

MOVING FORWARD PSALM 46:10



October 3-5
Junction City, Kansas

Psalm 46:10

Be still, and know that I am God.
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth!

SCHEDULE

Sunday, October 3

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration & Vendors
5:00 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.	Welcome and Introductions
5:15 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.	Keynote I
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Awards Banquet
8:00 p.m. - ????	Entertainment

Monday, October 4

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Keynote II
10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	Session A
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.	Session B
2:30 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Business Meeting
3:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.	Session C
4:45 p.m.	Dinner on your own/Free evening

Tuesday, October 5

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.	Session D
9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Keynote III
10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Worship

EDUCATORS CONFERENCE OFFERING DESIGNATION: Church Worker Care Fund

The 2021 Educators Conference offering has been designated for the District Church Worker Care Fund. All congregations and/or schools are highly encouraged to designate September's Sunday School/chapel offerings for additional funding of this fund. This District discretionary fund has historically assisted pastors and educators, spouses, and their families in addressing a variety of unforeseen emergency worker needs. The goal for this special appeal is to invite each District school/congregation to raise a minimum of \$50. Please set aside the month of September for this challenge! NOTE: Designated offerings should be made payable to the LCMS Kansas District with "District Church Worker Care Fund" in the memo line and mailed to the District Office at 1000 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, KS, 66604. You can also donate your offerings online on the District website at <https://kslcms.org/business-office/donate/kansas-district-offerings/>. Please choose "Church Worker Care" from the fund drop-down menu.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

This conference is for all active and retired church workers and their spouses. **Online registration begins August 17 at <https://lcmaskansasdistrict.regfox.com/educators-conference-2021>.**

- ◆ **This is a required conference for all rostered church workers.**
- ◆ **5 clock-hour points will be available for Early Childhood Educators – Sessions A1, B1, C1, D1**

Conference Fee

\$125 – Educators

\$90 – Spouses

\$0 – Emeritus Educators, Committee Members

No registration fee for emeritus workers and committee members; attendees responsible for cost of lodging.

Up-to-the-minute conference registration details regarding schedule, speakers, and online registration can be accessed on the Kansas District website: <https://kslcms.org/educators-conference/>

Cancellations or substitutions – Substitute when possible as cancellations after October 1, 2021, may be subject to a \$60.00 per person cancellation fee to cover meal costs. Contact the District Office to make registration changes.

Questions? Contact Tami at the District Office at 785-357-4441, ext. 5001 or tami@kslcms.org.

LODGING INFORMATION

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Courtyard by Marriott
310 Hammons Dr.
Junction City, KS 66441
785-210-1500

Lodging Reservations

To make reservations, go to the hotel website [reservation page](#) or call the hotel at 785-210-1500 and ask for the group rate for “Educators Conference.” All reservations should be made by Friday, September 3, 2021. After this date, we will release the remainder of our room block. Additional reservation requests will be honored on a space-and rate-available basis. Please make sure your dates are correct before completing your transaction.

Hotel Information

\$89/night plus tax – King Bed Room

\$89/night plus tax – Double/Double Bed Room

Amenities

Free Wi-Fi, free parking, pool, lounge area, fitness center, business center

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



The Rev. Dr. Darrell Zimmerman served thirty years as a parish pastor in St. Louis, MO and Saginaw, MI. He and his wife, Carol, attended the first Grace Place Wellness retreat in the fall of 1999 and led retreats in the earliest years of the ministry. In the fall of 2012, Darrell became the first full-time program director at Grace Place Wellness and has shared the church worker wellness message across the Synod. Darrell has been instrumental in developing the Congregational Wellness Weekend and the Ministry Team Wellness Workshop. He is a 1982 graduate of Concordia, St. Louis and earned his Doctor of Ministry degree in 2006. A native of Portland, Oregon, he enjoys golf, woodworking, his five young grandchildren, and golf. (He really likes golf!)

Keynote I

Moving Forward in the Midst of Chaos (Vocational Wellbeing)

Keynote II

Moving Forward in Stillness (Spiritual Wellness)

Keynote III

Moving Forward in Connection (Healthy Team Ministry)

CONFERENCE PRESENTERS

Presenter	Sessions	Target	Session Titles
Michelle Anderson	B1	Early Childhood	The Importance of Active Children
Heather Croucher	D2	Educators	Hands-On and Project-Based Math
JoAnn Emerson	D1	Early Childhood	Building Early Childhood Mathematical Knowledge through Manipulatives
Elizabeth Karst	C1	Early Childhood	STEM in the Classroom
Dr. Staci M. Mathes	A1	Early Childhood	Trauma-Informed Care in Early Childhood
Dr. Staci M. Mathes	B5	All	Trauma-Informed Care in Ministry
Karen Maxson	A3	Educators	PBL/Gramification
Karen Maxson	D3	Elem. Educators	Elementary Teachers Roundtable Discussion
Dr. Shanna Opfer	B2	Educators	Globally Networked Curriculum Projects (gNET) – a 21st Century Approach to Learning and Engagement
Dr. Shanna Opfer	C2	Educators	Differentiation: Philosophically on Board - Practically Challenged
Rev. Jason Schleicher	C5	All	Still Living in a Flying Dying World
Rev. Jason Schleicher	D5	All	Meet the Robinsons: A Story of Connection
Emma Taylor	C3	Middle School Educators	Middle School Teachers Roundtable Discussion
Emma Taylor	D4	Principals and Leaders	Principals/School Leaders Roundtable Discussion
Ronnie Williams	A4	All	Google Chrome Extensions and Add-Ons That Make an Educator's Life Easier
Ronnie Williams	B4	Educators	Engaging Students with Powerful EdTech Tools
Ronnie Williams	C4	Educators	Technology to Support Different Learning Styles
Dr. Sara Zillinger	A2	Educators	Alphabet Soup: Identifying Learners with Special Needs and a Primer on the Special Education Process
Dr. Sara Zillinger	B3	Educators	The Feelings Teacher: Incorporating Social-Emotional Learning and Support into the Lutheran Classroom
Rev. Dr. Darrell Zimmerman	A5	All	A Simple Fitness Plan for Everyone

PRESENTER BIOS

Michelle Anderson

Michelle Anderson has been the Assistant Director for Open Arms Lutheran CDC in Wichita, KS, since 2002. She enjoys being active with the children in their center during chapel while they sing and dance. In her spare time she enjoys being active with her new grandson.

Heather Croucher

Heather Croucher teaches middle school language arts and math at Bethany Lutheran School in Overland Park. She earned a Bachelor of Science in education with an emphasis in middle school math from the University of Central Missouri and a Master of Parish Education from Concordia University, Nebraska. Heather and her husband, Mark, live in Raymore, MO, with their son, who also attends Bethany Lutheran School.

JoAnn Emerson

JoAnn's love of math began with a very patient high school math teacher. Calc and trig were doable when someone who loved teaching and could explain complicated problems was guiding her! JoAnn went on to serve as a member of the Olathe School District's math cadre and teach Title I Math. She now shares her love of math and manipulatives with the students and staff of Trinity Lutheran Church Preschool in Shawnee, where she serves as director.

Elizabeth Karst

Elizabeth has worked in early childhood for almost 15 years, working with ages from infant through school age. She has her associate's degree in early childhood education and her bachelor's in psychology. She has been creating in-service trainings for early childhood settings for years and has enjoyed sharing the knowledge that she has with other early childhood educators.

Dr. Staci M. Mathes

Dr. Staci M. Mathes is in her 21st year in public education in Missouri. She currently serves as Executive Director of Special Services at the Lee's Summit R-7 School District. She has worked within the special education and student support services departments in both the Lee's Summit and Raytown school districts. Much of her teaching and learning has had a large focus on social, emotional, and behavioral support and trauma-informed practices from the classroom and administrative level. She has been involved in special care ministry and provided respite care, modified confirmation curriculum courses, and trainings for preschool staff and congregation members as a member of Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church.

Dr. Shanna Opfer

Dr. Shanna Opfer, Associate Professor of Education, has served at Concordia University, Nebraska since 2008, after teaching for six years in grades 4-6 in public schools. She is a graduate of Concordia University, Nebraska, with a B.S.Ed. in elementary education and special education as well as an M.A. in elementary administration. In 2020 she earned a Ph.D. in education with an emphasis in learning, instruction, and innovation from Walden University, studying the factors that influence the student-centered technology practices of elementary teachers. She is passionate about equipping future educators with research-based skills and instructional strategies, Christ-centered teaching dispositions, and joyful enthusiasm for their vocation. She currently serves as the Director of Elementary Education.

Rev. Jason Schleicher

Jason Schleicher is the Spiritual Formation Pastor at Salem Lutheran Church in Tomball, TX. He and his wife, Amy, have been married for eighteen years, and they love parenting identical twin boys who are nine and the cutest four-year-old girl in Texas. Jason served as a DCE for fourteen years before God led him to another path for ministry through the SMP program, which he completed in January 2021. Jason served a church in both Michigan and Montana before moving to Tomball. He loves working with people of all ages, and his favorite aspects of pastoral ministry are one-on-one conversations and preaching. Jason is excited to hang out with some of the coolest people in Kansas at this year's conference!

Emma Taylor

Emma Taylor graduated from Concordia University Chicago in 2015 with her bachelor's in K-8 Lutheran education with middle school endorsements in math and ELA. She student taught in a 5th-8th grade ELA position. Upon graduating, Emma began her teaching career in 2nd grade at a Lutheran school in the Chicago area. She is currently teaching 2nd grade at Topeka Lutheran School. Emma is currently working on her master's degree in educational administration from Concordia University, Nebraska.

Ronnie Williams

Ronnie Williams is a technology integration specialist at Greenbush, and he is passionate about supporting educators in their pursuit of incorporating meaningful technology into their classrooms. He created the website, EdTech Academy by Greenbush, which is an online professional development solution for educators to log in and learn about EdTech tools and resources. Information about EdTech Academy as well as how we can connect online is available at bit.ly/ronnielovestech.

Dr. Sara Zillinger

Dr. Sara Zillinger received her B.S. in elementary education and Lutheran Teachers Diploma from Concordia University, Nebraska in 1997. Along with this degree, she obtained concentrations in special education and music. She obtained her master's in psychology from Capella University, Minnesota, in 2016 and her Doctor of Psychology in school psychology in 2018, also from Capella University. Sara has a passion for Lutheran education and taught with Lutheran Association for Special Education early in her career, where she established the Joshua Program at Lutheran High School of St. Charles County. Although God has currently called her to serve and witness in the public school setting, she continues to support Lutheran education however possible and is excited to equip Lutheran teachers to serve students with special needs in classrooms where they can hear God's Word every day.

Rev. Dr. Darrell Zimmerman

The Rev. Dr. Darrell Zimmerman served thirty years as a parish pastor in St. Louis, MO and Saginaw, MI. He and his wife, Carol, attended the first Grace Place Wellness retreat in the fall of 1999 and led retreats in the earliest years of the ministry. In the fall of 2012, Darrell became the first full-time program director at Grace Place Wellness and has shared the church worker wellness message across the Synod. Darrell has been instrumental in developing the Congregational Wellness Weekend and the Ministry Team Wellness Workshop. He is a 1982 graduate of Concordia, St. Louis and earned his Doctor of Ministry degree in 2006. A native of Portland, OR, he enjoys golf, woodworking, his five young grandchildren, and golf. (He really likes golf!)

SESSION A**Monday, October 4 | 10:30–11:45 a.m.**

Session: A1**Title:** Trauma-Informed Care in Early Childhood**Target:** **Early Childhood****Presenter:** Dr. Staci M. Mathes**Description:** This session will provide information regarding the impact of trauma on students' pre-academic, social, emotional, and behavioral development and strategies to implement and design a trauma-informed environment and design for learning. The session will also inform a thoughtful approach to safe and predictable procedures and routines as well as designing learning structures around both known and unknown trauma with students to support them both proactively and responsively.**Session: A2****Title:** Alphabet Soup: Identifying Learners with Special Needs and a Primer on the Special Education Process**Target:** Educators**Presenter:** Dr. Sara Zillinger**Description:** Is it a learning disability or education gap? Is it ADHD or unskilled parenting? This workshop will present an overview of the special education identification process, including what all those acronyms mean! Many resources will be shared to help the Lutheran educator identify, gather data, and help students with diverse learning needs. Emphasis will be given to student/family rights in the education system. All levels of development (PK - 12) will be addressed.**Session: A3****Title:** PBL/Gramification**Target:** Educators**Presenter:** Karen Maxson

Session: A4

Title: Google Chrome Extensions and Add-Ons That Make an Educator's Life Easier

Target: All

Presenter: Ronnie Williams

Description: You have probably used Google products in your practice as an educator, but are you using them to their full potential? There are millions of free add-ons and extensions that enhance the use of Google products that make your life easier and bring entirely new experiences to your classroom. However, with so many of them out there, it is hard to know what is effective. In this session, you will learn about extensions and add-ons that integrate with Google Chrome, Gmail, Docs, Sheets, and Slides that are easy to use and will make those fantastic tools even better!

Session: A5

Title: A Simple Fitness Plan for Everyone

Target: All

Presenter: Rev. Dr. Darrell Zimmerman

Description: Twelve simple words in three easy-to-remember phrases can get anyone, of any age or body style, no matter your level of fitness, off to a great start to physical fitness. It feels good to feel good! Learn the secrets taught at Grace Place retreats worldwide.

SESSION B

Monday, October 4 | 1:00–2:15 p.m.

Session: B1

Title: The Importance of Active Children

Target: **Early Childhood**

Presenter: Michelle Anderson

Description: Many children are living inactive home lives. With good tools, teachers can increase the amount of physical activity time within their classroom in fun ways, showing children the importance of active, healthy lives and that it's FUN to be physically active. This is important now more than ever. Who better to show children that being active is fun than those individuals that care for them every day?

Session: B2

Title: Globally Networked Curriculum Projects (gNET) – a 21st Century Approach to Learning and Engagement

Target: Educators

Presenter: Dr. Shanna Opfer

Description: The world is at our fingertips ... literally! Connect learning in the classroom with worldwide resources, people, and collaborative experiences to promote communication, critical thinking, and a global perspective. Come to this session to learn about a 21st-century pedagogical approach that will allow you and your learners to collaborate with learners across the globe.

Session: B3

Title: The Feelings Teacher: Incorporating Social-Emotional Learning and Support into the Lutheran Classroom

Target: Educators

Presenters: Dr. Sara Zillinger

Description: Social-emotional learning is a buzzword in public education circles, but what does this have to do with Lutheran education? Come learn how to support development of social skills and emotional management in authentic, effective, developmentally appropriate ways. A special section of this presentation will be dedicated to answering the question, "What do I say when ... ?" All levels of development (PK - 12) will be addressed.

Session: B4

Title: Engaging Students with Powerful EdTech Tools

Target: Educators

Presenter: Ronnie Williams

Description: Students are interested in technology and crave interaction with it. With so many options out there, it's easy to feel digital overload when it comes to EdTech integration in the classroom. This session will focus on apps that provide additional methods of student input and feedback so you can utilize these tools in your classroom to boost engagement. The apps covered have a small learning curve but provide a big return on investment in the form of highly engaged students.

Session: B5

Title: Trauma-Informed Care in Ministry

Target: All

Presenter: Dr. Staci M. Mathes

Description: This session will provide information regarding the impact of trauma to on the brain and overall development and strategies to design a trauma-informed environment and approach to ministry. The session will align with concepts relevant to social emotional learning, or emotional intelligence, in providing predictable and safe structures and supporting people within your ministry. We will discuss known and unknown trauma as a roadblock to supporting people and strategies to address their needs.

SESSION C

Monday, October 4 | 3:30 – 4:45 p.m.

Session: C1

Title: STEM in The Classroom

Target: **Early Childhood**

Presenter: Elizabeth Karst

Description: STEM is defined as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. This is helpful for all ages of children in the early childhood setting. STEM involves many different areas of development. Early childhood teachers can implement STEM in all different centers in their classrooms as well. This presentation brings the definition of STEM to educators and gives them more ideas of how to implement it within their classroom.

Session: C2

Title: Differentiation: Philosophically on Board, Practically Challenged

Target: Educators

Presenter: Dr. Shanna Opfer

Description: Most teachers articulate a mindset that embraces differentiation and WANT to meet students where they are to address the wide variety of learning needs that are present in their classrooms. Day-to-day challenges of classroom life, however, can hijack philosophical pursuits and result in little to no actual differentiation. This session will begin with the philosophical but quickly shift to address practical strategies to put differentiation into motion in your classroom.

Session: C3

Title: Middle School Teachers Roundtable Discussion

Target: Middle School Educators

Presenter: Emma Taylor

Description: Middle school teachers are invited to come together to discuss the joys and challenges in teaching middle school (5th-8th grade). Teachers will be encouraged to share in order to gain ideas and insights from each other. Emma Taylor will facilitate the discussion and also have resources and topics to discuss. Potential topics include classroom management, working well with co-workers (team teaching), technology in the classroom, differentiating learning, various instructional strategies, and more. Come ready to share and learn!

Session: C4

Title: Technology to Support Different Learning Styles

Target: Educators

Presenter: Ronnie Williams

Description: You have probably used Google products in your practice as an educator, but are you using them to their full potential? There are millions of free add-ons and extensions that enhance the use of Google products which help to make curriculum more accessible as well as bring entirely new experiences to your classroom. However, with so many of them out there, it is hard to know what is effective. In this session, you will learn about EdTech tools that integrate with Google Chrome, Gmail, Docs, Sheets, and Slides that are easy to use and will better support students with diverse learning styles and needs!

Session: C5

Title: Still Living in a Flying Dying World

Target: All

Presenter: Rev. Jason Schleicher

Description: In life and ministry, we live restless lives. Life is fast-paced and high-flying. It is really hard to be still. Yet, we train our dogs to do it. "Sit, stay," we say, and they learn it. How do we live, lead, and love people in Jesus' name when so much of the world is flying and dying around us? People are too busy for God, it seems. Unless the people are close to us, we hardly notice the daily deaths from COVID-19, cancer, suicide, and accidents. In this session, Jason Schleicher will challenge those who listen to "sit, stay, learn, and grow" through a Biblical approach to still living.

SESSION D

Tuesday, October 5 | 8:00 a.m.–9:15 a.m.

Session: D1

Title: Building Early Childhood Mathematical Knowledge through Manipulatives

Target: **Early Childhood**

Presenter: JoAnn Emerson

Description: "Mathematical knowledge is too important to be left to chance..." Kansas Early Learning Standards, p.40.

In this presentation, we will explore the math standards for children ages 3-6 and how to teach them hands-on with manipulatives. Participants will gain many ideas for providing young children with positive math experiences. From cardinality to algebraic thinking to geometry, these activities will develop children who are confident in their ability to use math.

Session: D2

Title: Hands-On and Project-Based Math

Target: Educators

Presenter: Heather Croucher

Description: Come explore the hands-on possibilities of upper elementary and middle school math. We'll review some project-based options you can implement in your math classroom, as well as look specifically at the Hands-On Equations math curriculum (grades 4+). Have some great project-based or hands-on math ideas to share? Bring those, too, and we'll take time to share at the end of our session.

Session: D3

Title: Elementary Teachers Roundtable Discussion

Target: Elementary Educators

Presenter: Karen Maxson

Session: D4

Title: Principals/School Leaders Roundtable Discussion

Target: Principals/School Leaders

Presenter: Emma Taylor

Description: Principals and school leaders are invited to come together to discuss the joys and challenges of leading in a Lutheran school. Leaders will be encouraged to share in order to gain ideas and insights from each other. Emma Taylor will facilitate the discussion and have resources and current best practices to share from her recent educational administration studies from Concordia University, Nebraska. Potential topics include school missions and visions, decision making, using different types of data, school communication, and understanding and applying leadership styles. Come ready to share and learn!

Session: D5

Title: Meet the Robinsons: A Story of Connection

Target: All

Presenter: Rev. Jason Schleicher

Description: What were you doing in 2007? Figuring out how to work your brand-new Apple iPhone? Coping with the tragedy of the 200 MPH tornado that destroyed Greensburg, KS? Wondering about the state of violence in our country as the Virginia Tech shooter killed over 30 people on campus? Watching Disney's new movie "Ratatouille"? Disney released another movie in 2007 that wasn't nearly as popular as the adorable rat chef in Paris. Join Jason Schleicher in this session as we consider the story of connection from Disney's "Meet the Robinsons" and how it plays out in our lives of faith and leadership.