Nancy Young – Streamlining the Church Office- Brahms
- 2) Holly Zuidema – Communications: Working with What Works for You - Danube
- 3) Ed & Lyndsay - Beyond the Breakwater – Reaching the Lost in Your Community - Mosel
- 4) Julie Bellamy – Emotional Intelligence: The Key to Better Conversations and Relationships – Rhine

Breakout #2 Monday, April 27, 2026, 2pm

- 1) Shawn Smith – You’re a Good Idea Strength & Stretch - Brahms
- 2) Ashley Paavola – Deeper Dive into Curious Hope - Danube
- 3) Ed & Lyndsay - Beyond the Breakwater – Reaching the Lost in Your Community - Mosel
- 4) Julie Bellamy – The Power of Active Listening - Rhine

Breakout #3 Tuesday, April 28, 2026, 9:15am

- 1) Shawn Smith – You’re a Good Idea Strength & Stretch - Brahms
- 2) Travis Grulke – Life of Harmony - Danube
- 3) Chad Woltemath – Finances I- Mosel
- 4) Julie Bellamy – Communicating with Style: Understanding DISC - Rhine

Breakout #4 Tuesday, April 28, 2026, 10:30am

- 1) Nancy Young – Streamlining the Church Office - Brahms
- 2) Travis Grulke – Google Docs/Sheets (And a little AI) - Danube
- 3) Chad Woltemath – Finances II - Mosel
- 4) Holly Zuidema – Communications: Working with What Works for You – Rhine

**Office Personnel Conference - 2026
Break out Session Descriptions**



Julie Bellamy - Emotional Intelligence: The Key to Better Conversations and Relationships

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) isn't about being "nice." It's about being effective with people — especially when things get stressful.

In this engaging one-hour workshop, you'll learn how to recognize what you're feeling, respond to others instead of reacting, and build stronger trust through everyday interactions. We'll break EQ down to help you:

- Identify your emotional triggers, before conversations escalate
- Use simple self-regulation strategies to stay calm and clear under pressure
- Listen with empathy so people feel heard — even when you can't give them what they want
- Deliver – and receive – feedback, without defensiveness
- Strengthen trust, relationships and your personal credibility

Julie Bellamy - The Power of Active Listening

Listening is more than hearing words—it's about understanding meaning, emotion, and intent. In this one-hour session, we'll explore the art and science of Active Listening, learning how to build stronger connections, reduce misunderstandings, and foster trust in every conversation. We'll learn to:

- Recognize the barriers that get in the way of true listening
- Apply techniques such as paraphrasing, reflection, and open-ended questioning
- Demonstrate empathy and emotional awareness in conversation
- Strengthen workplace relationships and team communication

Whether you're leading a team, serving members or supporting colleagues, this session helps transform everyday conversations into opportunities for connection and understanding.

Julie Bellamy - Communicating with Style: Understanding DISC

Unlock the secret to stronger relationships, clearer communication, and more effective teamwork through the power of DISC! This dynamic one-hour workshop introduces the four DISC communication styles—Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, and Conscientiousness—and helps you recognize your own style as well as others'.

Through engaging discussion and interactive activities, you'll learn how to adapt your approach to connect more effectively, reduce misunderstandings, and foster collaboration across different personalities. Whether you're leading a team, serving members, or working with colleagues, this session provides practical tools to "speak the same language" in any interaction.

Walk away with greater self-awareness, improved communication strategies, and the confidence to value and bridge style differences for more productive and positive workplace relationships.

Rev. Ed Doerner & Lindsay Smokovitz - Beyond the Breakwater: Reaching the Lost In Your Community

Luke 19:10 says, "For the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost." There are a lot of lost people outside the walls of our churches. The problem lies in the model of today's church that many have settled into. This model sees the lost and drowning person and says "swim here" or "join us for worship" but the mission of God is to go after the one, save them, and bring them back into the abundant life with Jesus. 'Beyond the Breakwater' is all about mobilizing the church beyond its walls and stepping into the local impact when joining God on mission in their communities. To be the church is to reach one more life with Jesus by throwing out a lifeline to those who would never walk through the doors of your church and otherwise drown.

In this session you will learn about a model of ministry that inspires action, mission, and life transformation. You will leave with next steps of how you can mobilize your church in a way that has a deep-felt impact on the community.

The good news is - you don't have to wait to start the process! Watch the Beyond the Breakwater Podcast on YouTube or listen on Apple Podcasts & Spotify.

This is a podcast of Messiah Church and Elevate Community Ministries in Midland, Michigan. The church serving their community through food, transportation, childcare, jobs, appliances, healthcare, coffee, and housing.

YouTube: www.youtube.com/@BeyondtheBreakwaterPodcast

Spotify: open.spotify.com/show/7pyjkJpnEvOr5rmwgsLbd2?si=c6ebf3a600e54f16

Apple Music: podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/beyond-the-breakwater/id1694064788

Travis Grulke - Life of Harmony

How do those that work in the church keep five key areas of our life in harmony (NOT balance) with one another. We'll dive into ways we can make sure our relationships, finances, faith, physical health, and work life remain in harmony as we tackle all the things the Good Lord has called us to do! And we'll have a little fun in conversation as we discuss the challenges of all of this together.

Travis Grulke - Google Docs/Sheets (And a little AI)

We'll go through all things Google Drive focusing on Google Docs and Google Sheets. We'll also touch a little bit on AI as it has expanded its reach into Google and is taking over the

world! You'll learn a few tricks to organize your Google life and learn how to maximize some of Google's tools.

Shawn Smith - You're a Good Idea Strength & Stretch Session

Your body hears everything your mind believes. Let's pursue wholeness in Christ. Scripture calls to renew our thoughts because when our minds are set on truth everything begins to change. Join me, bring your mat or big towel & let's get stronger in Christ together.

Chad Woltemath - Finances Breakout 1

This is the first of two breakout sessions particularly designed for those working with finance and business issues in the Church / School. In this section, we'll concentrate on Payroll and Reporting obligations, including the special tax treatments for "Ministers of the Gospel", such as the Housing Allowance. We'll also discuss various benefit programs available and the reporting requirements related to benefits. Feel free to bring your questions!

Chad Woltemath - Finances Breakout 2

This is the second of two breakout sessions particularly designed for those working with finance and business issues in the Church / School. In this section, we'll discuss Contribution Reporting Requirements, Expense Reimbursements, Sales Tax Issues, and other issues. Feel free to bring your questions!

Nancy Young - Streamlining the Church Office: SOPs That Work

What happens when the office manager is out sick, on vacation, or pulled into a last-minute meeting? This session explores how clear, well-documented Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) can keep your church office running smoothly—even when you're not there. We'll share practical examples from Immanuel Lutheran Church in St. Clair. You'll leave with tools and templates to help build consistency, reduce stress, and empower others to step in with confidence.

Holly Zuidema - Communications: Working with What Works for You

This session is for church workers who are trying to do it all and would like to add or improve outward facing communications, including a website, social media, and newsletters. We'll focus on who our ideal audience is and then investigate a buffet of choices to reach them.

Topics covered:

*Knowing your audience

*Social media

- *Automating e-newsletters
- *Building a functional and engaging website on a shoestring
- *Making the most of your Google Business profile
- *What about ads?

Ashley Paavola - Deeper Dive into Curious Hope

Dig deeper into the ways you can foster curiosity in your interactions to better open opportunities to share your hope in Jesus. Explore what this looks like for your own relationships and sphere of influence in the unique roles God has placed you in right now. Discover what it looks like for you personally to be curious as you share the hope you have in Jesus with a complicated world.