



Southwestern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Fall Theological Conference - Oct. 6-8, 2024

Augsburg Confession and Ministry: Finding Your (Lutheran) Roots

SUNDAY:

4:30-6:30 p.m. – Registration Check In

6:30 – Welcome and introductions

7:00 – Session 1 – Dr. Tim Wengert

“The Heart of Parish Ministry.”

8:00 – Break

8:15 – Evening Prayer

8:45 – Social time. Snacks provided.

MONDAY:

Breakfast on your own in the hotel or elsewhere.

8:45 a.m. – Session 2 – Dr. Tim Wengert

“Church Is Ministry, and Ministry Is Church”

9:45 – Break. Coffee and snacks available

10:00 – Session 3 – Dr. Tim Wengert

“Church Is Ministry, and Ministry Is Church”

11:00 – Rev. Peter Reuss

12:00 – Lunch

12:45 – Bishop’s Time

2:00 – Free Time

TUESDAY:

Breakfast on your own in the hotel or elsewhere.

9:00 – Session 3 – Dr. Tim Wengert

“Separating Essentials from Non-Essentials”

10:10 – Break. Coffee and snacks available

10:15 – Session 4 – Dr. Tim Wengert

Summary

11:00 – Service of Holy Communion

Conference ends following Worship

Speaker: Professor Emeritus Timothy J. Wengert

We are living in a time of enormous change. Everyone knows that. As a result, Christian, parish ministry can get lost in the weeds. Everyone in the Church’s ministry experiences that, too. Our anchor, of course, is Jesus Christ, “The same yesterday, today, and forever,” as one clever first-century writer put it. With Christ as our anchor, we Lutherans have an amazing rudder to help us steer through the “slings and arrows of outrageous fortune” (Hamlet): the Augsburg Confession

In just a few years, in 2030, that confession will mark its 500th anniversary. To be sure, there are different ways to read that confession:

- As a historical record of princes and cities caught confessing their faith before the most powerful European ruler between Charlemagne and Napoleon, namely, Charles V;
- As a witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ;
- As a set of doctrines to be learned and subscribed to by congregations and church leaders.

But another approach to that document may help us “take arms against a sea of troubles” (more Hamlet), and that is to view this document as a helpful guide for ministry and parish life. This year’s fall theological conference will give us all an opportunity to do just that.

Our guide for this endeavor is Professor emeritus Timothy J. Wengert, who not only served as a parish pastor and is now married to one, but who also, as a scholar, has studied and written about many aspects of the Reformation, including Luther’s Small Catechism and the Augsburg Confession. Most recently, at the invitation of the ELCA he and Robert Kolb of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis have developed a study edition of the Augsburg Confession in anticipation of the 500th anniversary. Here is what we will study and discuss together:

- Session I: “The Heart of Parish Ministry.”
- Session II: “Church Is Ministry, and Ministry Is Church”
- Session III: “Separating Essentials from Non-Essentials”