

Widening Worship: Expanding the Repertoire and Engaging the Musical Gifts of the Community.

Dakota Road Music: Hans Peterson, Karol Baer, Larry Olson. **(Offered Session 1 only)**

This workshop geared for song leaders, musicians, pastors, worship planners, and anyone who might want to sing and bring some new musical ideas back to their congregation."

"Wait... Kids Are People??"

Rev. Nikoli Falenschek, SW MN Synod Youth Ministry Coordinator.

We translate the Latin word "liturgy" to mean, literally, "work of the people". How often do we include children and young people in that equation? Let us reclaim the fullness of our communities by finding interesting, faithful, and engaging orders of worship for all ages. In this workshop we will build skills for including all generations in worship planning without compromising theology or tradition. You will leave this session with a complete set of schematics for an intergenerational Rally Sunday worship!

WE DON'T WANT YOUR MONEY! *What you're NOT saying is what you may be telling people.*

Rev. Keith Pearson, Regional Gift Planner for the ELCA Foundation.

You have probably heard stories like this: The bachelor farmer or the schoolteacher with no children of their own dies and leaves millions to... some charity other than their church. Why didn't they give to their church? Because the church didn't ask! Learn how a few simple steps can raise awareness for bequest giving that can result in life-altering gifts.

Portico Benefit Services: Benefits Overview with Q & A.

Rev. Timothy Schroeder, Regional Representative, Portico Benefit Services.

As the Benefits Ministry of the ELCA, we are partners in supporting our clergy and professional staff throughout our Synod. Come and meet our new Regional Representative, Rev. Tim Schroeder, where you can bring your questions and learn about what is new with Portico. The benefits package for the ELCA includes health insurance, retirement, disability, and group life insurance. If Portico retirement is on the horizon, Pastor Tim is happy to be a conversation partner! Portico is a proud partner of Southwestern Minnesota Synod!

Faithful Innovations in a Changing (Church) World.

Rev. Tim Wheatley, Evangelical, Cokato.

The last years have seen the church go through a great change, but in the grand scheme they are not on the level of the Renaissance, black plague, or the fall of Rome. If God saw the church through those changes, we believe God has a plan for us in this age of change. By focusing on listening to God and others, trying holy experiments, and then sharing what we learn, we believe that God has a path forward not just for the church to survive but prosper and continue to spread the Gospel until Christ returns. Come hear about Faithful Innovations and how it is working in some of our congregations.

Food, Farming, and Faith: Perspectives from an Agrarian Ministry.

Rev. Kerri Meyer and Rev. Christian Muellerleile of Good Courage Farm.

Join us for a guided conversation at the intersection of regenerative agriculture, resilient food sheds, and Christian practice. Learn about the work of Good Courage Farm and how the way they farm pays attention to the interdependent web that connects all living and non-living things.

“You want me to donate? Why?” The building blocks of an impactful appeal.

Rev. Peter Reuss, CFRE, Partner, GSB Fundraising.

Our invitations to give a financial gift to the church can sound like a financial transaction. This approach quickly leads to diminished giving, donor fatigue, and a feeling of scarcity. It does not have to be this way. When a congregation conveys a clear, mission-based reason for giving, it's actually quite easy to invite people to make significant gifts to make that mission possible.

A Step Along the Way: Addressing Racism Together.

Rev. Dane Skilbred, SW MN Synod Racial Justice Network.

Sometimes issues as big as racism and discrimination can feel overwhelming. We wonder what we can do to solve such big world problems and then we can end up feeling stuck. Your synod racial justice team invites you to a session centered on keeping things simple and taking the next steps. We will provide a safe space to talk about real things that matter, engage in interactive learning about how racism affects our communities and congregations, and leave with one small step each of us can take to address racism in our own lives.

Communities of Welcome.

Rev Christa Forsythe, Immanuel, Atwater.

The conversation in this workshop will focus on how to welcome LGBTQIA folks in our congregations and communities. What are some of the obstacles to this and how can these obstacles be overcome? Come learn together through storytelling and discussion.

Walk the Labyrinth and Experience the Meditation Garden. *(Offered Session 1 only)*

Rev. Maggie Falenschek, Chaplain and Director of Campus Ministries at GAC.

Arboretum Entrance, near the Melva Lind Interpretive Center.

A labyrinth is an ancient tool used to facilitate prayer and meditation. Labyrinths are found in many cultures and in many faith traditions and provide an opportunity for quiet reflection. Come experience what it is like to walk a labyrinth by walking the Gustavus labyrinth, located in the Linnaeus Arboretum.

Chair Yoga

Cheryl Casteen

Have you ever wondered about the benefits of yoga but have never had the chance to try it? Here is your chance! Join us for a fun and energizing Yoga with a Chair class to experience a flowing series of sitting and standing poses synchronized with breathing, using a chair for stability. No equipment, experience, or workout clothes required. Whether you are a first-timer or a regular yoga practitioner, this session will leave you feeling relaxed and energized.

Revisioning Church Spaces.

Anne Gerriets, LEED AP, Church Building Consultant with Vanman Architects & Builders.

Has your ministry changed over the last 50 years? How about your building? As ministry needs change, your building can become a roadblock if it doesn't change too. We will discuss different church spaces, how to look at them through the lens of welcoming and ministry for your congregation today, and how to get started on projects. Viral Hope: Coaching for Positive Change.

Grant Writing 101: Ask and ye shall ~~shall~~ might receive.

Mary Simonson Clark, SW MN Synod Hunger Team.

This breakout opportunity will consider basic grant writing tips for congregations as well as some dos and don'ts. Bring your concerns about starting, grant application experiences, insights, and/or general questions to share during this cooperative learning discussion.

It's So Easy Being Green: Celebrating God's Creation through Worship.

Emily Bruflat, Director of Music at First Lutheran Church in Saint Peter, MN.

Do you have some time in the church year where you'd like to be more creative in worship planning? Do you have farmers, gardeners, and/or conservationists in your congregation? Would you like to celebrate our relationship with all of God's creation? During this workshop, Emily will lead you through various resources that can be used as a several-week series in your churches as a Season of Creation.

Moving from Negativity to Hope: ELCA Coaching.

SW MN Coaching Team.

Coaching is a process of asking the necessary questions to get to the right next step for leadership and your congregation. It's a chance to intentionally open up about grief, goals, and God questions. One congregation said this, "Coaching moved us from negativity to hope and that hope has spread easily and widely in our congregation." This workshop will teach you what the coaching process is and how it might transform your leadership and congregation.



Southwestern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America