



# ABIDING IN THE WORD

JOHN 8:31-32

**September 30 – October 1, 2025**  
**Shawnee, Kansas**

**“Abiding in the Word – as Workers in Christ’s Kingdom”**

[Conference Webpage](#)

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## PASTORS SCHEDULE

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### **Monday, September 29**

4:00-8:00 p.m. Circuit Visitors/Region Vice-Presidents

### **Tuesday, September 30**

7:30-8:30 a.m. Breakfast (at hotels)  
8:30-9:00 a.m. Registration  
9:00-10:00 a.m. Matins and announcements  
10:00-10:15 a.m. **Keynote I – “Abiding without Mystifying,” Rev. Dr. Joel Biermann**  
10:15-11:15 a.m. Break  
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Session A  
12:30-12:45 p.m. Lunch  
12:45-1:45 p.m. Responsive Prayer 2  
1:45-2:00 p.m. **Keynote II – “Remaining and Running,” Rev. Dr. Joel Biermann**  
2:00-3:00 p.m. Break  
3:00-3:30 p.m. Session B  
3:30-4:30 p.m. Break  
4:45-5:30 p.m. **Keynote III – “Working with the Word,” Rev. Dr. Joel Biermann**  
5:30 p.m. Pastors’ Business Meeting/Litany  
Dinner on your own/Free evening

### **Wednesday, October 1**

8:30-9:00 a.m. Breakfast (at hotels)  
9:00-10:05 a.m. Matins and announcements  
10:05-10:20 a.m. **Keynote IV – “Watch Your Language,” Rev. Dr. Joel Biermann**  
10:30 a.m. Rev. Dr. Jamison Hardy – update on the Concordia University System  
12:00 p.m. Divine Service (Pastors and Educators)  
Joint Awards Banquet  
  
Adjournment

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## EDUCATORS SCHEDULE

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9:00-10:00 a.m. Registration & vendors  
10:05-10:20 a.m. Rev. Dr. Jamison Hardy – update on the Concordia University System  
10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Divine Service (Pastors and Educators)  
12:00-12:45 p.m. Joint Awards Banquet  
12:45-1:15 p.m. Educators’ Business Meeting  
1:15-2:00 p.m. **Keynote I – “The Handle,” Rev. Dr. Peter Jurchen**  
2:00-2:15 p.m. Guided Roundtable Discussion  
2:15-2:45 p.m. Break w/snack  
2:45-3:30 p.m. **Keynote II – “The Frame,” Rev. Dr. Peter Jurchen**  
3:30-3:45 p.m. Guided Roundtable Discussion  
3:45-4:00 p.m. Break  
4:00-4:45 p.m. **Keynote III – “The Lens,” Rev. Dr. Peter Jurchen**  
4:45-5:00 p.m. Guided Roundtable Discussion  
5:00-5:30 p.m. Unfinished Business/Closing Devotion  
5:30 p.m. Dinner on your own/Free evening

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## CHURCH WORKERS CONFERENCE OFFERING DESIGNATION: Church Worker Care Fund

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The 2025 Church Workers Conference Offering has been designated for the District Church Worker Care Fund. Your congregation and/or school are highly encouraged to designate September's chapel/Sunday school offerings for the continued funding of the Districtwide Church Worker Care support fund. This District discretionary fund has historically assisted pastors, educators, and their families in addressing a variety of unforeseen emergency worker needs. Schools/congregations are invited to raise a minimum of \$50 each. Visit the [Donate webpage](#) and choose "Church Worker Care" from the donate drop-down menu.

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### REGISTRATION INFORMATION

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Online registration begins August 1, 2025, at <https://lcmaskansasdistrict.regfox.com/2025-joint-church-worker-conference>

♦ This is a required conference for all rostered church workers.

#### 2 Day Conference Registration (Sept. 30 & Oct. 1)

\$130 – Pastors, Vicars, Deaconess, DCEs,  
\$60 – Emeritus, Spouse (Meal cost only)  
\$0 – Committee Members

#### 1 Day Conference Registration (Oct. 1 only)

\$85 – Educators, DCEs, Pastors, Vicars,  
\$40 – Emeritus, Spouse (Meal cost only)  
\$0 – Committee Members

*No registration fee for committee members; attendees are responsible for the cost of lodging.*

**A \$15.00 late fee will be added to registration beginning September 13, 2025.**

**Cancellations or substitutions** – Substitute when possible as cancellations after September 12, 2025, may be subject to a \$50.00 per person cancellation fee to cover meal costs. Contact the District Office to make registration changes. Contact Tami Lierz at the District Office at 785-357-4441, ext. 5001 or [tami@kslcms.org](mailto:tami@kslcms.org).

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### LODGING INFORMATION

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#### Lodging Reservations

Room rates using our booking links will be \$127.99/night, September 30 and October 1, 2025. To make reservations, go to the hotel website using the link provided. If needed the group code is bolded next to the hotel name. Rooms are newly renovated. Breakfast is included. All reservations should be made by **Monday, September 8, 2025**. After this date, the hotel will release the remainder of our room block. Additional reservation requests can only be honored on a space and rate-available basis. Please make sure your dates are correct before completing your transaction.

Hampton Inn, KC/Shawnee  
16555 Midland Dr.  
Shawnee, KS 66217  
913-248-1900

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## PASTORS KEYNOTE SPEAKER

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### **Rev. Dr. Joel D. Biermann**

A full-time member of the faculty at Concordia Seminary since 2002, Rev. Dr. Joel Biermann revels in teaching doctrinal theology to Concordia's students – and to anyone else he can persuade to listen. He was ordained in 1987 and spent eleven years as a parish pastor serving congregations in Minnesota and Michigan before returning to the seminary for graduate work. He and his wife, Jeannalee, enjoy spending time pursuing a variety of activities afforded by the city, but most especially they cherish time with their three children and their spouses and their eleven grandchildren all who live in the St. Louis area. He has authored four books: *Courageous Fathers of the Bible*; *A Case for Character*; *Wholly Citizens*, and *Day 7*.

## **Abiding in the Word as Workers in the Kingdom**

### **Keynote I – “Abiding without Mystifying”**

While “abide” drags with it ideas and feelings that lean in the spiritual and mystical direction, it's actually quite a concrete verb. Joined with a concrete understanding of threefold nature of the Word, abiding in the Word captures the heart of Christian confession.

### **Keynote II – “Remaining and Running”**

When things “remain” they tend not to move. It is vital that Christians rightly understand the relationship between passivity and activity in their lives, overcome the false divide between them, and learn to see abiding as something far from static.

### **Keynote III – “Working with the Word”**

We are prone to set aside precious and special things, “saving” them for appropriate occasions or circumstances. God's Word is as precious, special, and holy as it gets, but it is meant to do work. Indeed, it is the only tool kingdom-workers have got.

### **Keynote IV – “Watch Your Language”**

Christians confess Jesus as their Lord—but learning to speak the Christian language takes practice, and we are prone to pick up other dialects. To follow Christ means that we speak his language, so we need to pay attention to rules of Christian grammar and not become fluent in American pidgin Christian speech.

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## EDUCATORS KEYNOTE SPEAKER

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### **Rev. Dr. Peter Jurchen**

Rev. Dr. Pete Jurchen is the Asst. Professor of Lutheran Education and Faith Formation at Concordia University, Nebraska. In this role he teaches classes both related to Lutheran education for future church workers and helps lead initiatives that help cultivate a campus community that is actively engaged in faith formation. He lives in Seward, Nebraska with his wonderful wife Deb and their five children.

### **Keeping In Focus: Insights from the Lutheran Tradition that Helps Us Equip and Cultivate Mature Disciples**

Overall, the three parts of this presentation will use a mental picture/framework to help us think about how we equip each other with the tools of self-directed, lifelong learning of God's Word. The frame is a magnifying glass, which consists of three parts: the handle, the frame, and the lens.

#### **Keynote I – “The Handle”**

Values of the Lutheran Tradition that Support Lifelong Learning of God's Word. I will talk about different values/attitudes from the Lutheran tradition that we can build and emphasize in our lives and our schools that keep us motivated and empowered to be people of the Word of God.

#### **Keynote II – “The Frame”**

Practices from the Lutheran Tradition that Support Lifelong Learning of God's Word. I will focus on both the corporate and individual practices from the Lutheran tradition that anyone (Lutheran or not) can utilize that will form the habit of self-directed lifelong learning of God's Word.

#### **Keynote III – “The Lens”**

Insights from the Lutheran Tradition that Support a Growing Understanding of the Intersection of God's Word and Daily Life. In this session I will focus on six key Reformation tensions (humanity, suffering, love, purpose, freedom, and reason) that we can keep in mind (and help instill in others) when we are seeking to interpret the world through a Biblical lens.

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## CONFERENCE PRESENTERS

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Presenter	Sessions	Session Titles
Rev. Dr. Todd Biermann	A3, B3	Daily Tools for Family Discipleship from CCF
Rev. Daniel Grams	B5	God's Mission Here: Kansas
Rev. Dr. Jamison Hardy	A1, B1	Biblical Leadership without Fear
Rev. Dr. Peter Jurchen	A2, B2	How Should I Consider and Approach Maturing Discipleship?
Rev. Ian Kinney	A4, B4	Ora. Labora. Lege
Rev. Jacob Mueller	A5	Jesus and Bad Funeral Etiquette: A Reason for Hope

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## PRESENTER BIOS

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### Rev. Dr. Todd Biermann

Rev. Dr. Todd A. Biermann has always had a passion for fostering marriages and families in God's way. This was true in his role as a parish pastor of the LCMS for 33 years, in his international marriage ministry with his wife, Heather, and now as they both work with Concordia Center for the Family (CCF), an RSO of the LCMS. Dr. Biermann's educational path (B.A. at CUNE, M.Div. at CSL and D.Min. at CTSFW) along with a wide array of field experience has prepared him for his role as the Executive Director of CCF, which he was called to begin in February 2024. He rejoices in the privilege to promote family discipleship, uniting homes and congregations in making lifelong disciples of Jesus. Learn more about Dr. Biermann and CCF at [www.concordiacenterforthefamily.org](http://www.concordiacenterforthefamily.org). Contact him directly at [toddbiermann@concordiafamily.org](mailto:toddbiermann@concordiafamily.org).

### Rev. Daniel Grams

Rev. Daniel Grams has served the LCMS Kansas District since October 2023 as the Assistant to the President for Congregational & School Services. In this role, he supports and encourages congregations and church workers in the areas of missions, stewardship, education, and youth ministry. Prior to his service in Kansas, Rev. Grams spent 21 years as a parish pastor, serving congregations in diverse settings: an urban parish in New Jersey, a rural congregation with a school in Wisconsin, and a suburban church with an early childhood center in Michigan.

He holds a B.A. from Concordia University–Ann Arbor, an M.Div. from Concordia Theological Seminary–Fort Wayne, and a Master of Nonprofit Administration from the Mendoza College of Business at the University of Notre Dame–South Bend. Rev. Grams has contributed to the broader church through roles such as LCMS Convention Delegate, Floor Committee member, Circuit Visitor, Chair of the English District Constitutions Committee, and as a member of both the SELC outreach and English District evangelization committees. Rev. Grams has traveled several times to South Sudan with Lutheran Heritage Foundation to teach men preparing for pastoral ministry with the Ev. Lutheran Church of South Sudan & Sudan. In the community, Rev. Grams has served as a fire department chaplain and as a board member and volunteer for a local food pantry and Care Net Pregnancy Center.

Rev. Grams and his wife Susan, a rostered LCMS teacher, have been married for over 27 years and are blessed with four children: Mitchell, Katherine, Nicholas, and Nathan.

**Rev. Dr. Jamison Hardy**

The Rev. Dr. Jamison Hardy is the President of the Concordia University System. He was born in Bay City and raised in Flint and Westland, Michigan. Following High School, Jamison continued his Lutheran education at Concordia University in Mequon, WI where he pursued a degree in Secondary Education-Broad Field Social Sciences. Upon graduating, Jamison enrolled at Concordia Seminary in Fort Wayne, IN. He was ordained on December 10, 2000, at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Westland, MI, and called to Our Savior Lutheran Church in Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania. In 2007-2008, Our Savior Lutheran Church in Mt. Lebanon, PA, and Hope Lutheran Church in McMurray, PA, merged into Peace Lutheran Church with Pastor Hardy as the pastor of the merged congregation meeting at the McMurray location, after teaching as an adjunct at the Community College of Allegheny County. Pastor Hardy began his graduate studies in 2009 in the Master's in Public Policy program. He then continued with his doctorate in Business Administration from Walden University in Minneapolis, graduating in 2012. In 2009, he was elected as the vice-president of the English District of the LCMS. He also served on the Peters Township School Board of Directors and the McMurray Rotary Club #7330.

In June 2015, Pastor Hardy was elected as the 21st President and Bishop of the English District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod at its 55th regular convention. Bishop Hardy taught classes at Concordia Theological Seminary in the Doctor of Ministry program on parish administration and pastoral leadership. He also recorded the PALS module for the LCMS on the same topic. He has presented at several conferences and led workshops on the works of mercy, emphasizing faith and love. Bishop Hardy was awarded the Distinguished Alumnus Award from Concordia University, Mequon, WI in May 2021. In October of the same year, he was inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame for wrestling at Concordia University, Mequon, WI.

In May 2024, the Concordia University System (CUS) extended a divine call to Dr. Hardy to serve as its next president, and after prayerful consideration, he accepted it. Under Dr. Hardy's leadership, CUS has established protocols for visiting all CUS campuses and supporting them in fulfilling their mission and objectives. CUS has launched its Church-Work voucher program. He continues to serve in the pastoral ministry as an Associate Pastor at Our Savior, Hartland, MI. He and his wife, Wendy, have three children.

**Rev. Dr. Peter Jurchen**

See Educators Keynote Speaker biography on page 5.

**Rev. Ian Kinney**

Pastor Ian Kinney is the pastor of First Lutheran Church in Sabetha, KS.

**Rev. Jacob Mueller**

Rev. Jacob T. Mueller grew up in Southern Illinois, went to Concordia, Ann Arbor, and was a guest student at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Pretoria, South Africa. After graduating from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in 2012 he served Holy Cross, Emma, MO until coming to Hope Lutheran Church and School, Shawnee in 2024. Three times he has served as a guest lecturer at the Lutheran Theological College of Uganda where he teaches a class on Romans. Jacob is the husband to Julia and father to Hannah, Zachariah, and Abigail. For fun he enjoys model railroading and cycling.

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**SESSION A****Tuesday, September 30 | 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.**

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**Session: A1****Title:** Biblical Leadership without Fear**Presenter:** Rev. Dr. Jamison Hardy**Description:** Being a leader is difficult. Even more challenging is applying biblical leadership principles in a world that denies the existence of God. Through biblical figures in the Old and New Testaments, examples will be provided to illustrate how God can use you to lead in the Church and the world. Despite your human frailties, God can accomplish great things through you.

We will explore the concept that all believers are called to leadership through Christ's empowering work. I will emphasize that authentic leadership isn't limited to formal positions but flows from a Christ-centered

identity. Through spiritual disciplines, community engagement, and servant leadership, every Christian can influence others. The presentation highlights how Christ's redemptive work qualifies and equips ordinary people for extraordinary impact, transforming weaknesses into strengths. By embracing this inclusive vision of leadership, the church becomes a dynamic body where all members contribute to God's mission, regardless of title or position.

***Session: A2***

***Title:*** How Should I Consider and Approach Maturing Discipleship?

***Presenter:*** Rev. Dr. Peter Jurchen

***Description:*** Part of what makes teaching adults in the parish so difficult is that pastors often don't know where to begin. In this session, Rev. Dr. Pete Jurchen will offer up some considerations on how we think about maturity in our parish education. He will also offer up some practical suggestions for how we can more effectively and faithfully cultivate a Christ-centered community of lifelong, maturing disciples.

***Session: A3***

***Title:*** Daily Tools for Family Discipleship from CCF

***Presenter:*** Rev. Dr. Todd Biermann

***Description:*** Receive simple tools to help you, your family and those you serve to grow as disciples of Jesus at home every day. Learn how CCF (Concordia Center for the Family) is helping support church workers, congregations and homes in a united effort toward making lifelong disciples of Jesus.

***Session: A4***

***Title:*** Ora. Labora. Lege.

***Presenter:*** Rev. Ian Kinney

***Description:*** Benedict of Nursia fundamentally altered western civilization as we know it. Out of the ashes of a decrepit society, the Holy Spirit forged the Western world through Benedict. Built upon the foundations of prayer, work, and study, Benedict of Nursia was a true reformer 1,000 years before Luther tasted sauerkraut. Is there anything we can learn or even appropriate from him? We will engage in a critical examination of the person, movement, and rule of Benedict of Nursia. Comparing these with the Holy Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions (namely AC XXVII), we will see if there is anything that can be learned or adopted in our context.

***Session: A5***

***Title:*** Jesus and Bad Funeral Etiquette: A Reason for Hope

***Presenter:*** Rev. Jacob Mueller

***Description:*** Humans create etiquette to make ourselves feel comfortable in uncomfortable situations. This was just as true during Jesus' earthly ministry as it is today. While parts of our traditional funeral etiquette are helpful and should be retrained, Jesus did not follow the funeral etiquette of his day. This presentation will show us why Jesus' action at funerals is good news for you. This will help us as we share the message of hope with those who mourn today and help us imagine what etiquette could look like in the New Creation. Rev. Jacob T. Mueller is the pastor of Hope Lutheran Church and School, Shawnee, KS.



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**SESSION B**  
**Tuesday, September 30 | 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

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**Session: B1**

**Title:** Biblical Leadership without Fear

**Presenter:** Rev. Dr. Jamison Hardy

**Description:** Being a leader is difficult. Even more challenging is applying biblical leadership principles in a world that denies the existence of God. Through biblical figures in the Old and New Testaments, examples will be provided to illustrate how God can use you to lead in the Church and the world. Despite your human frailties, God can accomplish great things through you.

We will explore the concept that all believers are called to leadership through Christ's empowering work. I will emphasize that authentic leadership isn't limited to formal positions but flows from a Christ-centered identity. Through spiritual disciplines, community engagement, and servant leadership, every Christian can influence others. The presentation highlights how Christ's redemptive work qualifies and equips ordinary people for extraordinary impact, transforming weaknesses into strengths. By embracing this inclusive vision of leadership, the church becomes a dynamic body where all members contribute to God's mission, regardless of title or position.

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**Presenter:** Rev. Dr. Todd Biermann

**Description:** Receive simple tools to help you, your family and those you serve to grow as disciples of Jesus at home every day. Learn how CCF (Concordia Center for the Family) is helping support church workers, congregations and homes in a united effort toward making lifelong disciples of Jesus.

**Session: B4**

**Title:** Ora. Labora. Lege.

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**Description:** Benedict of Nursia fundamentally altered western civilization as we know it. Out of the ashes of a decrepit society, the Holy Spirit forged the Western world through Benedict. Built upon the foundations of prayer, work, and study, Benedict of Nursia was a true reformer 1,000 years before Luther tasted sauerkraut. Is there anything we can learn or even appropriate from him? We will engage in a critical examination of the person, movement, and rule of Benedict of Nursia. Comparing these with the Holy Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions (namely AC XXVII), we will see if there is anything that can be learned or adopted in our context.

**Session: B5**

**Title:** God's Mission Here: Kansas

**Presenter:** Rev. Daniel Grams

**Description:** Congregations across the Kansas District face unique challenges—rural population loss, cultural secularism, resource constraints—but also hold untapped potential to be vibrant centers of Gospel mission. In this session, Rev. Daniel Grams will offer practical resources available to support and strengthen church workers and congregations as they carry out God's mission here in Kansas. Participants will have the opportunity to share best practices and provide insight into how the members of the Kansas District can collaborate and partner together to strengthen their local mission presence.