

Men of His Word Session List

1) Getting the Conversation Started!

David Scharf

It's easy to talk about the weather, sports, etc. But Jesus? In this workshop we will prepare ourselves for approaching people and broaching the subject of Jesus. We will discuss ideas for getting a conversation started with an unchurched person and turning it into a conversation about Jesus. Drinking in God's promises will give us the confidence to start spiritual conversations and keep them going.

David Scharf served as a parish pastor at Immanuel in Greenville, WI, and as coordinator for the Northern Wisconsin District Evangelism Commission from 2005-2016. He now serves as a Professor of Theology at Martin Luther College. He is a member of the Institute for Worship and Outreach and chairman of the Commission on Congregational Counseling. A graduate of Luther Prep (1996), Martin Luther College (2000), and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (2005), Dave and his wife have six children ages 6-17.

2) If the World Hates You

Jared Oldenburg

These are Jesus' words, not ours. But what do they even mean? What does it mean that the world will hate you in our post-Christian existence? As the world has become more and more polarized, has our time to blend in become a thing of the past? "If the World Hates You" is a genuine look at what the cost of following Christ is as a husband, father and a man of God.

Jared Oldenburg is the founding pastor of Eternal Rock Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO. In addition, Jared has presented around the country as a conference speaker and hosts a Church Planter Intensive to mentor new missionaries. He has been published multiple times in Christian publications, is the author of the interactive eBook *Who is Jesus, Simple Answers* (Boettcher/Trinklein Inc., 2013) and is part of the www.yourtimeofgrace.org presenting team, as well as a contributor for their written publications. Jared lives in Castle Rock, Colorado, with his wife Aimee (whom he met when they were 14 & 15 years old), three kids, and Jens, the manliest of poodles.

3) Finding the Hidden God

David Olson

Sometimes it's a death in the family. At other times, it's a fork in the road of our career path. Or perhaps it's just the sense that you are aimlessly drifting through life. The situations are as different as all of us, but the questions are similar. Why did God do this? What does God want me to do? What direction does God have planned for my life? Since the beginning of time Christians have asked these questions and at times grown frustrated with a God who doesn't seem to give us the answers we want. Isaiah wrote, "Truly you are a God who hides himself." (45:15) But the God who hides himself also reveals himself. In fact, he hides himself in order to reveal himself so that we know him as he is. Join us as we talk about searching for God where he promises to be, finding the answers we need, and knowing what that means for how we live our lives.

Pastor Olson has had the pleasure of serving at St Matthew in Appleton since June of 2019 where he serves as the Coordinating Pastor. Before that, he had the pleasure of serving in Nashville, Tennessee, for eight years and Greeley, Colorado, for seven years. His wife Stephanie currently teaches at Mount Olive Lutheran School in Appleton. They have been blessed with four children who are excited to begin their next adventure in the Valley!

4) Managing to Be a Dad: Our Stewardship of Christian Fatherhood

Karl Schultz

God has given all Christian fathers the awesome privilege and wonderful responsibility of bringing up their children in the training and instruction of the Lord (Eph 6:4). How does a man of God manage this area of his life in 2020? How will we continue to raise the children whom our Lord has graciously entrusted to our care? In this session we will (1) study the encouragement and direction that our heavenly Father gives us as fathers, and (2) exchange practical advice about being Christian dads in today's society.

Karl Schultz married his wife Jill in 1991. The Lord has graciously blessed the Schultzes with eight children, ranging in age from 26-13: Katie, Emma, Grace, Aaron, Luke, Sadie, Joe and Meredith. Since his graduation from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in 1994, Karl has served as the pastor of congregations in Minnesota, Nebraska and Wisconsin. He currently serves First Lutheran Church in Lake Geneva, WI.

5) Gospel Outreach in America's Heartland

Jonathan Bauer

While we continue to plant new churches in bigger cities and along the coasts, many of our churches are still located in relatively small towns in the heartland of America. These churches might convince themselves that they are not in a setting where aggressive and effective gospel outreach can take place. However, nothing could be further from the truth. Not only is the heartland a great place to do outreach, WELS churches are uniquely qualified to do it. This session will discuss the potential.

Pastor Jonathan Bauer has been serving at Good News Lutheran Church in Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin, since the summer of 2014. Good News had been started as a daughter congregation of Resurrection in Verona. One year after weekly services began in Mt. Horeb, Pastor Bauer was called to be the congregation's first full-time pastor. Pastor Bauer and his wife Lindsay have three children, ages 12, 9, and 6. In addition to his service at Good News, Pastor Bauer serves on the WELS Hymnal Project and is a speaker for Grace Talks daily devotions through Time of Grace Ministries.

6) Leadership in the Church

Jon Leach

Can anyone be a leader? How do leaders measure success? God has a way of turning common leadership models upside down. We'll discuss how spiritual leaders unleash God's power by promoting God's vision and moving people on to his agenda.

Pastor Jon Leach served in a home mission church and as campus pastor at a high school. He currently serves as chairman of the East Asia Administrative Committee for World Missions. He recently completed a Master's in Intercultural Missional Leadership. Jon now serves as Vice-President of Truth in Love Ministry. Jon and his wife Liz, together with their four boys, reside in Nampa, Idaho.

7) Resilience: Bend, Don't Break!

Karen Fischer and Wayne Shevey

We know God is in control, but sometimes challenges seem overwhelming. Each of us will have difficulties, but some individuals have a greater propensity to recover. Can we discover what makes that happen, and can we implement these strategies? The answer is yes, and in this workshop, participants will learn the science of resilience and the traits of those who persevere as well as work to identify their individual resilience, strengths and weaknesses. They will develop an improvement plan to work on nine traits and bolster their ability to weather the storms of life while leaning on the promises of their faithful God.

Karen joined Christian Family Solutions in 2019 as a Licensed Professional Counselor with degrees from Wisconsin Lutheran College and Concordia University. She works mainly in intensive outpatient programs for adults and adolescents with significant mental wellness challenges. Karen's passion is helping individuals engage in re-learning thought processes that increase their well-being and decrease maladaptive behaviors. Grace is the theme of Karen's life as a physically and spiritually adopted person. This drives her interest to know more about how people become who they are and how God's grace is limitless for us all. Karen is a big sports fan and loves to travel. Her husband Tom is a big baseball and history fan so that works out fine. She has one adult son.

Pastor Wayne Shevey is in his seventh year as campus pastor at Wisconsin Lutheran College. He says he is blessed to hang around fun young people who have boundless opportunities in front of them, helping them navigate various stages and circumstances of life. He has children their age and is constantly reminded that he was college-aged at one time, so he understands what is best for their lives and their eternal life. Whether in competition, the theater, the stage, or in the classroom, he loves to see students in action—sharing their successes and their challenges. Prior to arriving at WLC in 2013, "Rev Shev," as he is known around campus, served 14 years in Dardenne Prairie, Missouri, where he started a mission congregation with his family. Wayne is married to Julie, who teaches language arts, music, and art at St. Paul's Lutheran School in Muskego. They have four children: Morgan, a teacher in Hortonville, Kaylyn and Marisa who attend WLC, and Elijah, a junior at Luther Preparatory School in Watertown.

8) Who Am “I”? The Crisis Among Teens Today

Phil Huebner

This session will explore the souls so often lost in the mix and swallowed up by society. They are outwardly brash, bold, tough, and opinionated, but secretly they are dying on the inside. Teens are living in a critical time of world history, a time that is causing a crisis among their generation--a crisis of emotional, psychological, and spiritual health. In this session we will explore shocking statistics and anecdotal stories that will paint the picture of life for teens today. After analyzing the problem(s), we will move forward with clear strategies and solutions for serving teens today. The information for this session comes from careful research and intimate knowledge of teen life over years of ministry.

Dr. Phil Huebner was assigned to start a new mission church in Palm Coast, FL, in 2007. Over nine years Christ the King Lutheran Church and School was showered with blessings, growing to 300 members and 400 students. In 2016 he accepted a call as campus pastor at Wisconsin Lutheran High School where he now serves. Dr. Huebner holds a Master's in Divinity and a Master's in Systematic Theology from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and received his Doctor of Ministry in Mission and Culture from Concordia Theological Seminary in 2019. His thesis was on what to do with children in church. His entire ministry has emphasized outreach, children, teens, and families. Dr. Huebner and his wife Becky have two children, Noah and Gwen. In his free time he loves to travel and read and research more on the topics of families and teens.

9) Discipling Gen Z

Brandon Steenbock

Teens need adults in their lives, and more than just a 20-something with a cool haircut. Ministering to teens in the 21st century needs the dedication of every Christian adult. It requires a disciple-making mindset patterned after Jesus' Great Commission. Discover what today's teens need, and the three key characteristics that every Christian man has to have to be a disciple-maker of teenagers.

Brandon Steenbock is a native of the Seattle area, but now lives in Green Bay where he serves as Young Adult Minister at St. Mark-De Pere/Green Bay. He graduated from Martin Luther College in 2006 from the Staff Ministry program and was assigned to St. Paul's-New Ulm, MN as Youth and Family Minister. In 2013 he earned a Master's in Family Life Education from Concordia University. He is currently working toward a Master's in Theological Studies. He is married to Nikki, and together they have two boys, Athanasius (13) and Paladin (11). Brandon also writes for Bread for Beggars and serves on the boards for the Staff Ministry Conference and Camp Phillip. He is a self-proclaimed coffee snob, roasts his own coffee beans, and enjoys writing stories and reading large books.

10) Keeping Kids Connected

Brett Naumann and Adam Zimpelmann

The dropout rates of our teens after confirmation is staggering. No Christian father wants his child to be part of that statistic. One thing that has been shown to squelch that statistic is a father-led family devotional life. This session will discuss common obstacles to regular family study and share some solutions and resources to encourage and equip families to keep kids connected past confirmation.

Brett Naumann and Adam Zimpelmann are two men who don't spend a lot of time with long lists of their qualifications. They describe themselves as just two pastors who have learned a lot from their mistakes.

11) Sabbath Time: in a Weary World of Work, God's Invitation to Rest **Mark Parsons**

In his book *24/7*, Jonathan Crary proclaims our new normal seems to be an always-on activity: “[W]e esteem the individual who is constantly engaged, interfacing, interacting, communicating, responding, or processing within some telematic milieu. In their connectionist paradigm, the highest premium is placed on activity for its own sake.” Not sure what that means? Me either, but Crary’s point is clear: We have a problem, a rest problem, and it’s not a new one. The Bible often speaks of this strange tension between work and play and rest and knowing when to stop working to truly rest. But it doesn’t have to be that way. The God who rested from his creation work and the Lord of the Sabbath invites us to find rest in him. Come and hear God’s invitation to rest in the finished work of Jesus, to study the Old Testament Sabbath, to examine how it prepared God’s people for rest in Christ, and to discover what that rest means for us today.

Originally from Montrose, Colorado, Mark served the family of believers at Christ the King Lutheran in Port Charlotte, FL, from 2009-2013, and since January of 2014 has been serving as Pastor of School, Youth, and Family Ministry at Faith Lutheran in Fond du Lac, WI. He enjoys weekend adventures with his three children, working out in his basement with his wife, and running around Fond du Lac training for Tough Mudder or a marathon. In addition to his roles and responsibilities at Faith, Pastor Parsons is the chief content curator for the online resource ministry, Bread for Beggars, and the director of Fuel Student Ministry.

12) Stop Living in the 20th Century... **John Parlow**

Church members often think they are in churches that understand the current soul landscape, but when you scratch the surface, you see that many are not. The reality is many churches have discipleship and outreach in their rhetoric, but not in their reality. Countless strategic decisions must be made weekly to simultaneously better equip Jesus followers and still reach those within a nine-iron golf shot of your front porch who have no memory of the Gospel. Discover the latest insights for being a 21st century church with 1st century power, including a look at speaking out on the most pressing topics of our day.

Pastor John Parlow’s philosophy of ministry may be best summed up by the following: “When sharing the Gospel, you always need to be willing to think outside the box, because one day everybody is going to be in one.” Pastor Parlow has served congregations in South Dakota, Wisconsin and Asian Lutheran Seminary in Hong Kong. He is a graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and has continued his education at South Dakota State University, Concordia Theological Seminary and Denver Seminary where he earned his Doctorate. He currently serves as lead pastor at St. Mark Lutheran in De Pere, WI, a multi-site ministry including an 80-child Christian Childcare Center. He and his wife Lydia have three sons. His interests include the martial arts, the outdoors and pistol shooting.

13) 3 Words That Will Change Your Life

Mike Novotny

You, like every man of God, have a desire to grow in faith, self-control, peace, and Christian love. Yet the challenges you face at school, at work, at home, and in life often interrupt that vision, leaving you stuck in the same place as you were before. This session unpacks the three simple words that the Holy Spirit uses to free men from complacency and fear and position them for serious spiritual growth. Learn more about the three words that changed the presenter's life and inspired him to write an entire book, *3 Words That Will Change Your Life*, detailing his journey deeper into the joy-producing presence of GOD.

Mike Novotny is a pastor who currently serves at The CORE (a part of 922Ministries) in Appleton, WI. When not dating his wife and two daughters, Mike shares the good news of Jesus as the lead speaker of Time of Grace, an international media ministry. As a lifelong soccer player, he was recently accused (by some millennial friends) of wearing shorts that were embarrassingly short. But you shouldn't let that stop you from attending this session or reading his new book, *3 Words That Will Change Your Life*. You can connect with him on Instagram @pastormikenovotny.

14) God's Adopted Adopting

Ben Enstad

For some time in our culture (and many others), adoption has been taboo to one degree or another. This perception is particularly interesting among Christians when you consider that adoption is not unfamiliar to God's people (both in our adoption by God and the adoptions that occurred in Scripture). This session is for everyone: those considering adoption, those who have adopted (with kids in the home or all grown up), those who want to know more about adoption to better support family and friends who have adopted or hope to adopt. We'll cover our adoption into God's family through faith; what to expect in the process; what to do when... after you've adopted; and finally, we'll open your eyes to the many faux pas surrounding adoption and often related infertility (in other words, how to avoid foot-in-mouth-disease).

Ben is a 2009 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. He and his wife married in 2006. After a couple years of "waiting" to have kids, they started trying. Both had come from large families and expected getting pregnant quickly. After two years, however, they had fertility tests done. While they weren't the most fertile couple, they weren't biologically infertile. After diving deeper into the biology of fertility far more than they ever expected with charts, timing, temperatures, you name it, they still weren't successful. They had no intention of going the route of drugs or IVF. So, after a lot of pain, heartache, difficult but needed conversations, and finally healing, in 2012 they chose the path of adoption. In 2015, they adopted their son Asher and are in the process of trying to adopt again. Ben and his wife love being parents to their sweet, funny, anything-with-a-motor-loving Asher, but they also hope and pray the Lord would bless him with a little brother or sister.

**15) Retirement: How We Can Uniquely Serve God's Kingdom
While in This Chapter of Life**

Pastor Mark Jeske

Join Pastor Jeske for an inquiry into the extraordinary things God accomplished through his senior citizens, an action plan for making the most of your retirement years, and sharing stories of service and ministry.

Pastor Jeske has served as senior pastor at St. Marcus Lutheran Church, a multicultural congregation on Milwaukee's near north side since 1980. Previously, he started a mission church in South America and taught English, history, and Old Testament at Northwestern Prep. Until recently stepping back from being the face of *Time of Grace*, he had brought the Word of God to viewers since 2001. Pastor Jeske has written a Bible commentary and more than a dozen daily devotional booklets. He and his wife Carol, an elementary school teacher, are blessed with four children.

16) What Will Our Synod Look Like 100 Years from Now?

Mark Schroeder

The church always looks back at history to learn from it. The church also looks ahead to the future. What predictions can we make about what our synod will look like 100 years from now? What are the challenges we will face as we continue to carry out the mission God has given us? What blessings can we expect from the gracious God who has asked us to carry out that mission in his name?

After graduating from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in 1981, Rev. Mark Schroeder began his ministry at Faith, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. In 1987 he accepted a call to King of Kings, Maitland, Florida, where he served until he was called to be president of Northwestern Preparatory School. In 1995 he oversaw the amalgamation of Northwestern Prep and Martin Luther Prep into the school now known as Luther Preparatory School. He has served as the president of WELS since 2007 and is now serving in his fourth term. President Schroeder has been blessed with a faithful and supporting wife (Andrea). They have four grown children and six grandchildren.

17) A Look at 2020 Politics with God's 20/20 Vision

John Braun

The political landscape today is marked by character assassinations, partisan politics on all sides, dysfunctional government at many levels, angry words and actions in the public square, biases that aim to distort rather than enlighten, sexual misconduct, and talk of impeachment. This session will help us find direction for our thoughts and lives as Christian citizens in these times.

John Braun is the executive editor of Forward in Christ.