

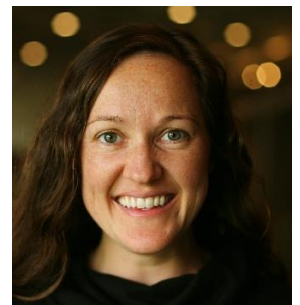


Religion in Life Adult Education Forums

2024-2025



Sundays
11:10 a.m.-12:00 p.m.



St. Michael's Lutheran Church
1660 County Road B West
Roseville, MN 55113

www.stmichaelselca.com



Religion in Life

Sundays, 11:10 a.m.

Religion in Life (St. Michael's adult education forum) provides an opportunity for community and congregation members to gather and learn about topics from guest presenters. Topics range from Bible and theology, to Community Life and Justice Issues, to Health, Wellness, Spirituality, and Art.

Religion in Life begins at 11:10 a.m. in the Courtyard room at St. Michael's. Most weeks there will also be a live-stream and recording of the presentation, so that it is available to a broader audience and can be viewed at other times. We invite you to join in this time of learning together!

September

Sunday, September 15 *How Would Jesus Vote (Part 1)*
the Rev. The Rev. Roland Hayes

Sunday, September 22 *How Would Jesus Vote (Part 2)*
the Rev. The Rev. Roland Hayes

"If Jesus had voted, I believe his vote would have reflected his beliefs and values. But what about us? If we profess that Jesus is the Christ, our Savior and Lord, and if we claim to be a follower of Jesus, we must honestly wrestle with this question. 'Do the values Jesus taught, and the way he lived inform my thinking, orient my life and shape my decisions - including my vote?'"



These two sessions provide the opportunity to carefully examine several key Gospel texts that reveal Jesus' core beliefs and values. Then we will use them as a plumb line to determine how our political parties and candidates square with them.

Roland Hayes is a graduate of Carthage College, Kenosha, Wisconsin, and Luther-Northwestern Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota. Roland served as pastor at St. Michael's for thirty-eight years before retiring. Over the course of his career, Roland was active in addressing healthcare, social ministry, mentoring leaders in the church and community, issues of pastoral concern such as grief, loss, and relationships, and was (and continues to be) actively involved in volunteering in the community. Roland enjoys golfing, biking, furniture building, watching baseball and basketball, and reading. He and wife, Betsy, also love time with their daughter Lindsay, son-in-law Brady, and grandchildren Rosie and Elenora.

Sunday, September 29 *Common Ground: Stories of Creation, Care, and the Call to Community*
Mary Hess, Ph.D., Professor at Luther Seminary



We become who we are by the stories we tell and the listeners who hear them. Join Dr. Hess for a brief introduction to her current research project, which employs digital storytelling as a way into listening more carefully to ourselves and others as we live in and care for God's good creation. She will share a few videos from her Earth Stories project, and discuss how St. Michael's could be involved. (earth.storyingfaith.org)

Dr. Mary Hess is professor of educational leadership at Luther Seminary, where she has taught since 2000. She has degrees from Yale, Harvard, and Boston College, and her current research focuses on finding creative ways to empower people to share their faith in connection with God's creation.

October

October 6

The Ins and Outs of Screens & Technology with our Children and Youth

Erik Leafblad, Ph.D., Professor at Bethel University

Erik is a graduate of Bethel University (BA), Princeton Seminary (M.Div.) and Luther Seminary (Ph.D. in Pastoral Care and Counseling). He currently serves as Assistant Professor of Missional Ministries at Bethel University and as the Department Chair for Biblical and Theological Studies.



Erik is passionate about how children, youth, and families experience the world around them. Prior to getting his Ph.D., Erik served as a youth pastor and with the non-profit, Youthfront, in Kansas City. In his studies and work he has continued to address intersections of faith and science, meaning, and connection. This comes to bear today as he shares with us some of his own experiences and learning when it comes to technology and how it informs, shapes, and engages children and youth and their lives.

October 13

Can We Bring Out the Best in People? The Human Instincts for Cooperation

Bruce Peterson, attorney and District Judge



Bruce Peterson is a senior district judge who teaches a course on Lawyers as Peacemakers at the University of Minnesota Law School. The course explores the elements of human nature developed through natural selection that predispose people to cooperate and help each other. Sadly, our current social and political environment features polarization, xenophobia and the desire for revenge. Judge Peterson will lead a discussion about how our countervailing instincts for empathy, understanding, and forgiveness, can be better nurtured by institutions and cultural practices.

Bruce Peterson served as District Court Judge from 1999 until his retirement in May, 2019, sitting in Hennepin County, Minnesota, which includes Minneapolis and its suburbs. From 2006 to 2008 he was the presiding judge of Hennepin County Family Court. From 2008 to 2013 he initiated and presided over Co-Parent Court, offering supportive co-parenting services to low income, unmarried parents establishing paternity. From 2013 to 2016 he presided over the Hennepin County Drug Court and specialized calendars for people who are homeless and women charged with prostitution.

Judge Peterson is a 1978 graduate of Yale Law School, was a special assistant in the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice, an Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Columbia, and a partner in the Minneapolis law firm of Popham, Haik, Schnobrich and Kaufman. He was the 2013 recipient of the Hennepin County Bar Association Professionalism Award and has received several other recognitions. He has been an adjunct professor at the University of Minnesota Law School since 2003. He has written and spoken widely on issues of law and public policy.

October 20

Personality Type & Prayer and Faith Practices

Jane Kise, Ed.D., adjunct Professor at St. Thomas University



Dr. Jane Kise is respected throughout the world as a thought leader in psychological type. The author or co-author of over 25 books on personality, education, and leadership, Jane's understanding of the 16 psychological types is profound and exhaustive. Her motivation to develop new tools and applications—such as 16 Style Types—stems from over 25 years of watching lives change as people discover more about who they were meant to be and how to improve their relationships with themselves and with others.

While Jane's primary passion is working with schools, with the goal of creating places where every adult and child feels welcomed, capable, and engaged by the lifelong task of learning, she also holds a passion and brings a wealth of experience in how we each experience prayer and spirituality. Today she draws us into conversation around our personalities and the ways we engage in faith and practice.

Jane Kise, Ed.D., CPQC, founder of Differentiated Coaching Associates, has worked as a consultant for 30 years, specializing in executive and instructional coaching and professional development. She is also the author or coauthor of over 25 books, including *LifeKeys: Discover Who You Are*, *SoulTypes: Matching Your Personality and Spiritual Path*, and *Did You Get What You Prayed For?* She holds an MBA in finance from the Carlson School of Management and a doctorate in educational leadership from the University of St. Thomas, where she is an adjunct professor for the doctoral program.

October 27

Lessons from Dietrich Bonhoeffer in a Divided World

Lori Brandt Hale, Ph.D., Professor at Augsburg University

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) was a German pastor, theologian, ecumenist, and peace activist. He wrote profoundly about Christian faith, community, grace, and ethics, centered one way or another on the question, who is Christ for us today? In our fraught political times, Bonhoeffer offers lessons and guidance as we consider the impact of our actions for the future and for coming generations.

Dr. Lori Brandt Hale is the Director of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and Professor of Religion in the Department of Religion and Philosophy at Augsburg University (Minneapolis, MN). Her research focuses on the life and legacy of German theologian and anti-Nazi dissident, Dietrich Bonhoeffer. She currently serves as the President of the Board for the International Bonhoeffer Society - English Language Section and is the co-editor, with W. David Hall, of *Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Theology, and Political Resistance* (Lexington Books, 2020). Brandt Hale's chapter in this volume is a constructive essay titled, "The Interfaith Imperative: How Bonhoeffer Compels Interfaith Action." In July, she was the guest preacher and educator - focused on the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer - at the Bay View Association Chautauqua on Lake Michigan. In October, she will offer a keynote presentation at United Lutheran Seminary in Gettysburg, PA titled, "Hope in a Divided World: Dietrich Bonhoeffer's This-Worldly Christianity as an Antidote to Christian Nationalism." Next April, she will be among the international speakers commemorating the 80th Anniversary of Bonhoeffer's death at the Flossenbürg Concentration Camp.



November

November 3

Humor & Faith (Part 1)

The Rev. Rolf Jacobson, Ph.D., Professor at Luther Seminary

November 10

Humor & Faith (Part 2)

The Rev. Rolf Jacobson, Ph.D., Professor at Luther Seminary



Robert Jenson once wrote, “It is the whole mission of the church to speak the -gospel....It is the church’s constitutive task to tell the biblical narrative to the world in proclamation and to God in worship, and to do so in a fashion appropriate to the content of that narrative.” One might add that the church must speak the gospel in a fashion that is appropriate to its context. That is, the church must speak in a fashion that is faithful to Scripture and tradition, but in a register that is fitting to whatever context in which it finds itself—in a way that translates the gospel message into language and symbols that can be understood. Since humor is an essential part of human nature, speaking the truth, including the biblical truth, seems to require the use of humor. Humor exposes our flaws and opens us to new vistas—or in theological terms, it preaches both law and gospel.

Over the course of two weeks, Dr. Rolf Jacobson will invite us into the story of faith and the ways that humor engages, excites, and speaks to our very souls.

Rolf Jacobson is Dean of the Faculty, Professor of Old Testament and the Alvin N. Rogness Chair of Scripture, Theology, and Ministry, joined the Luther Seminary faculty in 2003. Prior to that, he served on the faculty of Augsburg University and as Associate Pastor of Como Park Lutheran Church (St. Paul, Minnesota).

Rolf is known for combining humor and faithful biblical interpretation. You can see this in his book *The Homebrewed Christianity Guide to the Old Testament: Israel’s In-Your-Face, Holy God* and *Divine Laughter: Preaching and the Serious Business of Humor* (with Karl Jacobson).

November 17

Camp Sunday

Staff from Luther Crest Bible Camp



Luther Crest exists to inspire faith, stewardship, and community in God’s creation. This is accomplished through summer camp - where kids and teens unplug and immerse themselves in God’s great outdoors; family camps; retreats. From the friendships formed around the campfire to the inspiring lessons learned in our daily devotionals, time spent at Luther Crest is sure to be an experience that people of all ages will treasure for a lifetime.

Significantly, for many children and youth in our congregations, a week at Bible camp is one of the most formative faith experiences. At camp they have the opportunity to learn, play, sing, try new things, and simply be themselves. Studies show that camping ministries offer a space for youth to ask big questions, think about ways that God shows up in their lives, and be part of a caring community. Camps are also places that offer encouragement to be involved in faith communities in the future. In fact, many campers go on to be active in churches, to take on leadership, and a number go on to be pastors and deacons!

We take a moment today to hear from staff who serve at Luther Crest Bible Camp in Alexandria, Minnesota, and the ways the camp is connecting with children, youth, families, and congregations today.

November 24

Guatemala Connection: Caminando Juntos/Walking Together **St. Michael's Guatemala Trip Participants**



Fifteen years ago St. Michael's entered into a relationship of accompaniment with a partner congregation in Cimiento, Guatemala. Throughout the years we have travelled to Guatemala to visit, hosted leaders from the Iglesia de Luterana Agustina de Guatemala, and offered support and mutual care.

In October, twelve members of St. Michael's will have travelled to Guatemala reconnect with our partner congregation, engage in the work of the elementary school (CLAG) and the girls' school (Milagro), and see how ministry is taking shape in various contexts across the country. This Sunday they will be sharing their experiences from the 10 days in Guatemala—the people they met, the projects worked on, and the ways we are church together.

December

December 1

Practicing Hope: Advent's Invitation **Marty Stortz, Ph.D., Retired Professor, Augsburg University**

Dr. Marty Stortz writes, "I begin with experience, drawing from distinctions between: true hope and false hope, hoping *for* something and hoping *in* something, *having* hope and the sense that hope somehow *has you*, and hope as a kind of DIY matter and hoping with someone or a community. These distinctions point us all to a hope shaped by resurrection and etched on the bodies of believers. As we gather in community, we literally remember ourselves as people of hope." This Sunday we move into the Advent season...a season of anticipation and hope. And together we look to the ways that hope is alive and at work within us.

Marty Stortz was the Christensen Chair in Religion and Vocation at Augsburg University from 2010-2020. Prior to that she was on the faculty of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary and the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley since 1981 as professor of historical theology and ethics. She is author of several books, including *A World According to God* (2004), *Called to Follow* (2009), *Blessed to Follow* (2008), and, with a team of Roman Catholic and Lutheran authors, *One Hope* (2014). She currently serves on the boards of the Collegeville Institute and the MN Multifaith Network.



December 8

Understanding How Children Cope with Stress

Renée Labat, Youth Program Coordinator at NAMI Minnesota



Youth mental health has long been a topic of significant conversation. Moving through the COVID-19 pandemic and into the current reality, this topic of youth mental health has only been heightened. Anxiety, depression, isolation, and socialization hit close to home for many youth, their families, friends, and teachers. This is a one-hour presentation that discusses where anxiety and stress come from, healthy and unhealthy ways to cope with stress, when anxiety might be an anxiety disorder, and where to get help.

Renée Labat is the youth program coordinator at NAMI Minnesota. She graduated from Luther College with a degree in elementary education and a minor in Spanish. She then went on to spend a year volunteering in Argentina. When she returned to the United States, she worked a variety of jobs ranging from being a PCA, a tutor, and a youth counselor at a residential treatment center. Working at the residential treatment center as well as her own journey with depression was what drew her into working in mental health, and what ultimately led her to working at NAMI Minnesota. Renee

spent 10 years living with depression before seeking treatment, so she finds it very rewarding to work with youth to teach them that it is okay to reach out for help and that they do not need to wait so long.

December 15

Understanding the Unique Needs & Barriers of the LGBTQIA+ Senior Community

Paul R. Bloom, Minneapolis Area Senior Workers Association, Program Chair for Fall Aging Conference

Older LGBTQIA+ adults have experienced discrimination over their lifetime. These experiences have impacted their current health situation as well as their fears of how they will be treated in health care and other settings if their sexual orientation or gender identity are known. Participants will learn and recognize terminology related to the LGBTQIA+ Community including generational differences. We will discuss the differences between sex assigned at birth, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation. The historical timeline will help put perspective on the research that points to a unique set of needs and barriers this community faces, and the opportunity to identify ways in which we can create a welcoming environment for members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

Paul received his Bachelor of Arts from Luther College and coursework toward his Masters of Divinity at Wartburg Theological. Since 2001 Paul and his husband, Bob, have owned and operated Right at Home – In Home Care & Assistance for seniors in the Twin Cities. Paul was among the founding board members of Training to Serve, the curriculum to train senior service providers on the unique needs and barriers of the aging LGBT Community. Paul currently serves as Treasurer of the Minneapolis Area Senior Workers Association and Program Chair of the annual Fall Aging Conference. Additionally, Paul is chair of the board of Avenues for Youth.



December 22

A Very St. Michael's Christmas: Carols, Memories & Holiday Traditions with Karen Wilkerson, Tom Bartsch & Chuck Hanson



This has become one of the most popular hours of the year, as members and friends fill the courtyard room to tell holiday stories of days gone by, sing favorite carols and hymns, or highlight a tradition shared within their family.

Join Karen Wilkerson as she leads the singing, Tom Bartsch as he tickles the ivories, and Chuck

Hanson he emcees, as together they invite us into the season with songs, stories, and a good amount of holiday cheer.

December 29

Winter Break (the week after Christmas)

January

January 5

Looking Forward: The Upcoming Legislative Session John Marty, Minnesota State Senator

As the Minnesota legislature prepares for the upcoming session, join Senator John Marty in conversation around topics and legislation that will be significant over the next five months.

John grew up in a home engaged in the civil rights and anti-poverty movements, where his parents taught him deeply-rooted values, such as respecting the dignity of every human being, the value of working hard and playing fair, and the importance of taking responsibility to bring change when confronting injustice.

John attended St. Olaf College in Northfield and received a B.A. in Ethics in 1978. After college, he worked as a researcher and a foundation grant administrator. During this time, he met his wife Connie. They have two adult children, Elsa and Micah.

John won a race for state Senate in Roseville in 1986. He first became known statewide for his work in ethics and campaign finance reform. In 1993, he authored successful legislation to reduce the impact of special interest money on the political process. John was also the author of landmark legislation that prohibited lobbyists and interest groups from giving gifts to public officials.

John has been a strong advocate for public investments in education, He co-chaired the Legislative Commission to End Poverty and works for legislation to ensure that all workers receive a living wage.

Senator Marty is the chair of the Senate Finance Committee where he led efforts to develop the 2024-25 state budget. John is also former chair of the Senate Environment and Energy Committee and has been an outspoken leader on environmental protection, renewable energy.



January 12

Communication: Parents & Kids

Dawn Paulson, Marriage and Family Therapist Intern

Dawn writes, “I have raised four kids, founded five companies, and parented three dogs and thousands of bees—not much intimidates me.” And today she will be utilizing her personal work as a parent and professional work in marriage and family therapy to guide us in addressing communication with parents and kids.

Dawn is a Marriage and Family Therapy intern and an occupational therapist with 25+ years of experience helping individuals and families thrive. She is passionate in helping people find reconnection, meaning, and fulfillment in their lives and in their relationships. And a significant part of this work is open and honest communication.

Many describe Dawn as an insightful communicator, a compassionate space holder, and an enthusiastic cheerleader for change. Today we will venture into this topic making sure to find joy and laughter along the way.



January 19

How Can I Love the Bible When People Have Used It To Do So Much Harm?

The Rev. Cody J. Sanders, Ph.D., Associate Professor at Luther Seminary



The Bible is a sacred and complicated document. It has the power to heal and the power to harm, the capacity to deliver life-giving words and to deliver death-dealing blows. How do we continue to love the Bible when we know how widely it has been used to cause great harm? This forum will explore that question through critical recognition of the Bible's uneven effects in history and our contemporary world, examining the biblical text in all of its complexity, and learning to read the sacred text alongside marginalized people who have been harmed by its interpretation throughout history.

The Rev. Cody J. Sanders, Ph.D., is Associate Professor of Congregational & Community Care Leadership at Luther Seminary. Prior to this, he served as pastor to Old Cambridge Baptist Church in Cambridge, MA, where he also served as a chaplain at both Harvard and MIT. He has published several books, including, *Corpse Care: Ethics for Tending the Dead* (Fortress, 2023) and *Christianity, LGBTQ Suicide, and the Souls of Queer Folk* (Lexington, 2020).

January 26

The State of Policing and Charting a Path Forward

Matt Langer, former Chief Minnesota State Patrol

Matt Langer grew up at St. Michael's. He attended Sunday School starting at the age of three and continued through confirmation. He spent 25 years with the Minnesota State Patrol, including 10 years as Chief, including one year as Acting Chief. He enjoyed the challenge of crash reconstruction work, public information/media work, and still fully believes in the mission of traffic safety for our state. During his time as Chief, Matt was able to grow the agency, modernize the aviation fleet, place emphasis on employee wellness (including chaplaincy work), and had the unique perspective of leading through historic challenges, including civil unrest, riots, and other controversial situations. In 2024, he transitioned into a new role as the Director of Global Policing for the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). The IACP is a large association with 34,000 members across over 170 countries. He holds a Masters degree in Public and Nonprofit Administration and has attended several professional development programs during his career. He is married with two children and is a member at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Mahtomedi.

Matt invites us into conversation around the state of policing today and creating a path forward in the wake of all we have come to know and experience.



February

February 2

A Post-Election Reflection—what we saw and experienced in 2024
David Shultz, Ph.D., Professor at Hamline University

David Schultz is Distinguished University Professor in the Departments of Political Science, Environmental Studies, and Legal Studies at Hamline University. He is also an adjunct professor of Law at the University of Minnesota and at the University of St. Thomas. A four-time Fulbright scholar who has taught extensively in Europe and Asia, and the winner of the Leslie A. Whittington national award for excellence in public affairs teaching, David is the author of more than 45 books and 200+ articles on various aspects of American politics, election law, and the media and politics, and he is regularly interviewed and quoted in the local, national, and international media.



David tries to only speak to area community groups/churches every other year, but when speaking with us last year acknowledged how 2024 was going to be a crazy year and there would be a lot to discuss. So, he agreed to come back again this year to help us look at 2024 and everything that happened in the midst of the election. Come and join the conversation and his overall analysis.

February 9

Beyond Walls: Abolishing the Prison Industrial Complex
David Starks and Jason Sole

Jason Sole has served as the Minneapolis NAACP president and teaches criminal justice at Hamline University. David Starks mentors young men, volunteers with local organizations, and works for an area non-profit. Both are fathers; both are family men. And both have had the experience of being convicted, incarcerated, and labeled a felon. Their experiences with the police, judicial system, and incarceration have prompted them to look at what currently exists in the United States and the need for an alternative. Together they hope to increase civic engagement and shift culture at the local, state, and national level in addressing the prison industrial complex (or PIC for short).



In the presentation, each of them will share aspects of their own journey and the need they see in addressing the overlapping interests of government and industry that use surveillance, policing, and imprisonment as solutions to economic, social and political problems. They are particularly mindful of how the PIC affects African-American boys and men, and people of color. Together they invite us to learn, examine, and imagine what could be.

February 16

An Hour with the one and only Earl Schwartz **Earl Schwartz**

Our guest presenter is long-time friend of St. Michael's, Earl Schwartz. Earl is retired from the Hamline University religion department. He is the author of numerous books and articles on Jewish life and education, including *The Arc of the Covenant: Jewish Educational Success on the Upper Mississippi, a study of Jewish communal education in St. Paul*. Earl's exact topic will be announced closer to the date, but as always promises to be an engaging, thought-provoking, and fun hour together.



February 23

Roseville Schools & Education Updates **Jenny Loeck, Superintendent, Roseville Area Schools** **Ryan Vernosh, Principal, Brimhall Elementary School**

This Sunday is an opportunity to hear from Jenny Loeck and Ryan Vernosh as they share updates on Roseville Schools and trends that they are seeing in the district and across the state.



Dr. Jenny Loeck assumed the role of superintendent of Roseville Area Schools in July 2021. For more than 25 years, Dr. Loeck has worked in public education in various roles with increasing responsibility, including as a physical education and health teacher, associate principal and activities director, principal, and assistant superintendent. Dr. Loeck was instrumental in initiating the AVID program in Roseville Area Schools, which supports students who have the potential of becoming first-generation college students, and is committed to advancing policies and practices that support equity and remove barriers for students of color, English learners, and students receiving special education services. Her education includes a Bachelor of Arts from Bemidji State University; a Master of Arts in educational leadership from St. Mary's University, an Education Specialist degree in educational leadership from the University of St. Thomas, Minneapolis; and Doctor of Education from St. Cloud State University. Her doctoral dissertation was on supporting students of color to close the achievement gap. Dr. Loeck is a longtime resident and member of the Roseville community where she resides with her family, including an elementary student who attends Roseville Area Schools.

Ryan Vernosh is in his fourth year as Brimhall's Principal. Prior to choosing Roseville, Ryan served as a principal, policy and communications director, and teacher throughout a 17-year tenure in Saint Paul Public Schools. He was named the 2010 Minnesota Teacher of the Year, selected as an education policy fellow in the Obama administration, and a twice governor appointed director to the State Board of Teaching, now known as the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board. He lives in White Bear Lake with his wife (a Roseville Schools teacher) and two children.



March

March 2

Exploring a Theology of Food

Trish Zimmerman, Associate Professor of Practice of Religion, St. Olaf College



At St. Michael's we often joke that our life together revolves around food. And as a community that celebrates communion together, that is very true. It is part of what makes community...and a community of faith. Today we will be going deeper into theology and how it ties into food (the ordinary and the extraordinary) as we learn from Trish Zimmerman.

Trish Zimmerman received her MA and PhD from the University of Chicago Divinity School and BA from Gustavus Adolphus College, including work at the University of Heidelberg. Her research and teaching focus on the history of Christianity with particular emphasis on the diversities of Christian thought and practice; feminist theology; theology of food; and comparative mysticism. She co-teaches in the Environmental Conversation and has taught for many years in Enduring Questions/Great Conversation. She is in the early stages of her book *A Mysticism of*

Place. Minnesota Biomes as Holy Encounter.

Preaching and teaching regularly in various denominational churches, she is an advocate for the public understanding, discussion, and debate of all things religious. She has served on the Council of the American Society of Church History and as a senior fellow for the Ford Foundation Difficult Dialogues project, as co-chair of the Steering Committee of the History of Christianity group for the American Academy of Religion.

March 9

Connecting and Serving through Food

Guest Panelists from Every Meal and Keystone Food Shelf

Last week we explored a theology of food; this week is an opportunity to look at ways that St. Michael's serves the community and connects with local organizations that are committed to fight hunger. Join in conversation with guest panelists from Every Meal and Keystone Community Services.



**EVERY
MEAL**

Every Meal highlights that more than 300,000 children in Minnesota live with food insecurity, and the organization is **on** a mission to change that. Every Meal fights child hunger by focusing on filling the food gaps children face, especially on the weekends, when they're not able to eat school meals. When they don't have consistent access to enough food, the risk of hunger is very real. Through multiple food gap programs, Every Meal provides children and families experiencing food insecurity with access to good food.

Keystone likewise is striving to address hunger in our community. The Keystone food shelf in Ramsey County is designed to support people who need food assistance and other avenues of help. Along with their Food mobiles, crisis support and additional food programs, Keystone is working to strengthen the community by providing access to our neighbors in need.



St. Michael's is actively engaged in the work of both Every Meal (with volunteers packing boxes at the headquarters in Roseville, and others volunteering regularly to distribute food at Parkview Center School), and Keystone (with volunteers making bread and food deliveries, hosting the mobile food shelf, and providing food and funds through March Food Share month.) The panelists will highlight the current work and hopes for the future as we move through March Hunger Awareness month.

March 16

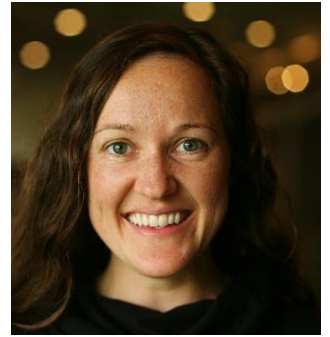
Settled: One Response to Homelessness

Gabrielle Clowdus, Ph.D., CEO and Co-founder of Settled

Settled is a team of committed and curious families and individuals, that has developed a research-based approach to addressing homelessness through close relationships with the chronically homeless and those who serve them.

As an organization, Settled helps churches develop permanent supportive tiny home villages, called Sacred Settlements, designed to address long-term homelessness. Each one is owned and operated by the worshipping community on their land with Settled by their side for the journey.

Today we have the opportunity to hear from Gabrielle Clowdus who is considered to be a thought-leader in affordable housing and homelessness. She has devoted her life to walking alongside people in poverty, holding a profound conviction that we belong to one another.



March 23

Understanding and Addressing Sex Trafficking in Minnesota

Madelyn Hanson, Communication & Program Director at C.A.S.T.

Citizens Against Sex Trafficking (C.A.S.T.) is an organization founded in June 2017 by a group of concerned citizens in Washington County, Minnesota, who learned that human trafficking and sexual exploitation are not issues that “just takes place over there” (in big US cities or abroad), but are realities that take place every day in our own backyard. The organization is dedicated to join together as a community end to sexual exploitation.

C.A.S.T. recognized that the anti-trafficking movement in the United States often revolves around services for those who have been victims of sex trafficking or human trafficking. And, while these victim services are absolutely essential, there are few programs in the country that focus on prevention and community empowerment, even fewer in Minnesota. C.A.S.T.’s goal is to create a world with fewer victims by giving individuals the knowledge and tools they need to protect themselves.

Madelyn has spent the last 8 years in the anti-sexual exploitation movement. She specializes in anti-trafficking efforts but has had the opportunity to engage in anti-exploitation work from various angles including, working with safe homes around the U.S., as a legal advocate, street outreach worker, batterer intervention program staff, and working with Minnesota’s Day One. Madelyn is a passionate advocate for the equality and dignity of all people and that educating and equipping community members empowers us all to make choices of freedom!



March 30

Lutheran Social Services-Minnesota

Amanda Simons, Director of Church Partnerships and Volunteerism, LSS of Minnesota



Lutheran Social Services (LSS) is the social service ministry of the six ELCA synods of Minnesota. Through more than 25 lines of service, we reach 1 in 63 Minnesotans annually and provide services in each of Minnesota’s 87 counties. Our work is grounded in two principles—God loves all people unconditionally and God yearns for us to love our neighbors.

Today, the Rev. Amanda Simons, Director of Church Partnerships and Volunteerism, joins us to share more about the mission and work of LSS. She is a graduate of Gustavus Adolphus College and the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. As a part of her seminary education, she completed a four-unit Clinical Pastoral Education

residency with HealthEast Bethesda Hospital and a parish internship at Christ the King Lutheran Church, Bloomington. She served as associate pastor at Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church, Saint Paul, from 2013 to 2023. Currently, she is serving as a Board of Trustees member with Gustavus Adolphus College for a one-year appointment term. Amanda lives in Edina, Minnesota with her spouse and children. She volunteers for her local school district’s PTO activities and occasionally coaches soccer.

April

April 6

Church for the Sake of Our Neighbor

Nicholas Tangen, Director of Faith Practices & Neighboring Practices with the Minneapolis Area Synod

The neighborhood is the most potent context for change and human flourishing we have. Health and wellness, safety and security, community and care are all qualities that are determined in the neighborhoods where we live. Churches and faith communities are essential partners in the neighborhoods where they are located, but we've often lost sight of the small simple practices that build community across difference and generations. How can we refocus on the relational health of our community, connect our neighbors' gifts for the sake of the common good, and celebrate how God is at work in the places where we live and worship? Join Nicholas Tangen for a conversation about these very questions.



Nicholas Tangen is the Director of Faith Practices & Neighboring Practices at the Minneapolis Area Synod. He is a neighbor, writer, and podcaster curious about God's call to be the church rooted in place. Nicholas lives in NE Minneapolis with his spouse Kristin.

April 13

On Being a Mayor: A New Avenue of Service

Mike Krachmer, Mayor of Vadnais Heights & St. Michael's member



This Sunday we are excited to hear from Mike Krachmer who, after stepping away from non-profit management, decided to throw his name in the ring and run for mayor of Vadnais Heights. The process of running for election was completely new and, in some ways, stepping into the role of mayor was unfamiliar territory. Yet, for Mike, it was and is an incredible way to meet his neighbors, the people of the city of Vadnais Heights, and to give back in service.

Today Mike will be sharing some of his experiences and learnings.

April 20

On-Break (Easter Sunday)

April 27

Current Events & World News

Thomas Hanson, former U.S. Foreign Service Officer, Diplomat in Residence at UMD

Join former career Foreign Service Officer Tom Hanson in conversation around the latest foreign policy developments, trends, and challenges facing the U.S. in the year ahead including the repercussions from the war in Ukraine, concerns facing China's economy, conflict in the Middle East, and global struggles for peace and security. Don't miss your chance to stay up-to-date on the year's impactful developments in international relations!

Thomas (Tom) Hanson is a former U.S. Foreign Service Officer with the Department of State whose diplomatic postings included East Germany, France, Norway, the Soviet Union, Sweden, and the former Soviet Republic of Georgia. He also participated in the opening of new U.S. embassies in Mongolia and Estonia, worked on the Foreign Relations Committees of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, and served as Director for NATO and European Affairs at the Atlantic Council of the United States in Washington, D.C. He has been a member of numerous national and international committees and provided services in many areas of foreign policy. Mr. Hanson holds a BA degree from the University of Minnesota and graduate degrees from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy; the Institute of Advanced International Studies in Geneva, Switzerland; and the National School of Administration (ENA) in Paris, France.



May

May 4 **TBD**

May 11 *Nature RX: Forest bathing and nature journaling*
Kristen Mastel

Forest bathing, also known as shinrin-yoku in Japanese, is a practice of immersing oneself in nature to improve mental and physical health. After facing career and personal burnout, Kristen found that taking the time to be out in nature, whether a walk with her pup, or out on the trails alone, was crucial to her mental and physical health and burnout recovery. She will share the healing powers of nature and provide skills to start your intentional journey through nature.

Kristen Mastel is an academic librarian with the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, in addition to being a certified forest therapy guide, herbalist, and health coach.



May 18 *The Year At-A-Glance*
St. Michael's Church Council Members

In 2023-2024 St. Michael's congregation, staff, and council engaged in conversations around worship and educational planning. To foster greater community, address changes in volunteerism since COVID-19, and maintain strong and intentional worship, schedules were adapted. There was the move from 2 Sunday services to 1 Sunday service and 1 Wednesday evening mid-week service with a community meal. Families also adjusted their schedules with Sunday school prior to worship, Senior High Youth Group following worship, and Religion in Life Adult Education after the Sunday worship service.

Part of the Church Council's commitment is to evaluate the experiences of this past year. What has worked well? Where have there been challenges? What have we learned? This Religion in Life hour is the opportunity to gather at the end of this trial year and, as a community, reflect as we continue to build for the future.



St. Michael's Lutheran Church
1660 County Road B West
Roseville, MN 55113

www.stmichaelselca.com