

Breakaway Sessions

Colorado State University // Fort Collins, CO

July 6-9, 2021

Session A

// Salvation by Grace and...

Rev. Dr. Chris Ascher

Where does our forgiveness come from? Believe it or not, many denominations have answered this question differently since Jesus called His first disciples. This breakaway serves as a quick overview covering more than 2,000 years of Church history in a fun, interactive way with a 3-D living timeline. Participants will see what is special about the Lutheran church's teaching that we are truly saved by grace alone. Nothing else is needed.

Rev. Dr. Ascher is the pastor at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, SD. He can be reached at cascher76@gmail.com.

// Punching Satan in the Mouth

Standing Firm in the Face

of Persecution

Rev. Duane Bamsch

Christians around the world are suffering. "Christian" businesses are forced to close, churches are attacked on holy days, months of COVID-induced lockdowns are oppressing so many. It all seems to mean that Satan is winning. But is he? Although persecution or martyrdom may never come your way, learn how to respond to it in faith, and how to cast off fear if danger comes. If Satan sucker punches you, punch him right back—in the mouth. Boldly confess the faith once delivered to the saints and dare Satan to do more to you than kill you. But he can't; he's powerless. Because of Jesus, you are safe. You are Forgiven!

Rev. Bamsch is the pastor at Grace Lutheran Church in Grass Valley, CA. He is also the Interim President of Higher Things. He can be reached at duane.bamsch@icloud.com.

// Being a Blessing in Tough Times

Rev. Dr. Kirk Clayton

These are tough times for the Church and our culture. Riots and violence are tearing our society apart. Cities are burning. Injustice and corruption fill our news. Often the Church is blamed for what is wrong with our world today. Christians are despised. Opposition to the Church is on the rise. How does the Church respond? With the Gospel—in words and in deeds! The Church has been in this situation before, and has been a blessing to the broken and dying world by providing God's care and God's love for all those in need, our neighbors all around us. Come see how the Church has faced similar challenges in the past, and how we can move forward today.

Rev. Dr. Clayton is the pastor at Zion Lutheran Church in Mascoutah, IL. He can be reached at kmcljcuac@yahoo.com.

// How to Avoid Wearing Masks

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Rev. Fenker is the pastor at Bethlehem & Immanuel Lutheran Churches in Bremen KS. He’s also the Dean of Theology for Higher Things and one of the Plenary speakers at this conference. He can be reached at aaronfenker@higherthings.org.

// Rice, Beans, Plantains and Jesus: God’s Mission in the Dominican Republic

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Have you ever wondered what it’s like to be a missionary in another country? What does a missionary do? How does our Lutheran theology intersect with how we do missions? What is the LCMS doing around the world and specifically in the Dominican Republic and Latin America? How can you get involved? How many Dominicans can fit on a motorcycle? How does our liturgy sound in Spanish? ¡Vamos a ver!

Rev. Fritsche is an LCMS Missionary to the Dominican Republic. He also serves on the Higher Things Board of Directors as Secretary. He can be reached at joelfritsche@me.com.

// Cancel Your Guilt Trip

Katie Hill

Go ahead. Reach into your back pocket and pull out that ticket. You know the one—your ticket for the next guilt trip you plan to take. Perhaps you’re one of those really forward-thinking people and you’ve got a lifetime pass. Impressive. But what happens if you find yourself arm wrestling with guilty feelings far too often? Well, there are two possibilities: Either you’re struggling to accept God’s forgiveness for a real offense, or you’re taking responsibility for something that you shouldn’t. That’s the devil’s trick, too! Let’s see what God’s Word says about changing your travel plans as you live in light of the forgiveness of your sins in

Christ Jesus!

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Rev. Dr. Kachelmeier is the pastor at Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church in Los Alamos, NM. He can be reached at bkachelmeier@msn.com.

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Rev. Lietzau is the pastor at Wheat Ridge Evangelical Lutheran Church in Wheat Ridge, CO. He can be reached at pastorwrlutheran@gmail.com.

// Jesus Christ is Lutheran.

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Session B

// The Uncultured Saints Live

Rev. Elisha Lietzau & Rev. Harrison Goodman

A Higher Things Podcast live! We're told the same thing over and over. Christianity doesn't fit with today's culture. The thing is, it isn't the culture saying it. It's the Church. We've done a great job of figuring out who we're not. Sometimes we forget who we are. We're the saints, washed in the blood of the Lamb. We're sinners who Jesus made holy. This defines us. There are places Christianity doesn't fit with today's culture because Christianity isn't bound by culture. We're free in Christ to be uncultured. Not against it. Not apart from it. Undefined by it, because we're defined by something greater. Join Pr. Goodman and Pr. Lietzau, the uncultured saints, as we tackle today's issues through the lens of the Lutheran confessions and find answers to today's questions rooted in a timeless truth in Christ.

Pastors Goodman and Lietzau are the hosts of the Higher Things Podcast, The Uncultured Saints. Like out of date 90s references? Then this is the podcast for you.

// Will The "Real" Jesus Please Stand Up

Rev. Michael Hageman

We are bombarded with false Christs every day of our lives. Whether we are enticed to follow the "evolution Jesus" or the "popularity contest Jesus," it is confusing to know who the "real Jesus" may be as we experience life. In this breakaway we will be peering into how easy it is to follow a false Jesus because of the deceit of the evil one, the world, and our flesh. In the risen Christ, the real Jesus who stands up for us, and we are able to repent and clearly confess with the Church the truth of God's Word to the world.

Rev. Hageman is the pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church in Garden City, KS. He can be reached at hagmission@att.net.

// Generation Z Survival Guide: Spoiler alert; It's all about the Gospel!

Erica Jacoby

One out of five Americans belongs to Gen Z and yours is the first generation in American history whose the majority doesn't identify as Christian. In fact, most of you believe that there is no one true "religion." What does the Church need to do to keep the youth we have in the Church, and what more do we need to do to reach those outside of it? Let's talk about this generation's unique challenges and opportunities and why the Gospel just might flourish in spite of us!

Erica Jacoby is the Executive Director of Higher Things and a member at Summit of Peace Lutheran Church in Thornton, CO. She can be reached at erica@higherthings.org.

// A Stranger in a Strange Land: Christians in a Secular Workplace

Eric Maiwald

Not every Christian gets to work in a church. Most of us have to work in the secular world. This is where every commandment is broken each day, where envy runs rampant, and Sundays are not days of rest. How can you as a Christian live in such a world? With 34 years of experience in corporate environments, Eric has faced many challenges in living out his faith. He'll tell stories about conversations, conflicts, and choices he's had to make, and he wants to hear your experiences, too.

Eric Maiwald is a member at St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hancock, MD. He is also the Transportation Manager at this conference and can be reached at emaiwald@fred.net.

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// Pandemics and Social Distance: Love Your Neighbor?

Rev. Michael Meyer

The last year has reminded us of the benefits of community, and the challenges of isolation. Yet in the midst of it all, one thing has remained constant: God's love for you in Christ! How do we, in turn, show that love to others? What about those times when life throws us a curveball? In this breakaway, we'll discuss the who, what, when, where, and how of showing God's love and mercy, to those around us, whether we find ourselves walking through the valley of the shadow of death, or putting up tents with Peter, James, and John.

Rev. Meyer is the director of LCMS Disaster Training. He can be reached at michael.meyer@lcms.org

// The Cantor Conversation

Rev. Paul Soulek

The Lutheran church has always been a singing church - and the vocation of cantor (leader of the people's song) supports and encourages this living tradition! This breakaway will discuss the many ways in which the human voice, organ, and other instruments are used to sing the Christian faith in the life of the Church. Participants should bring their voice and a willingness to participate in singing together!

Paul Soulek is the Cantor at St. John Lutheran Church in Seward, NE. He's also the organist for this conference. He can be reached at paul.soulek@stjohnseward.org.

// Watermarked, now what?

Rev. Randy Sturzenbecher

Watered and Worded in Holy Baptism, now what? What comes after God makes us alive in Christ? Is it working to keep the Law? Is it being a better person? Is

it (fill in whatever you think God wants from you)? God gives Baptism and He keeps giving. He gives us Jesus.

He gives us a life-changing reality: "You are forgiven!"

Join us to find out more about private confession, where you receive Jesus. Join us to see the joy in confessing all your hurt, your heartache, your stubborn, sinful, selfishness to Jesus and receiving those blood bought words, "You are forgiven!"

Rev. Sturzenbecher is the pastor at Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church in Black Hawk, SD. He also serves on the Higher Things Board of Directors and is the Catechist for this conference. He can be reached at dslcpastor@divineshep.org.

// Too Lutheran for the Holy Spirit

Rev. Jared Tucher

Lutherans get a bad rap for downplaying the role of the Holy Spirit or outright ignoring His work.

However, that is far from the truth. A brief study of the Third Article of the Creed in Luther's Small and Large Catechism shows us just how important His work is and the value that Luther (and all Lutherans) place upon the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit's work is indeed an important part in the plan of salvation. Let's be "un-Lutheran" and talk about the Holy Spirit!

Rev. Tucher is the pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church in Gillette, WY. He is also the Catechist for this conference and can be reached at revtucher@gmail.com.

// Is the Death Penalty Okay?

Rev. Dr. Jason Wagner

Can God allow for the death penalty and also encourage us to protect human life? In this session, we will look at what Scripture has to say about authority, the death penalty, mercy, and protecting human life. Ultimately, we will consider different viewpoints on the use of the death penalty in society today as we seek a biblically faithful way to think about the ultimate punishment in this world.

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Rev. Dr. Wagner is the pastor at Hope Lutheran in High Ridge, MO. He can be reached at pastorwagner@email.com.

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Session C

// Daily Life & Spiritual Warfare

Rev. Steve Andrews Jr.

Jesus teaches us that our lives should not look the same as the world around us. We are called to lose our lives for His sake and the gospel, to be a light to the world. And yet, our lives tend to look the same as an unbeliever. We have so many options to choose from in a buffet-styled world. So many ways to work, play, and serve. But what should the daily life of a Christian actually look like? Why are we here? What purpose could there be for your life? Our conversation may lead us to wrestle with various topics like comfort, persecution, spiritual warfare, loneliness, fear, and shame.

Rev. Andrews is the pastor at St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Lee's Summit, MO. He can be reached at andrews@gracefaithlove.org.

// Taking a Swim in the Epistles

Rev. Gerald Heinecke

There are so many people who question Baptism and its purposes. As you are well aware from the catechism, there are four parts on Baptism, each with its own Bible passage, but there are so many more passages that address Baptism. Why baptize? Who needs to be baptized? Who is doing the work? What does Baptism do? The Pauline epistles are ripe with baptismal imagery and language. In our limited time together we will give a quick survey of passages and explore as many of them as we can.

Rev. Heinecke is the pastor at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Buffalo, WY. He can be reached at pastor.heinecke@gmail.com.

// Under the Cross Live

Ashleigh Sheldon & Rev. Harrison Goodman

A Higher Things Podcast live! It's dark down here, and that wears on us. We don't just suffer physically and spiritually. Sin wages war against our mental health, too. Ashleigh Sheldon, a mental health professional, and Pr. Harrison Goodman, a parish pastor, are here to tackle tough issues like trauma, addiction, abuse, and depression. Here, we give names to the dark even as we find hope in the Light, Jesus Christ our Lord. Your mental health and your spiritual wellbeing are connected, and so both should be cared for and nourished. Jesus promises to shelter us with His presence. We're here to talk about how He does it. Join us as we take shelter under the Cross.

Rev. Goodman is the pastor of Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church in San Antonio, TX; the Content Executive for HT; and he and Ashleigh Sheldon host the HT Podcast, Under the Cross. Ashleigh is a mental health professional and a member of Mt. Olive Lutheran Church in Loveland, CO.

// Are Public School Kids Going To hell?

Erica Jacoby

It's time to talk about your education in this breakaway, even if you don't attend a public school. What are they teaching teachers to teach these days and are students really learning how to learn? Are you being taught how to think or are you being taught what to think? Let's take a look at why your school and teachers are the way they are. The Bible and Luther, the chief teacher of our church, have lots to say about getting a good education, even— gasp!—in a public school.

Erica Jacoby is the Executive Director of Higher Things and a member at Summit of Peace Lutheran Church in Thornton, CO. She can be reached at erica@higherthings.org.

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// The Heavenly Life

Rev. David Kind

Heaven breaks in upon earth in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus, who became incarnate for our salvation, comes to us now, too, to bring us that salvation in the Divine Service. This sectional will explore how the Church reflects the heavenly reality in its life (liturgy, art, architecture, music, etc.), and how we actually live in heaven through Christ even while we are on earth. *Rev. Kind is the pastor at University Lutheran Chapel in Minneapolis, MN and is also the Chaplain for this conference. He can be reached at Revkind@gmail.com.*

// Submit and Die: What I Wish I Could Tell My High School Self About Marriage

Eric & Kay Maiwald

What do you mean, I have to submit? And who's going to die? Did you know submission and death are part of marriage? Come see how we have survived almost 33 years of this gift. We've figured out a few things about marriage that we wish we had better understood when we were your age. How do we find the right spouse? How do we stay together when so many people don't? Join us to explore this mystery of Christ and the Church. *Eric and Kay Maiwald are members at St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hancock, MD. Eric is the Transportation Manager and Kay is the Housing Coordinator for this conference. You can reach them at kay@higherthings.org.*

// Forgiven, Armored, and Ready for War

Rev. Sean Kilgo

The Lord has, with His holy and precious blood, plundered us from the strong man's house, forgiving our sins, and promising eternal life. But for the time being, we still live in this life, under the assaults of the devil, the world, and our flesh. In mercy, the Lord clothes us in His armor, so that we would stand steadfast against these assaults and receive the victor's crown. Join Pastor Kilgo and dig into what this armor looks like and what it means to wear it as the Lord's forgiven people.

Rev. Kilgo is the pastor at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Lawrence, KS. He can be reached at kilgosr@gmail.com.

// Cruel Masters: Crime, Lust, Violence, and Drugs in St. Augustine's Confessions

Rev. Carl Roth

In his Confessions, Augustine confesses his guilt and former enslavement to certain sins, including theft and lust, before God. He also observes how his friends and family found themselves ensnared by other sins, including drunkenness and the enjoyment of violence. But then he describes his conversion to Christ and confesses his faith in God as his Redeemer and Sanctifier, the One who delivered full forgiveness of all of his sins and liberated him from the besetting sins that had formerly enslaved him. In this session, we will learn that temptations to certain types of sin are strong, yet the Gospel provides us not only pardon for our guilt but also power in our fight against the Old Adam.

Rev. Roth is the pastor at Grace Lutheran Church in Elgin, TX. He can be reached at pastor.roth@gmail.com.

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// “Jesus’ Parables: Encountering God...and ourselves”

Rev. Joseph Murphy

Everyone loves a good story. Stories are easy to remember and to pass on to others. Jesus often taught with stories called parables. Jesus’ parables teach us about the most important things in life: God, salvation, mercy, forgiveness, and eternal life. Come and examine some great parables. They are rich and deep with meaning and show us how we can apply the Christian faith to the circumstances of our everyday life.

Rev. Murphy is the pastor at Grace Lutheran Church in Parker, CO. He can be reached at pastormurphy@glcparker.org.

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Eric Maiwald

Not every Christian gets to work in a church. Most of us have to work in the secular world. This is where every commandment is broken each day, where envy runs rampant, and Sundays are not days of rest. How can you as a Christian live in such a world? With 34 years of experience in corporate environments, Eric has faced many challenges in living out his faith. He’ll tell stories about conversations, conflicts, and choices he’s had to make, and he wants to hear your experiences, too.

Eric Maiwald is a member at St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hancock, MD. He is also the Transportation Manager at this conference and can be reached at emaiwald@fred.net.

//Pandemics and Social Distance: Love Your Neighbor?

Rev. Michael Meyer

The last year has reminded us of the benefits of community, and the challenges of isolation. Yet in the midst of it all, one thing has remained constant: God’s love for you in Christ! How do we, in turn, show that love to others? What about those times when life throws us a curveball? In this breakaway, we’ll discuss the who, what, when, where, and how of showing God’s love and mercy, to those around us, whether we find ourselves walking through the valley of the shadow of death, or putting up tents with Peter, James, and John.

Rev. Meyer is the director of LCMS Disaster Training. He can be reached at michael.meyer@lcms.org

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// Youth Ministry 101

Crysten Sanchez

Thinking about putting together a youth program can seem daunting. Let's be honest, if you were asked to build something from scratch with immediate success, it WOULD be daunting! There are a lot of building blocks that go into a healthy, sustainable, safe youth program. Crysten Sanchez, former youth coordinator at a church in Iowa, will walk you through the many pieces of the puzzle to do just that!

Crysten Sanchez is the Events Executive for Higher Things and a member at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Mount Vernon, IA. She can be reached at csanchez@higherthings.org.

// The Cantor Conversation

Rev. Paul Soulek

The Lutheran church has always been a singing church - and the vocation of cantor (leader of the people's song) supports and encourages this living tradition! This breakaway will discuss the many ways in which the human voice, organ, and other instruments are used to sing the Christian faith in the life of the Church. Participants should bring their voice and a willingness to participate in singing together!

Paul Soulek is the Cantor at St. John Lutheran Church in Seward, NE. He's also the organist for this conference. He can be reached at paul.soulek@stjohnseward.org.

// Watermarked, now what?

Rev. Randy Sturzenbecher

Watered and Worded in Holy Baptism, now what? What comes after God makes us alive in Christ? Is it working to keep the Law? Is it being a better person? Is it (fill in whatever you think God wants from you)? God

gives Baptism and He keeps giving. He gives us Jesus. He gives us a life-changing reality: "You are forgiven!"

Join us to find out more about private confession, where you receive Jesus. Join us to see the joy in confessing all your hurt, your heartache, your stubborn, sinful, selfishness to Jesus and receiving those blood bought words, "You are forgiven!"

Rev. Sturzenbecher is the pastor at Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church in Black Hawk, SD. He also serves on the Higher Things Board of Directors and is the Catechist for this conference. He can be reached at dslcpastor@divineshep.org.

// Too Lutheran for the Holy Spirit

Rev. Jared Tucher

Lutherans get a bad rap for downplaying the role of the Holy Spirit or outright ignoring His work.

However, that is far from the truth. A brief study of the Third Article of the Creed in Luther's Small and Large Catechism shows us just how important His work is and the value that Luther (and all Lutherans) place upon the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit's work is indeed an important part in the plan of salvation. Let's be "un-Lutheran" and talk about the Holy Spirit!

Rev. Tucher is the pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church in Gillette, WY. He is also the Catechist for this conference and can be reached at revtucher@gmail.com.

// Is the Death Penalty Okay?

Rev. Dr. Jason Wagner

Can God allow for the death penalty and also encourage us to protect human life? In this session, we will look at what Scripture has to say about authority, the death penalty, mercy, and protecting human life. Ultimately, we will consider different viewpoints on the use of the death penalty in society today as we seek a biblically faithful way to think about the ultimate punishment in this world.

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Rev. Dr. Wagner is the pastor at Hope Lutheran in High Ridge, MO. He can be reached at pastorwagner@email.com.

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Session F

// Daily Life & Spiritual Warfare

Rev. Steve Andrews Jr.

Jesus teaches us that our lives should not look the same as the world around us. We are called to lose our lives for His sake and the gospel, to be a light to the world. And yet, our lives tend to look the same as an unbeliever. We have so many options to choose from in a buffet-styled world. So many ways to work, play, and serve. But what should the daily life of a Christian actually look like? Why are we here? What purpose could there be for your life? Our conversation may lead us to wrestle with various topics like comfort, persecution, spiritual warfare, loneliness, fear, and shame.

Rev. Andrews is the pastor at St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Lee's Summit, MO. He can be reached at andrews@gracefaithlove.org.

// Taking a Swim in the Epistles

Rev. Gerald Heinecke

There are so many people who question Baptism and its purposes. As you are well aware from the catechism, there are four parts on Baptism, each with its own Bible passage, but there are so many more passages that address Baptism. Why baptize? Who needs to be baptized? Who is doing the work? What does Baptism do? The Pauline epistles are ripe with baptismal imagery and language. In our limited time together we will give a quick survey of passages and explore as many of them as we can.

Rev. Heinecke is the pastor at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Buffalo, WY. He can be reached at pastor.heinecke@gmail.com.

// Are Public School Kids Going To hell?

Erica Jacoby

It's time to talk about your education in this breakaway, even if you don't attend a public school. What are they teaching teachers to teach these days and are students really learning how to learn? Are you being taught how to think or are you being taught what to think? Let's take a look at why your school and teachers are the way they are. The Bible and Luther, the chief teacher of our church, have lots to say about getting a good education, even— gasp!—in a public school.

Erica Jacoby is the Executive Director of Higher Things and a member at Summit of Peace Lutheran Church in Thornton, CO. She can be reached at erica@higherthings.org.

// Forgiven, Armored, and Ready for War

Rev. Sean Kilgo

The Lord has, with His holy and precious blood, plundered us from the strong man's house, forgiving our sins, and promising eternal life. But for the time being, we still live in this life, under the assaults of the devil, the world, and our flesh. In mercy, the Lord clothes us in His armor, so that we would stand steadfast against these assaults and receive the victor's crown. Join Pastor Kilgo and dig into what this armor looks like and what it means to wear it as the Lord's forgiven people.

Rev. Kilgo is the pastor at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Lawrence, KS. He can be reached at kilgosr@gmail.com.

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// The Heavenly Life

Rev. David Kind

Heaven breaks in upon earth in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus, who became incarnate for our salvation, comes to us now, too, to bring us that salvation in the Divine Service. This sectional will explore how the Church reflects the heavenly reality in its life (liturgy, art, architecture, music, etc.), and how we actually live in heaven through Christ even while we are on earth. *Rev. Kind is the pastor at University Lutheran Chapel in Minneapolis, MN and is also the Chaplain for this conference. He can be reached at Revkind@gmail.com.*

// Submit and Die: What I Wish I Could Tell My High School Self About Marriage

Eric & Kay Maiwald

What do you mean, I have to submit? And who's going to die? Did you know submission and death are part of marriage? Come see how we have survived almost 33 years of this gift. We've figured out a few things about marriage that we wish we had better understood when we were your age. How do we find the right spouse? How do we stay together when so many people don't? Join us to explore this mystery of Christ and the Church. *Eric and Kay Maiwald are members at St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hancock, MD. Eric is the Transportation Manager and Kay is the Housing Coordinator for this conference. You can reach them at kay@higherthings.org.*

// "Jesus' Parables: Encountering God...and ourselves"

Rev. Joseph Murphy

Everyone loves a good story. Stories are easy to remember and to pass on to others. Jesus often taught with stories called parables. Jesus' parables teach us

about the most important things in life: God, salvation, mercy, forgiveness, and eternal life. Come and examine some great parables. They are rich and deep with meaning and show us how we can apply the Christian faith to the circumstances of our everyday life.

Rev. Murphy is the pastor at Grace Lutheran Church in Parker, CO. He can be reached at pastormurphy@glcparker.org.

// Cruel Masters: Crime, Lust, Violence, and Drugs in St. Augustine's Confessions

Rev. Carl Roth

In his Confessions, Augustine confesses his guilt and former enslavement to certain sins, including theft and lust, before God. He also observes how his friends and family found themselves ensnared by other sins, including drunkenness and the enjoyment of violence. But then he describes his conversion to Christ and confesses his faith in God as his Redeemer and Sanctifier, the One who delivered full forgiveness of all of his sins and liberated him from the besetting sins that had formerly enslaved him. In this session, we will learn that temptations to certain types of sin are strong, yet the Gospel provides us not only pardon for our guilt but also power in our fight against the Old Adam.

Rev. Roth is the pastor at Grace Lutheran Church in Elgin, TX. He can be reached at pastor.roth@gmail.com.

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