

## 2026 Conference Bios

### 1) Stronger Together: The Power of Church - Nonprofit Partnerships

Phil Hayes/ Tim Dolan

Phil Hayes serves chairman of the Board of Directors and volunteer for Safe Families for Children (NE WI) and the Appleton Site Director for BIO Girls. Phil has seen firsthand how collaboration between churches and nonprofits can transform lives and strengthen communities. A husband and father of two daughters, he is committed to helping families flourish through compassion, leadership, and faith in action.

Tim Dolan serves as a Pastor at Immanuel Lutheran Ministries in Greenville. He and his wife are grateful parents of three and are passionate about seeing the church make a lasting impact in everyday life.

### 2) The Christian and Science

Arthur Eggert

Arthur Arnold Eggert. Born: Shawano, Wisconsin (1944). Confirmed: St. James Lutheran (Shawano, 1958). BS in Chemistry (UW-Madison, 1966). PhD in Analytical Chemistry (UW-Madison, 1970). Chemistry teacher (Duke University, 1970-71). Professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine (UW-Madison, 1971-2012). At UW Hospitals: director of Laboratory Informatics (1972-2012), director of the Clinical Laboratories (1995-2002), and chief of the Clinical Pathology Service (1995-2002). Chief of academic-industrial project team that developed Relational LABCOM software. Developer of CHEMPROF (chemistry teaching software). Industrial consultant. Authored/co-authored three books and numerous scientific papers. Taught classes on theology and Bible/church history at Lutheran churches in Dane County, Wisconsin (1989-present), served on the WELS Synodical School Self-Study Committee, the WWD Adult Discipleship Committee, and the WLS Governing Board (2006-2018). Currently: managing editor of In Terra Pax Lutheran Publishing, LLC and teacher of a multi-congregational course series entitled Thoroughly Lutheran. Authored/co-authored seven books and numerous religious articles.

### 3) Building Solid Financial Habits

Peter Wolfgramm

Peter has served as a teacher and staff minister at several WELS churches in the Midwest since 1996. He currently serves as the Director of Operations for Grace in Action. He is also a Ramsey Solutions certified financial coach. As such he helps individuals and couples evaluate their financial habits and choices and assists them with creating a solid plan of action for long-term success.

### 4) Yes, you: An evangelism model for anyone, anywhere

Aaron Wakeman

Aaron Wakeman has been actively involved in mission work since 2004 when he and his wife Cora moved to Wuhan, China to be evangelists and church planters. They returned to China several years later with their three children, Will, Andy and Anna. During that time Aaron served as the Field Coordinator and lead trainer for about 50 global evangelists. Aaron now serves as the Executive Director of Friends Network, a role he has held since 2018. Friends Network is a WELS-affiliated mission agency that recruits, trains, sends, and supports missionaries around the world. Over the past several years Aaron has led dozens of workshops and training seminars around the country on the topic of evangelism and outreach. Aaron graduated from Martin Luther College and later earned a Masters Degree in Nonprofit Management from Hamline University. He has also received extensive training as a cross-cultural coach. Aaron and his family live in St Paul, MN with their little dog Nugget, and they attend New Life Lutheran Church in Shoreview.

## **5) Just Don't Be Weird**

**Nathan Klusmeyer**

Pastor Nathan Klusmeyer is a 2023 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and currently serves as pastor at Water of Life Lutheran Church in Racine and Caledonia. He is married to Ahnsharee Klusmeyer and they have three children. His daughter, Kaliska, is a sophomore at Milwaukee School of Engineering, his son TJ is a senior at Shoreland Lutheran High School and recently enlisted in the Wisconsin National Guard, and his youngest son Grant is a freshman at Shoreland. Pastor Klusmeyer enjoys reading books about science fiction and history, and he also enjoys hunting and golf. An interesting fact about Pastor Klusmeyer is that he loves history so much he managed to convince his wife to name their two sons after Civil War generals.

## **6) You Gotta Love It**

**Justin Heise**

Pastor Justin Heise serves as the spiritual director at Camp Phillip, a summer camp in Wautoma, WI. He is married with two children. Bible Study is his favorite thing in the whole world, and he is extremely excited to talk about its value.

## **7) Pastoring Your Household: Rhythms of head, heart, and habit**

**Brandon Steenbock**

Dr. Brandon Steenbock serves as a staff minister at St. Mark Ministries in Green Bay, Wis., where he focuses on discipleship, teaching, and family ministry. With experience in both parish ministry and leadership development, Brandon has written and taught extensively on the need for family discipleship as the heartbeat of congregational life. He has presented at conferences, taught courses at Martin Luther College, and led workshops for church leaders on equipping parents as the primary disciplers of their children. Brandon is passionate about helping congregations move beyond theory into practical strategies that make homes the central place of faith formation.

## **8) From Overwhelmed to on Mission**

**Jon Ruddat**

Jon Ruddat serves as IT Manager at 922 Ministries and as a board member for Men of His Word. For nearly 30 years, he struggled with the same challenge facing many Christian men today: working too much, struggling to find balance, and not knowing when to say no. In October 2024, Jon shifted from letting emails dictate his day to implementing a customized Getting Things Done system that builds his week around biblical priorities first, then tasks and messages. The result? His stress level dropped even as his workload increased—managing additional ministry duties after a staff departure and navigating his mother's move to memory care, all while protecting family time and getting more meaningful work done. Jon lives in Appleton, Wisconsin with his wife Carolann and has 6 grown children.

## **9) Yes, But I Can't Forgive Myself**

**Brad Price**

Brad Price has served Lutheran Military Support Group as President/CEO since 2022 and enjoys sharing God's grace with those in military and first responder communities. Brad served in the Texas Army National Guard for seven years and deployed to Baghdad, Iraq in 2005 where his team completed over 450 missions in a combat zone. He also has experience in detention services and search and rescue operations. He and his wife, Laura, have two boys and like to spend time outdoors and on road trips.

## **10) Marriage under Fire**

**Ben Berger**

Ben has been married to Heather for over 21 years. Together they have raised Eliana, a freshman at Martin Luther College, and Andrew, a junior at Fox Valley Lutheran High School. Ben has also had the privilege of serving God's people at St. Paul's in Winneconne since 2014.

## **11) Livestreaming: Fad or Gospel Aid?**

**Larry Poch & Panel**

A longtime member of Faith Lutheran Church in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, Larry has quietly served behind the scenes for nearly 20 years as a worship recorder and livestream coordinator. With a natural interest in technology and a heart for ministry, he regularly helps bring worship to shut-ins and remote viewers. Larry's work may not draw attention, but it reflects a steady commitment to sharing the gospel and the belief that livestreaming is a viable outreach tool.

## **12) Godly Boyz II Men**

**Phil Huebner**

Rev. Dr. Phil Huebner was assigned from the Seminary to start a new mission church in Palm Coast, Fla., where he served for nine years. Since 2016 he has served as the campus pastor at Wisconsin Lutheran High School. He received a second masters degree from our Seminary in 2016 and his Doctorate in Ministry in Missions and Culture in 2019 from Concordia Theological Seminary. His entire ministry to date has seen emphases in outreach, children, teens, and families. He is married to his wife Becky who also teaches at WLHS and they have two children--Noah a freshman at MLC and Gwen a sophomore at WLHS.

## **13) Living with God's Gift of Anger**

**Phillip Merten**

Pastor Phillip Merten served as a chaplain with Institutional Ministries since 1989, mostly working with people in jails and prisons seeking recovery from addictions. I'm semi-retired since the beginning of 2025, enjoying more time with my wife Pam and my two kids and three grandkids, but still meeting weekly with groups in corrections facilities.

## **14) Forming the Whole Man: Faith, Discipline, and Habits**

**Wade Johnston**

Dr. Johnston teaches history and theology at Wisconsin Lutheran College and serves as the pastor of Resurrection Lutheran in Milwaukee. Before moving to Milwaukee, he served a parish in Saginaw, Michigan for ten years. He and his wife have five children. He enjoys weightlifting, bicycling, traveling, and reading widely.

## **Keynote**

**Jared Oldenburg**

**JARED OLDENBURG** serves as the Lead Pastor at 922 Ministries in Appleton, Wisconsin, where he leads a team of six pastors and serves as the primary preacher at the St. Peter campus. He is the founding pastor of Eternal Rock Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, Colorado, where he served for fifteen years.

Jared established and served as the director of the Divine Savior Ministries Leadership Institute. He also founded the WELS Church Planting Intensive and coaching program, where he continues to mentor and

support new church planters. He holds a Master of Divinity degree and has been published in multiple Christian publications.

Jared and his wife, Aimee, live in Appleton, Wisconsin, and have three adult children. They are also the proud owners of Jens — the manliest poodle on the planet.