



SW MN Synod Fall Theological Conference Sept. 27 - 29, 2026

SUNDAY:

4:30-6:30 p.m. – Registration check in

Dinner is on your own.

6:30 – Welcome and introductions

7:00-8:00 – Benjamin Durheim

Assistant Professor of Theology, College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University, MN

8:15-8:45 – Evening Prayer

Social time following, snacks provided.

MONDAY:

8:30 a.m. – Coffee, rolls and fruit

8:45 – Welcome

9:00 – Session 1 - David Scherer and Joe Davis,

JUSTmove

10:30 – Break

11:00 – Session 2 - David and Joe

12:00 – Lunch

1:00 p.m. – Bishop's Time

Following the Bishop's Time we will express gratitude for the ministry of Synod Minister Pr. Heather Culuris.

Snacks and fellowship will shift us into free time.

Optional Gatherings:

Dakota 38+2 Documentary - 2:45pm, Conference Room

Games & Puzzles - Afternoon/Evening, Breakfast Nook

Evening Fellowship:

Trivia - 7:00pm, Breakfast Nook

Music Jam Session - 8:00pm, Conference Room

TUESDAY:

8:30 a.m. – Coffee, rolls and fruit

8:45 – Welcome

9:00 – Benjamin Durheim

10:30 – Break

11:00 – Service of Holy Communion

Conference ends following Worship

Who are the People in Our Neighborhood?

How loving our neighbor and a prophetic witness both begin with knowing the people in our community.

In this continuing season of unease, the 2026 Fall Theological Conference will help us consider how the places and people to which God calls us shape our ministry and our witness.

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- How do we come to know the unique context and the neighbors God has given us?
- How much do place and context shape us?
- How do we navigate a growing tension among people who seek to follow Jesus in our context?
- How can we be faithful to God's prophetic witness among the people entrusted to us?

We will learn from:

Ben Durheim, assistant professor of theology at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University, Collegeville.

Teaching courses in liturgical and sacramental theology, ethics, and systematics, Ben's publishing has centered on the intersection between liturgy and ethics, ecumenism, liturgical and sacramental practice, and social ethics. His recent book, "Each in Our Own Language: Symbolization and Social Ethics in Rural America" (Fortress Press), explores the deep layers of meaning that contribute to an increasingly deep "rural-urban divide." Through story, theological reflection, rural sociology, and his fresh teaching style, Durheim will help us consider how ministry might lean toward the social conditions where love flourishes for the sake of all.

JUSTmove—Joe Davis and David Scherer—will bring their music, poetry, and storytelling to help us imagine how to bridge the many kinds of cultural differences we experience today and to facilitate movement and healing.

Joe Davis is a spoken word artist and educator, facilitating intercultural and racial justice training to help people stay connected with each other.

David Scherer, also known as AGAPE, engages people through music and teaching to bridge cultural anxiety and practice racial accompaniment.

Together, they will team up to equip us to move from discomfort and avoidance to leadership with courageous conversation and belonging.