



Wisconsin Breakaways

Who Am I - 2024

Breakaway Session A

Frankenstein's Folly

Mrs. Jocelyn Benson

WI - A - CCES Exhibit Hall 2nd Floor

Victor Frankenstein created a living, breathing identity crisis. God created you. You are not an identity crisis, nor do you need to have one, despite popular opinion. Come learn from Frankenstein (and his folly), his creature, and your Creator. They have much to teach us in terms of who we are (and who we are not) and how to avoid an identity crisis amidst all of the lies the devil, the world, and our own sinful flesh craft for us.

Jocelyn Benson is the head teacher at Wittenberg Academy in Chatfield, MN. You can reach her at mrsbenson@wittenbergacademy.org

What About Your Imagination?

Rev. Jonathan Boehne

WI - A & B - Buuck - Friends of Concordia

Do you have an imagination? Whether you realize it or not, God gave you an imagination, and you use it all the time, either for good or for evil. In Christ, God redeems you and gives you a Christian imagination. But what is a Christian imagination, and how do you use it? We'll talk about the spiritual battle for your imagination and how God captures it with The Book (miracles, metaphors, visions, psalms, parables, etc.) and with other lesser books. Some special attention will be given to The Chronicles of Narnia series and other books worth reading.

Rev. Boehne is the pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in El Paso, IL. You can reach him at jonboehne@hotmail.com

Who Am We

Rev. Daniel Burhop

WI - A & C - Pharmacy 147

Yes, that's bad grammar. "Am" is singular. "We" is plural. I know. But who "we" are is just as important as who "I" am. We (plural) form the body (singular) and bride (singular) of Christ. In our Liturgy, we use the plural for just about everything (although there are a few exceptions that are well worth noting). We will look at the pronouns used in the liturgy of our church and why they are important.



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Rev. Burhop is the pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Reese, MI. You can reach him at pastorburhop@gmail.com

The Biblical Case for Rest

Rev. Timothy Chase

[WI - A & B - Siebert 009](#)

In a world that pushes for busy schedules and to occupy every waking moment of our day, it is easy to lose sight of just who we are. We must ask, "Who am I?" "Where do I find my purpose and calling?" Using Biblical examples, we will see that the best way to rediscover our identity, might just be in stopping the chaos of life and allowing ourselves to take a rest. We will follow the words of Psalm 46, "Be still and know that I am God."

Rev. Chase is the pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Truman, MN. You can reach him at timachase@gmail.com

The Liturgy Teaches Who I Am

Rev. James Douthwaite

[WI - A & B - Chemnitz 005](#)

The liturgy isn't just the order in which we do things in the Divine Service. The liturgy teaches us who we are. We need to hear this in the midst of a world that is also trying to teach us who we are, but their definition is very different than God's! And what the world tells us is not Good News! The liturgy, however, is filled with the Good News of all that God does for us in Jesus and who we are in Him. Who we are now and who we will be forever. No confusion, just truth.

Rev. Douthwaite is the pastor of Saint Athanasius Lutheran Church in Vienna, VA. You can reach him at revjdoc@gmail.com

I am...Catholic?

Rev. Dr. Aric Fenske

[WI - A & B - Loeber 118](#)

"I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church..." Do you know that it originally said "Catholic" instead of "Christian?" That means when you confess the Creed, you are confessing that you belong to the Catholic Church! But we're Lutheran, not Catholic, aren't we? What if I told you that we Lutherans are more Catholic than the pope? At this breakaway, you'll learn about the real meaning behind the word "Catholic," how the modern Roman Catholic church isn't really that Catholic, and how the Lutheran Church has always thought of itself as the true Catholic Church."

Rev. Dr. Fenske is the pastor of Trinity & Grace Lutheran Churches in Bear Creek, WI. You can reach him at aricfen@gmail.com



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Comfort in the Darkest Hour

Rev. Brian Hamer

[WI - A & C - Chemnitz 16](#)

"It is good to read Paul Gerhardt's hymns and to learn them by heart, as I am doing now." So wrote Dietrich Bonhoeffer--pastor, spy, prisoner, and eventually martyr--to his parents from Cell 92 at the beginning of his two-year imprisonment near Berlin. His "prison Epistles" contain several references to the hymns of Paul Gerhardt, whom Bonhoeffer described as "an unexpectedly helpful standby" during this time of loneliness, trial, and separation. This presentation will survey the Gerhardt hymns that brought comfort to Bonhoeffer, with special focus on how hymnody is your theological language because it proclaims your baptismal identity in Christ.

Rev. Dr. Hamer is the Chaplain, School of Infantry West, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California. You can reach him at revhamer@verizon.net

Treasured Possessions

Rev. Dr. Aaron Moldenhauer

[WI - A - Loeber 112](#)

"Whoever I am, You know me, I am yours, O God." Our identity begins with knowing that we are the Lord's. Scripture passages describe us as the Lord's treasured possessions, an expression that speaks to how much the Lord values us. This session begins with Dietrich Bonhoeffer and his poem, which is quoted above. We will then explore Scripture passages about how we are the Lord's treasured possession: How can these passages help us sort through nagging questions of identity?

Dr. Moldenhauer is a faculty member at Concordia University Wisconsin in Mequon, WI. You can reach him at aaron.moldenhauer@cuw.edu

Christ vs. AI and Transhumanism

Vicar Joshua Pauling

[WI - A & C - Chemnitz 12](#)

What does it mean to be human in the digital age where we can get lost in online worlds and create internet identities separate from our bodies? And what about transhumanism and AI? In this session, we will analyze these challenging issues, how we must ground our identity in the wonders of the created and redeemed body, and how the incarnation of Christ is the ultimate answer to such questions. From this proper foundation, then we can better serve and love our neighbors in body and soul and be prepared to sacrifice and suffer, too.

Vicar Pauling is serving at All Saints Lutheran Church in Charlotte, NC. You can reach him at jpauling@hotmail.com



Wisconsin Breakaways

Who Am I - 2024

Unmasking Deception; Identifying Fake Churches

Rev. Dr. Matthew Richard

[WI - A & B - Albrecht - Terrace Room](#)

What makes a church fake? What makes a church the real deal? In this breakaway session, you are invited to examine eight different churches in the pretend town of Midway. Seven of the churches are fake, and one of the churches is real. But how can you tell the difference? The session will take time to help everyone unmask each of the churches' purposes and unity, for within the churches' unity and purpose, we are able to quickly discern the false churches from the real church.

Rev. Dr. Richard is the pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Minot, ND.

Haunted or Wholly Holy Houses

Rev. Aaron Schian and Deac. Mika Patron

[WI - A & B - Pharmacy 026](#)

Everyone is a house that's possessed! What?!? Demon possession? Sounds like Haunted Houses filled with ghouls and ghosts and...Yikes! Don't worry about scary squatters! They can't stay! Jesus won't let them! The Boogeyman Satan has met his match, and home ownership has changed hands! Someone else has moved in and holds the keys for good, forever! Haunted Houses? More like Wholly Holy Houses! Luke 11 says so! Join us for a live episode of HT's Black and Blue as we celebrate our neverending Owner telling the World who we are and whose we are! Jesus holds the house keys!

Rev. Schian is the pastor and Deac. Patron is the deaconess at Grace Lutheran Church in Auburn, MI. You can reach Pastor at aaronschian@yahoo.com

Being Branches in the Vine of Jesus

Rev. Dr. Charles Schulz

[WI - A - Loeber 110](#)

Jesus said, "I AM the Vine, you are the branches" (John 15). What do the early Church Fathers have to teach us about this passage? We'll meet second to sixth-century teachers like Origen, Methodius, Athanasius, Cyril, and Augustine to hear what it means that Jesus is the Vine, how we get united to Him, and what fruit we bear. Along the way, they find they have defined the full Deity of Christ even as they explain who we are in Him.

Rev. Dr. Schulz is a faculty member at Concordia University Wisconsin in Mequon, WI. You can reach him at charles.schulz@cuaa.edu



Wisconsin Breakaways

Who Am I - 2024

What is a Lutheran?

Rev. Joel Shaltanis

[WI - A - Pharmacy 132](#)

[WI - B - Chemnitz 12](#)

To understand who you are, you should have some idea of where you come from. Are Lutherans Evangelical Catholics or just watered-down Catholics? Did Martin Luther break away from the Catholic Church? Did he start a cult? Was he the first and only one, or were there others before and after him? Where do Lutherans come from? Where do we fit into the bigger picture of Christians throughout the world and throughout history? This breakaway will step back and look at who we are as Lutherans in light of the whole history of the Christian Church.

Rev. Shaltanis is the pastor of Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Plano, TX. You can reach him at pastorshaltanis@yahoo.com

Private Confession: Remembering Who You Are

Rev. David Solum

[WI - A & B - Chemnitz 008](#)

Holy Absolution within the rite of Private Confession is the most underappreciated and personally comforting Gift of Christ for His Church. Still, the confession part is the most scary, embarrassing, and no fun! Why should you want to go to Confession? Come and find out the value of Private Confession and how when you go through the uncomfortable aspect of Private Confession, it is a wonderful reassurance of your identity in Christ. Christ won't let your sins define you!

Rev. Solum is the pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Michigan City, IN. You can reach him at solumdr@gmail.com

Martin Luther – Spiritual Forefather of Adolph Hitler?

Rev. Jeffrey Ware

[WI - A & B - Pharmacy 008](#)

“Next to the devil, a Christian has no more bitter and galling foe than a Jew” – Martin Luther. Shocking comments like these have led some historians to conclude that the seeds of anti-Semitism in Germany, which led to the Holocaust, were planted by Martin Luther himself. Is this true? How do we respond to those who would lay blame for the Holocaust at the feet of Martin Luther? More importantly, how should we treat our Jewish friends and neighbors today?

Rev. Ware is the pastor of All Saints Lutheran Church in Charlotte, NC. He also serves on the board of directors for Higher Things. You can reach him at revware@outlook.com



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Who Am I - 2024

Who Are We?

Rev. Caleb Weight

WI - A & B - Chemnitz 007

You are a Baptized child of God. This changes everything about your life and the reality in which you live. However, the Christian life is not one that is lived alone and in isolation. The church is not a bunch of individuals, but it is one body made up of many members. In this session, we will explore through the scriptures and the confessions what it means to be a part of the church and how it is instrumental in the life of a baptized believer in Christ.

Rev. Walworth is the pastor of Peace In Christ Lutheran Church in Hermantown, MN. You can reach him at revcalebweight@gmail.com

The Fall and Identity

Rev. Matthew Zickler

WI - A & B - Chemnitz 004

In being confronted with the question of who we are, the answer we are regularly reminded of is that we are sinners. The Fall into Sin in Genesis 3 informs us of the truth of this but also gives us the promise of a new identity: that of those who are redeemed by the Offspring of Woman, our Lord Jesus Christ. There we find that we are now, in fact, those clothed in the righteousness of this Righteous One. As we see His care for our first parents even at the first sin, we also see in this foundational chapter His continued care for His people in the victory of this Christ and in the liturgical life of the Church.

Rev. Zickler is the pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in Western Springs, IL. You can reach him at grace.lutheran.pastor.ws@gmail.com



Breakaway Session B

Who Is My Pastor?

Rev. Dr. Mark Birkholz
[WI - B - Chemnitz 16](#)

Why do Christians need pastors? Why can't we go directly to God for forgiveness? In this session, we will see how the Lord used mediators in the Old Testament to give His Gifts to His people, pointing to Jesus Christ, who makes peace between man and God. We will also see how Jesus gives us pastors to speak for Him with His authority as a source of comfort to us. Finally, we will explore the Christian's vocation as a member of a congregation in submitting to and caring for their pastor.

Rev. Dr. Birkholz is the pastor of Zion Lutheran Church in Naperville, IL.

What About Your Imagination?

Rev. Jonathan Boehne
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The Biblical Case for Rest

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[WI - A & B - Siebert 009](#)

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Who's That in the Dress?

Vicar Jonah Clausen

WI - B & D - Pharmacy 147

This breakaway will cover the vocation of the pastor, starting in worship settings and stretching out until it covers his role at conferences. You will learn the symbolism behind the various pieces of vestments and why the pastor faces the altar and, at other times, faces the congregation. By learning more about your pastor's identity and vocation, you will learn more about how his identity relates to yours. While his vocation might differ from yours, he is here to remind you of the love of Christ.

Vicar Clausen is the Higher Things summer vicar. He's receiving his training from Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, IN. You can reach him at jonah.clausen@ctsfw.edu

The Liturgy Teaches Who I Am

Rev. James Douthwaite

WI - A & B - Chemnitz 005

The liturgy isn't just the order in which we do things in the Divine Service. The liturgy teaches us who we are. We need to hear this in the midst of a world that is also trying to teach us who we are, but their definition is very different than God's! And what the world tells us is not Good News! The liturgy, however, is filled with the Good News of all that God does for us in Jesus and who we are in Him. Who we are now and who we will be forever. No confusion, just truth.

Rev. Douthwaite is the pastor of Saint Athanasius Lutheran Church in Vienna, VA. You can reach him at revjdoc@gmail.com

I am...Catholic?

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WI - A & B - Loeber 118

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Who Am I - 2024

Wet & Miserable

Deac. Emma Heinz

WI - B & C - Pharmacy 132

Being wet and miserable sounds, well, miserable! We avoid being uncomfortable or experiencing pain. We sometimes expect our faith to spare us from suffering and evil. We put our trust in God to preserve us from evil (rightly), but we then forget the words of Christ Jesus, which plainly tell us if we lose our life for His sake, we will gain life eternally (Matthew 16:25). So what are we to do? Cling to your Baptism! Suffering in this life will not be removed, but take heart: Christ has overcome the world. Remember your Baptism and learn to faithfully endure being wet and miserable, knowing that Christ Jesus is with you.

Deac. Heinz is the registrar for Higher Things and a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Lowell, IN. You can reach her at e.brauckman@gmail.com

Who Am I: Creed Edition

Rev. Peter Ill

WI - B & E - Loeber 110

It can be easy to get confused about who you are. That's not only a challenge for each and every person but can be a challenge for the Church. Each and every week, the Church says who she is, not because God forgets (God doesn't forget anything!) but so that the Church doesn't forget. As you join in that confession of the Creed, you are reminded who you are so that you don't forget either. This is a wonderful reminder every week and every day of who you are!

Rev. Ill is the pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Millstad, IL. You can reach him at rev.ill@higherthings.org



Wisconsin Breakaways

Who Am I - 2024

Spiritual Combat; Ready or Not!

Rev. Craig Muehler

[WI - B - Loeber 112](#)

Are you Ready for Spiritual Combat? Preparation and being ready are critical in any planning, but especially in planning a defense. The same must be true for you in your everyday life. Are you ready as Lutherans to face the challenges that will come your way? We are living in the Church Militant. We are present in a world where we are at war with the devil, the world, and our sinful nature. Are you ready for the battles and sufferings that you will face? What is your plan to sustain you on the battlefield of life? How will you endure? What is your hope and confidence as you go into battle and suffering? We will take a deep dive into Ephesians 6 and the Armor of God.

Rev. Muehler is serving at LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces. You can reach him at craig.muehler@lcms.org

Unmasking Deception; Identifying Fake Churches

Rev. Dr. Matthew Richard

[WI - A & B - Albrecht - Terrace Room](#)

What makes a church fake? What makes a church the real deal? In this breakaway session, you are invited to examine eight different churches in the pretend town of Midway. Seven of the churches are fake, and one of the churches is real. But how can you tell the difference? The session will take time to help everyone unmask each of the churches' purposes and unity, for within the churches' unity and purpose, we are able to quickly discern the false churches from the real church.

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WI - A - Pharmacy 132

WI - B - Chemnitz 12

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Rev. Shaltanis is the pastor of Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Plano, TX. You can reach him at pastorshaltanis@yahoo.com

The One About Dating and Marriage

Rev. Brett Simek

WI - B & C - CCES Exhibit Hall 2nd Floor

When should I start dating? Who should I date? What about marriage? Do I have to consider more things than just whether or not I think they are hot? Could who I date or marry say something about my faith? What does it take to be a good husband or wife? Does God say anything about all this? The Bible is full of the imagery of marriage, of husband and wife, and even wedding receptions (feasts), and it's not all good. What happens when things go wrong and life isn't "happily ever after" and where does Jesus fit into all of this? Come and hear about the perfect Groom and His Bride and what happens when things aren't perfect.

Rev. Simek is the pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Rantoul in Hilbert, WI. He is also the catechesis coordinator for Higher Things. You can reach him at brettsimek@higherthings.org

Private Confession: Remembering Who You Are

Rev. David Solum

WI - A & B - Chemnitz 008

Holy Absolution within the rite of Private Confession is the most underappreciated and personally comforting Gift of Christ for His Church. Still, the confession part is the most scary, embarrassing, and no fun! Why should you want to go to Confession? Come and find out the value of Private Confession and how when you go through the uncomfortable aspect of Private Confession, it is a wonderful reassurance of your identity in Christ. Christ won't let your sins define you!

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Who Am I - 2024

Martin Luther – Spiritual Forefather of Adolph Hitler?

Rev. Jeffrey Ware

WI - A & B - Pharmacy 008

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WI - A & B - Chemnitz 007

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Rev. Walworth is the pastor of Peace In Christ Lutheran Church in Hermantown, MN. You can reach him at revcalebweight@gmail.com

The Fall and Identity

Rev. Matthew Zickler

WI - A & B - Chemnitz 004

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Rev. Zickler is the pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in Western Springs, IL. You can reach him at grace.lutheran.pastor.ws@gmail.com



Breakaway Session C

Who Am We

Rev. Daniel Burhop

[WI - A & C - Pharmacy 147](#)

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Rev. Burhop is the pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Reese, MI. You can reach him at pastorburhop@gmail.com

Gregory the GOAT and You

Rev. Dr. Kirk Clayton

[WI - C & D - Chemnitz 005](#)

Gregory is often called "Gregory the Great," but is he really "Gregory the GOAT"? Pope Gregory, who served from about 590-604 AD, had a tremendous influence on the shape of the Church, especially in the area of service and human care. What can 21st Century Lutherans learn from a 6th Century Catholic Pope? Will we learn that Gregory is the GOAT? No, of course, Jesus is the GOAT, but we can learn to love and serve others today as Jesus loved and served us 2000 years ago, as Gregory did 1400 years ago.

Rev. Dr. Clayton is the pastor of Zion Lutheran Church in Mascoutah, IL. You can reach him at kmcljcuac@yahoo.com

A Biblical Theology of Missions

Rev. Joel Fritsche

[WI - C & D - Chemnitz 007](#)

Mission talk in the Church today often flows from our Lord's Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20. That's certainly biblical, but a biblical theology of mission spans the entire Scripture: Old and New Testament. The mission of the Gospel of Jesus Christ has its basis in the salvation God planned in the sending of His Son from before the foundation of the world. God's people of old asked, "Who am I?" just like you and I do. What does it mean that you are the new Israel in Christ? Come find out!

Rev. Fritsche is the Director of Vicarages and Deaconess Internships and Assistant Professor of Exegetical Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. You can reach him at fritschej@csl.edu



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Self-Esteem Is Demonic

Rev. Harrison Goodman

WI - C & D - Albrecht - Terrace Room

Self-esteem is a no-win scenario. Too little is bad, but so is too much. And you don't get to choose. When what's expected of us crashes into what we actually do, the mess left behind very rarely matches up with the person we wish we were. It leaves us feeling lost, worthless, and without a place. When we carry all that baggage around, expecting someone to actually love us becomes an exercise in schizophrenia or a lifetime spent in fear of people finding out the truth. Your worth is not in what you can do. It's found in what's been paid for you.

Rev. Goodman is the content executive for Higher Things and a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Mt. Vernon, IA. You can reach him at rev.goodman@higherthings.org

Comfort in the Darkest Hour

Rev. Brian Hamer

WI - A & C - Chemnitz 16

"It is good to read Paul Gerhardt's hymns and to learn them by heart, as I am doing now." So wrote Dietrich Bonhoeffer--pastor, spy, prisoner, and eventually martyr--to his parents from Cell 92 at the beginning of his two-year imprisonment near Berlin. His "prison Epistles" contain several references to the hymns of Paul Gerhardt, whom Bonhoeffer described as "an unexpectedly helpful standby" during this time of loneliness, trial, and separation. This presentation will survey the Gerhardt hymns that brought comfort to Bonhoeffer, with special focus on how hymnody is your theological language because it proclaims your baptismal identity in Christ.

Rev. Dr. Hamer is the Chaplain, School of Infantry West, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California. You can reach him at revhamer@verizon.net



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Wet & Miserable

Deac. Emma Heinz

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Deac. Heinz is the registrar for Higher Things and a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Lowell, IN. You can reach her at e.brauckman@gmail.com

Let Him Who Boasts, Boast...

Dr. Kelly Henry

[WI - C & D - Loeber 110](#)

We live in a culture with no agreement on determining what is true, what is right, and who we are. So did Jeremiah. Regarding identity, in particular, we are given two false narratives: identity is created from social groups, and identity is derived from self-esteem. Either way, we constantly look for either outer approval from groups or inner applause from ourselves. Here, we explore how both of these narratives are unbiblical and how the Bible teaches us to derive our identity through boasting in Christ's cross.

Dr. Henry is a member of Christ Lutheran Parish in Platte Woods, MO. You can reach him at henry@missouriwestern.edu



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The Spiritual Poison of Coveting

Rev. Michael Holmen

WI - C & D - Siebert 009

God commands us not to murder or steal. We know those things are wrong. Even people who know nothing about God or the Bible know that those things are wrong. Coveting is different. People do not recognize coveting as being bad as easily. The Ten Commandments, however, forbids coveting. There is a good reason for this. Coveting is very powerful. Paul says that coveting is idolatry (Col. 3:5). Coveting leads to other sins. Coveting makes people miserable. In this session, we will learn more about coveting and how we may turn away from it through thankfulness.

Rev. Holmen is the pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church and School in Fairmont, MN. You can reach him at rev.michael.holmen@gmail.com

Made in His Image

Dr. Angus Menuge

WI - C - Loeber 112

Your true identity is to be a child of God. You were made in His image to be a caretaker of this world. Although original righteousness was lost in the Fall, human beings still have special dignity on account of the image of God, an image that is restored in Christ. You will learn the biblical basis of your identity as image bearers and how to defend it when you dialogue with unbelievers. This teaching is vitally important in a culture that increasingly devalues life, seeing human beings as replaceable bio-technology instead of God's precious cargo.

Dr. Menuge is a faculty member at Concordia University Wisconsin in Mequon, WI. You can reach him at Angus.Menuge@cuw.edu



Wisconsin Breakaways

Who Am I - 2024

Your “Who Am I” Mantra

Mr. Christopher Mulder

WI - C & D - Chemnitz 008

REACH—Respect, Engagement, Accountability, Character, Health; My mantra helps guide my day and to positively impact others. Learn about the power of having a mantra that is steeped in Christ and how to develop your own mantra based on who you are as a Christian. A mantra is the framework that captures the abilities, principles, or values that you can use to make a difference, navigate temptations, and remind yourself of our Savior. I will use my mission planning and execution skills from my time as a fighter pilot to help you develop a mantra in this engaging breakaway.

Mr. Mulder is a member of Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church in Alexandria, VA. You can reach him at chris.mulder5@gmail.com

Christ vs. AI and Transhumanism

Vicar Joshua Pauling

WI - A & C - Chemnitz 12

What does it mean to be human in the digital age where we can get lost in online worlds and create internet identities separate from our bodies? And what about transhumanism and AI? In this session, we will analyze these challenging issues, how we must ground our identity in the wonders of the created and redeemed body, and how the incarnation of Christ is the ultimate answer to such questions. From this proper foundation, then we can better serve and love our neighbors in body and soul and be prepared to sacrifice and suffer, too.

Vicar Pauling is serving at All Saints Lutheran Church in Charlotte, NC. You can reach him at jpauling@hotmail.com

Pleasant Planting: Rooted in Christ

Rev. Caleb Schewe

WI - C & D - Chemnitz 004

The Sower, Jesus, sows His Word. The Lord Jesus plants His vineyard. He plants the good seed of His Word in you and doesn't stop there. He drenches you from His font. He nourishes you from His table. He makes you a good tree bearing fruits in keeping with repentance and faith. And you, the good tree, the branch from the True Vine, do every good and perfect work prepared for you to do. You do good. You're His Christian. You can't help it. Others see it. And your Father in heaven is glorified.



Wisconsin Breakaways

Who Am I - 2024

Rev. Schewe is the pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church in Monticello, IA. You can reach him at caleb.schewe@ctsfw.edu

Gravity of Identity

Rev. Jason Schockman

WI - C & D - Buuck - Friends of Concordia

There are many vocations that you have now and will have throughout your life. Which one is the center of who you are? Is it athletics, academics, music, nutrition, or a relationship? What happens when the center of who you think you are changes? Finding the center of your identity in something unchangeable means that no matter what may come, you have a “gravitational center” to which you can return. AND YOU HAVE ONE. It was given to you, and it will never change. The rest of the vocations this life will present you are all orbiting around it.

Rev. Schockman is the pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, School, and ECC in Oconomowoc, WI. You can reach him at pastor.schockman@splco.org

The One About Dating and Marriage

Rev. Brett Simek

WI - B & C - CCES Exhibit Hall 2nd Floor

When should I start dating? Who should I date? What about marriage? Do I have to consider more things than just whether or not I think they are hot? Could who I date or marry say something about my faith? What does it take to be a good husband or wife? Does God say anything about all this? The Bible is full of the imagery of marriage, of husband and wife, and even wedding receptions (feasts), and it's not all good. What happens when things go wrong and life isn't “happily ever after” and where does Jesus fit into all of this? Come and hear about the perfect Groom and His Bride and what happens when things aren't perfect.

Rev. Simek is the pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Rantoul in Hilbert, WI. He is also the catechesis coordinator for Higher Things. You can reach him at brettsimek@higherthings.org

Cantorology 101

Paul Soulek

WI - C & D - Chapel of Christ Triumphant

Hear from Cantor Soulek about the what, why, and how of church music. What do church musicians do? Why do we sing the things we sing? How do we equip God's people to do this? Participants will join in choral warmups, hymn selection exercises, and will also dive into the basics of the pipe organ and its role in supporting the congregation's song.



Wisconsin Breakaways

Who Am I - 2024

Paul Soulek is the cantor of St. John Lutheran Church in Seward, NE. He also serves as the cantor for Higher Things. You can reach him at paul.soulek@stjohnseward.org

Will There Be Smart Phones in Heaven?

Rev. Steve Stolarczyk

WI - C & E - Pharmacy 026

Science and technology seem to be at odds with the Christian faith by their very nature. The tension seems to be so great that, when we imagine what the new creation will look like, it would seem that we'll all become hobbits living in the shire without any technology more advanced than the wheel. But what if science is actually one of the tools that God has given us to use to serve Him and the people around us? We'll look at how the Bible actually speaks about the pursuit of knowledge and understanding and how our faith is a unique blessing for anyone interested in science and engineering.

Rev. Stolarczyk is the pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Unionville City, MI. You can reach him at solumdr@gmail.com

Be a Man! A Godly man.

Rev. Randy Sturzenbecher

WI - C - Pharmacy 008

WI - D - Pharmacy 026

This is a tough life for a young Christian man. Social media, culture, family dynamics, and let's not forget the temptations of our sinful flesh have very strong opinions on what a man is or should be. Christianity and masculinity are both under attack. To be a Christian is to be viewed as narrow-minded and weak. To embrace your masculinity is considered toxic. What does a 21st century Christian man look like? We will explore the qualities of manliness, good and bad, throughout the Scripture and especially in the perfect man, Jesus the Son of God. Ladies, this is for you, too, so you know what to expect in a Godly man.

Rev. Sturzenbecher is the pastor of Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church. He also serves as the president of the Higher Things board of directors. You can reach him at dslcpsturz@divineshep.org



Breakaway Session D

What do I Do Now?

Rev. Dr. Chris Ascher

WI - D & E - Chemnitz 16

Now that you know who you are, what do you do with that? How is the LORD calling you today? In this breakaway, we will discuss how our identity, "Who am I?" is connected to how we live out our callings/vocations in everyday life. We will look at our vertical call to faith, and our horizontal call to love and serve our neighbors as is summed up in Jesus' explanation of the greatest commandment in Matthew 22. We will also discuss how we carry out our vocations in each of the three estates: Family, Church, and State.

Rev. Dr. Ascher is the pastor of Resurrection Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, SD. You can reach him at cascher76@gmail.com

Who's That in the Dress?

Vicar Jonah Clausen

WI - B & D - Pharmacy 147

This breakaway will cover the vocation of the pastor, starting in worship settings and stretching out until it covers his role at conferences. You will learn the symbolism behind the various pieces of vestments and why the pastor faces the altar and, at other times, faces the congregation. By learning more about your pastor's identity and vocation, you will learn more about how his identity relates to yours. While his vocation might differ from yours, he is here to remind you of the love of Christ.

Vicar Clausen is the Higher Things summer vicar. He's receiving his training from Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, IN. You can reach him at jonah.clausen@ctsfw.edu

Gregory the GOAT and You

Rev. Dr. Kirk Clayton

WI - C & D - Chemnitz 005

Gregory is often called "Gregory the Great," but is he really "Gregory the GOAT"? Pope Gregory, who served from about 590-604 AD, had a tremendous influence on the shape of the Church, especially in the area of service and human care. What can 21st Century Lutherans learn from a 6th Century Catholic Pope? Will we learn that Gregory is the GOAT? No, of course, Jesus is the GOAT, but we can learn to love and serve others today as Jesus loved and served us 2000 years ago, as Gregory did 1400 years ago.

Rev. Dr. Clayton is the pastor of Zion Lutheran Church in Mascoutah, IL. You can reach him at kmcljcuac@yahoo.com



Wisconsin Breakaways

Who Am I - 2024

A Biblical Theology of Missions

Rev. Joel Fritsche

WI - C & D - Chemnitz 007

Mission talk in the Church today often flows from our Lord's Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20. That's certainly biblical, but a biblical theology of mission spans the entire Scripture: Old and New Testament. The mission of the Gospel of Jesus Christ has its basis in the salvation God planned in the sending of His Son from before the foundation of the world. God's people of old asked, "Who am I?" just like you and I do. What does it mean that you are the new Israel in Christ? Come find out!

Rev. Fritsche is the Director of Vicarages and Deaconess Internships and Assistant Professor of Exegetical Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. You can reach him at fritschej@csl.edu

Self-Esteem Is Demonic

Rev. Harrison Goodman

WI - C & D - Albrecht - Terrace Room

Self-esteem is a no-win scenario. Too little is bad, but so is too much. And you don't get to choose. When what's expected of us crashes into what we actually do, the mess left behind very rarely matches up with the person we wish we were. It leaves us feeling lost, worthless, and without a place. When we carry all that baggage around, expecting someone to actually love us becomes an exercise in schizophrenia or a lifetime spent in fear of people finding out the truth. Your worth is not in what you can do. It's found in what's been paid for you.

Rev. Goodman is the content executive for Higher Things and a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Mt. Vernon, IA. You can reach him at rev.goodman@higherthings.org

God and Country Music?

Rev. Andrew Gray

WI - D & E - Chemnitz 12

Country music commonly makes references to God. This is true even in today's pop country landscape. Do these lyrical references speak about him correctly? We will take a look at some of the religious roots of country music and listen to a variety of songs (mostly current) that reference God in some way, evaluating their statements in light of the Commandments. Can we learn anything from them?

Rev. Gray is the pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church in Marengo, IA. You can reach him at pastorgray4@gmail.com



Wisconsin Breakaways

Who Am I - 2024

Let Him Who Boasts, Boast...

Dr. Kelly Henry

WI - C & D - Loeber 110

We live in a culture with no agreement on determining what is true, what is right, and who we are. So did Jeremiah. Regarding identity, in particular, we are given two false narratives: identity is created from social groups, and identity is derived from self-esteem. Either way, we constantly look for either outer approval from groups or inner applause from ourselves. Here, we explore how both of these narratives are unbiblical and how the Bible teaches us to derive our identity through boasting in Christ's cross.

Dr. Henry is a member of Christ Lutheran Parish in Platte Woods, MO. You can reach him at henry@missouriwestern.edu

The Spiritual Poison of Coveting

Rev. Michael Holmen

WI - C & D - Siebert 009

God commands us not to murder or steal. We know those things are wrong. Even people who know nothing about God or the Bible know that those things are wrong. Coveting is different. People do not recognize coveting as being bad as easily. The Ten Commandments, however, forbids coveting. There is a good reason for this. Coveting is very powerful. Paul says that coveting is idolatry (Col. 3:5). Coveting leads to other sins. Coveting makes people miserable. In this session, we will learn more about coveting and how we may turn away from it through thankfulness.

Rev. Holmen is the pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church and School in Fairmont, MN. You can reach him at rev.michael.holmen@gmail.com

Quitting the Popularity Contest

Rev. Jeremiah Johnson

WI - D & E - Pharmacy 132

Could you write a list of your classmates or friends, arranged from most popular to least popular? Where would you fit in that list? If you're like most people, you know right where you fit on the social ladder ... and it worries you. But Christ says that you're His, and that changes everything. In this breakaway session, we'll consider how your baptismal identity frees you from the popularity contest and how Christ's approval truly frees you to be confident in who you are and to love your neighbor fearlessly.



Wisconsin Breakaways

Who Am I - 2024

Rev. Johnson is the pastor of Glory of Christ Lutheran Church in Plymouth, MN. You can reach him at jeremiahdj@gmail.com

Your “Who Am I” Mantra

Mr. Christopher Mulder

[WI - C & D - Chemnitz 008](#)

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Pleasant Planting: Rooted in Christ

Rev. Caleb Schewe

[WI - C & D - Chemnitz 004](#)

The Sower, Jesus, sows His Word. The Lord Jesus plants His vineyard. He plants the good seed of His Word in you and doesn't stop there. He drenches you from His font. He nourishes you from His table. He makes you a good tree bearing fruits in keeping with repentance and faith. And you, the good tree, the branch from the True Vine, do every good and perfect work prepared for you to do. You do good. You're His Christian. You can't help it. Others see it. And your Father in heaven is glorified.

Rev. Schewe is the pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church in Monticello, IA. You can reach him at caleb.schewe@ctsfw.edu

Gravity of Identity

Rev. Jason Schockman

[WI - C & D - Buuck - Friends of Concordia](#)

There are many vocations that you have now and will have throughout your life. Which one is the center of who you are? Is it athletics, academics, music, nutrition, or a relationship? What happens when the center of who you think you are changes? Finding the center of your identity in something unchangeable means that no matter what may come, you have a “gravitational center” to which you can return. AND YOU HAVE ONE. It was given to you, and it will never change. The rest of the vocations this life will present you are all orbiting around it.



Wisconsin Breakaways

Who Am I - 2024

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My Parents Are the Worst

Rev. Brett Simek

[WI - D & E - CCES Exhibit Hall 2nd Floor](#)

You know the Fourth Commandment. It's your parent's favorite commandment, but maybe not yours. It seems like a cheat code that some parent snuck into the Bible to force their kids to do whatever they say. It was written by a parent, our heavenly Father, so maybe there is something good in it. But what is so good about parents, especially when they are the worst? What should our relationship with our parents look like when we go to college, move out of the house, or get a job? Do I still have to keep the Fourth Commandment when I'm grown up? Join us as we see how parents and other authorities can point us to the greatest authority.

Rev. Simek is the pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Rantoul, in Hilbert, WI. He is also the catechesis coordinator for Higher Things. You can reach him at brettsimek@higherthings.org

Cantorology 101

Paul Soulek

[WI - C & D - Chapel of Christ Triumphant](#)

Hear from Cantor Soulek about the what, why, and how of church music. What do church musicians do? Why do we sing the things we sing? How do we equip God's people to do this? Participants will join in choral warmups, hymn selection exercises, and will also dive into the basics of the pipe organ and its role in supporting the congregation's song.

Paul Soulek is the cantor of St. John Lutheran Church in Seward, NE. He also serves as the cantor for Higher Things. You can reach him at paul.soulek@stjohnseward.org

Be a Man! A Godly man. (Math was never my strong suit)

Rev. Randy Sturzenbecher

[WI - C - Pharmacy 008](#)

[WI - D - Pharmacy 026](#)

This is a tough life for a young Christian man. Social media, culture, family dynamics, and let's not forget the temptations of our sinful flesh have very strong opinions on what a man is or should be. Christianity and masculinity are both under attack. To be a Christian is to be viewed as narrow-minded and weak. To embrace your masculinity is considered toxic. What does a 21st century Christian man look like? We will explore the qualities of manliness, good and bad, throughout the Scripture and especially in the perfect man, Jesus the Son of God. Ladies, this is for you, too, so you know what to expect in a Godly man.



Wisconsin Breakaways

Who Am I - 2024

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dslcpsturz@divineshep.org



Breakaway Session E

God's TIP in Post-Christian America

Dr. Brad Alles

WI - E - Siebert 009

In today's America, we hear there is no truth; a person's identity is bound in their race, class, and gender, and their purpose is to fight the oppressors. Learn why this has occurred and how to engage the culture with a biblical and Christ-centered approach. God's Truth in Christ, our Identity in Christ, and our Purpose in Christ can be shared as we live in the Kingdoms of the Left and Right Hand. Understand the times and know what to do as disciples of Jesus.

Dr. Brad Alles is a faculty member at Concordia University Wisconsin. You can reach him at brad.alles@cuw.edu

What do I Do Now?

Rev. Dr. Chris Ascher

WI - D & E - Chemnitz 16

Now that you know who you are, what do you do with that? How is the LORD calling you today? In this breakaway, we will discuss how our identity, "Who am I?" is connected to how we live out our callings/vocations in everyday life. We will look at our vertical call to faith, and our horizontal call to love and serve our neighbors as is summed up in Jesus' explanation of the greatest commandment in Matthew 22. We will also discuss how we carry out our vocations in each of the three estates: Family, Church, and State.

Rev. Dr. Ascher is the pastor of Resurrection Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, SD. You can reach him at cascher76@gmail.com

Joy-Full in a Sorrow-Full World

Rev. Christopher Craig

WI - D & E - Loeber 118

We live in a world that is full of sorrow. Sorrow is more than just sadness. It's when you believe you are right to despair and hope is a fantasy. Many have done this. Many have given into sorrow. But we are called to be people who are full of joy. Joy is more than happiness. Joy is hope that has been fulfilled. It's when you realize your hope is reality. Come hear about how our Lord fills us with joy by giving us a hope that has been fulfilled, both in this world and the next.

Rev. Craig is the pastor of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Sylvan Grove, KS. You can reach him at christopher.craig@ctsfw.edu



Wisconsin Breakaways

Who Am I - 2024

Who are the ELCA Lutherans?

Rev. Dr. Matthew Durance

[WI - D & E - Pharmacy 008](#)

What comes to your mind when you hear someone mention the "Evangelical Lutheran Church in America?" If asked, could you give a brief summary of what they believe, teach, and confess? How are they different than the LCMS? Are they even Lutheran? In this breakout, we will study the history of the ELCA, what they believe, teach, and confess, and how to talk to your ELCA friends and neighbors about the truth of God's Word and what it truly means to be a Lutheran.

Rev. Dr. Durance is the pastor of Zion Lutheran Church & School in Harbor Beach, MI. You can reach him at pastor@zionlcs.com

Hurt (or what I wish I knew to tell Ashley)

Rev. Harrison Goodman

[WI - E - Albrecht - Terrace Room](#)

When someone close to you is hurting, you just want it to stop. When it leaves scars and welts, it's terrifying. The temptation to answer with platitudes like "it will be OK" gives way to outright lies that only try to bury the hurt instead of facing it. The truth is, sin isn't just an idea that can be pushed aside by a smile and positive thinking. Sin is brokenness and hurt, but our God really did bleed for sin. Our God really did die for you. It is already finished.

Rev. Goodman is the content executive for Higher Things and a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Mt. Vernon, IA. You can reach him at rev.goodman@higherthings.org

God and Country Music?

Rev. Andrew Gray

[WI - D & E - Chemnitz 12](#)

Country music commonly makes references to God. This is true even in today's pop country landscape. Do these lyrical references speak about him correctly? We will take a look at some of the religious roots of country music and listen to a variety of songs (mostly current) that reference God in some way, evaluating their statements in light of the Commandments. Can we learn anything from them?

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Wisconsin Breakaways

Who Am I - 2024

Though I Suffer, I Sing

Mrs. Sarah Gulseth
[WI - E - Pharmacy 147](#)

Psalm 107:1-2 says, “Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever! Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble.” But what if I don’t feel like saying so? What if the hard things in life feel too heavy? How do I sing praise to God even when I am suffering? Following the rhythm of Psalm 107, hear how God’s steadfast love for us in Jesus Christ enables us to use the song of the Church to sing in the midst of suffering.

Sarah Gulseth is a radio host for KFUD Radio and a member of Village Lutheran Church, Ladue, MO.

Who Am I: Creed Edition

Rev. Peter Ill
[WI - B & E - Loeber 110](#)

It can be easy to get confused about who you are. That's not only a challenge for each and every person but can be a challenge for the Church. Each and every week, the Church says who she is, not because God forgets (God doesn't forget anything!) but so that the Church doesn't forget. As you join in that confession of the Creed, you are reminded who you are so that you don't forget either. This is a wonderful reminder every week and every day of who you are!

Rev. Ill is the pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Millstad, IL. You can reach him at rev.ill@higherthings.org

Quitting the Popularity Contest

Rev. Jeremiah Johnson
[WI - D & E - Pharmacy 132](#)

Could you write a list of your classmates or friends, arranged from most popular to least popular? Where would you fit in that list? If you're like most people, you know right where you fit on the social ladder ... and it worries you. But Christ says that you’re His, and that changes everything. In this breakaway session, we’ll consider how your baptismal identity frees you from the popularity contest and how Christ’s approval truly frees you to be confident in who you are and to love your neighbor fearlessly.

Rev. Johnson is the pastor of Glory of Christ Lutheran Church in Plymouth, MN. You can reach him at jeremiahdj@gmail.com



Wisconsin Breakaways

Who Am I - 2024

I Am a Body

Dr. Mark Paterson

WI - E - Loeber 112

May God the Father, who created this body; may God the Son, who by His blood redeemed this body; may God the Holy Spirit, who by Baptism sanctified this body; keep these remains to the day of the resurrection of all flesh." In the Lutheran burial rite, we thus proclaim the dignity of the body from womb, to tomb, to heavenly throne room. Who am I? I am a body created, redeemed, and sanctified by God. We will examine the body, created in the image of God and glorified in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, true God and true Man.

Dr. Paterson is a faculty member at Concordia University Wisconsin in Mequon, WI. You can reach him at mark.paterson@cuw.edu

Identity Claims and Perfectionist Games

Dr. Jim Pingel

WI - E - Buuck - Friends of Concordia

Roman Philosopher Marcus Aurelius once observed this sinful paradox: "We all love ourselves more than other people, but care more about their opinion than our own." Indeed, in an era of social media, FOMO, FOBO, FOPO, deep fakes, virtue signaling, identity politics, fake it till you become it ideology, branding, avatars, and AI, the pressure and temptations to "be perfect" and adopt secular identities are intense. Jesus, however, provides a more excellent way to live and embrace your identity in Him. Come be equipped by God's Word and Christ-centered practices in overcoming our culture's identity claims and perfectionist games.

Dr. Pingel is a faculty member at Concordia University Wisconsin in Mequon, WI. You can reach him at james.pingel@cuw.edu

Church Work Vocations and You

Mr. Glenn Rollins

WI - E - Chemnitz 004

Have you thought about what career you want to pursue after high school? Do you prayerfully ponder serving the Lord in a full-time church work vocation? Have you considered how your gifts, talents, and abilities will inform how you can make a positive impact in this world? Come and hear about LCMS church work vocations and listen to the stories of current Concordia church work students. Learn their pathway toward a church work vocation to help you understand your own vocational journey.

Mr. Rollins is serving the Synod as the manager of Set Apart to Serve - LCMS Church Worker Recruitment. You can reach him at glenn.rollins@lcms.org



Wisconsin Breakaways

Who Am I - 2024

Youth Ministry 101

Mrs. Crysten Sanchez

WI - E - Chemnitz 008

Thinking about putting together a youth program can seem daunting. Let's start with some building blocks that go into a healthy, sustainable, safe youth program! We'll share resources and ideas as well! Crysten Sanchez, former youth coordinator at a church in Iowa, will walk you through the many pieces of the puzzle.

Crysten Sanchez is the events executive for Higher Things and is a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Mt. Vernon, IA. You can reach her at csanchez@higherthings.org.

My Parents Are the Worst

Rev. Brett Simek

WI - D & E - CCES Exhibit Hall 2nd Floor

You know the Fourth Commandment. It's your parent's favorite commandment, but maybe not yours. It seems like a cheat code that some parent snuck into the Bible to force their kids to do whatever they say. It was written by a parent, our heavenly Father, so maybe there is something good in it. But what is so good about parents, especially when they are the worst? What should our relationship with our parents look like when we go to college, move out of the house, or get a job? Do I still have to keep the Fourth Commandment when I'm grown up? Join us as we see how parents and other authorities can point us to the greatest authority.

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Rev. Stolarczyk is the pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Unionville City, MI. You can reach him at solumdr@gmail.com



Wisconsin Breakaways

Who Am I - 2024

The Hands and Feet of Jesus

Rev. Tyler Walworth

WI - E - Chemnitz 007

Often, we wonder what God is doing in the world. Am I part of it? How? Do I need to sign up? Or maybe it goes the other direction. How could God let that happen? Why isn't God fixing it? Either way, one major question beneath it all is: How is God at work in the world THROUGH the world? This is a question of God's divine providence and also of our frustrating and yet beautiful limitation as His creatures. Come along and see what God is up to in His creation and how we too are His hands and feet.

Rev. Walworth is the pastor of Emmanuel and Our Savior Deaf Lutheran Church in Dearborn, MI. You can reach him at tyler.walworth@gmail.com

I Am a Creature

Dr. Michael Young

WI - E - Chemnitz 005

Humans are part of creation. God created not just our atoms but also our reason and all our senses. We use these senses to perceive the Word and Sacraments and also to understand the created world. But can our senses be trusted? Can we use science to understand God and His creation? What are the commonalities between God, humans, and the rest of creation? How can an infinite God communicate with us as finite beings? Come learn how to use our reason and senses as Godly Gifts, serving our neighbors and being stewards of creation.

Dr. Young is a faculty member at Concordia University Wisconsin in Mequon, WI. You can reach him at michael.young@cuw.edu