

2025-2026 LIFEU

LIVING IN FAITH EVERYDAY

**PREMIER
ADULT
EDUCATION
WEDNESDAY
NIGHTS**

DINNER
4:45-6:15pm

LIFE Talks
6:30pm

LIFE Groups
7:25pm



ST. ANDREW'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Welcome to LIFEU!

Our premier adult education ministry includes inspiring weekly LIFE Talks and small group connections through LIFE Groups. The goal of LIFEU is to inspire you to “Live In Faith Everyday” (LIFE).

“Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord.”

2 PETER 3:18

This year we seek to explore the many ways we can GROW at St. Andrew's—grow in faith, grow in love, grow in wisdom, grow in understanding. Let's expand our hearts and minds and find inspiration from those who know what it takes to GROW!

LIFE TALKS

October 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 • BIBLE & THEOLOGY—WHY IT MATTERS

November 5, 12 & 19 • FAITH & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

January 7, 14, 21 & 28 • CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS OF BELIEF

February 4 & 11 • UNDERSTANDING ATONEMENT

April 8, 15, 22 & 29 • SHALOM—WHOLENESS, PEACE, WELLNESS

LIFE GROUPS

LIFE Groups, led by a trained facilitator, are built around our weekly Wednesday LIFE Talks. They provide opportunities to dive deeper into the topic. LIFE Groups connect you with one another and to our greater church family as you engage in meaningful conversations, share, and pray together.

Most LIFE Groups meet Wednesday evenings immediately following LIFE Talks, though other options are available. **To join a LIFE Group**, register online or contact Sue Lennartson at slennartson@saintandrews.org.

For more information,
visit saintandrews.org/LIFEU or

contact Cheryl Peterson-Schurke at 651.762.9105
or cpeterson-schurke@saintandrews.org.





October

BIBLE & THEOLOGY—WHY IT MATTERS

October 1

Lutherans, Catholics & The Human Condition

REV. MICHAEL CARLSON & REV. WINSTON D. PERSAUD

This month, let's plum the depths of biblical and inter-religious dialogue with Bible scholars who will help answer important questions of faith. Take an inspirational look at our topic with our Lead Pastor and one of his mentors!

October 8

Hiding Behind Locked Doors—Finding Peace & Facing Fears

DR. MAY BURT PERSAUD

In John 20, Jesus passes through the locked door where the disciples are hiding. How does this resurrection act draw together God's work in Christ Jesus through the Holy Spirit for the disciples then, and for us, today?

October 15

Faith & Works—What Do They Have to Do with Each Other?

REV. WINSTON D. PERSAUD

Dive deep into the Doctrine of Justification, which was signed by the Lutheran World Federation and The Roman Catholic Church on October 31, 1999.

October 22

Hiding From God

DR. MAY BURT PERSAUD

This study is a continuation from October 8. May will guide the conversation to connect the dots between John 20 and Genesis 2-3. Revisit the scriptures about the disciples' attempts to hide from God and hear how the Holy Spirit draws us closer to God.

October 29

Why is Justification Such a BIG Deal?

REV. WINSTON D. PERSAUD

In such a time as this, how does the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification help us to live into the reality of Jesus' prayer (John 17) for the unity of the church? Be reminded what Jesus Christ brings to a world in need of healing and wholeness.

About Our October Presenters



REV. MICHAEL CARLSON has been St. Andrew's Lead Pastor since 2014. He attended the University of Minnesota and completed a MDiv at Wartburg Theological Seminary. Prior to St. Andrew's, he served several congregations in northern Minnesota and the Twin Cities as a youth minister and pastor.



REV. WINSTON D. PERSAUD is Professor Emeritus of Systematic Theology at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa. A native of Guyana, he served his home congregation, Redeemer Lutheran Church, prior to joining the Wartburg faculty, in February 1984. His teaching and research are focused on defining and confessing the gospel of Jesus Christ in a world of religious and non-religious alternatives. He is married to May Burt Persaud.



DR. MAY BURT PERSAUD, is the Instructor Emerita in Biblical Languages (Biblical Hebrew & New Testament Greek) at Wartburg Theological Seminary, where she taught for 39 years, as well as having served as an Adjunct Instructor at the University of Dubuque and the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary. The daughter of a Presbyterian pastor, May is married to Winston Persaud.

November 5

Serving God & Country

MATT LANGER, KEVIN GERDES & JOHN MORRIS

Engage with leaders from the fields of policing and military as they share insights about being people of faith in these fields, and the role of the Chaplain in organizations where members are facing life and death scenarios.

November 12

How Religious Liberty Fuels Justice for All

DR. LAURA KITTLE

Throughout history, the church has been a powerful moral force—at times a light in the darkness, and at others, complicit in injustice. How can we ensure our faith communities remain on the side of justice, compassion, and human dignity? Explore the responsibility of the church to defend truth, promote justice, and participate in building a society where all can grow.

November 19

Sumud—Faithful Steadfastness Under Occupation

REV. KHADER KHALILIA

Explore the meaning of sumud, an Arabic word that embodies the spirit of resilience, dignity and hope among Palestinians living under occupation. Through personal story, theological reflection and lived experience, hear how faith empowers people to endure injustice without surrendering their humanity.

About Our November Presenters



MATT LANGER fulfilled the dream of serving as a State Trooper—a job he had for 25 years. He currently serves as Director of Global Policing for the International Association of Chiefs of Police. He enjoys being engaged in various boards, teaching part-time, and is very proud of the six years he spent on the church council at St. Andrew's, a place his family calls home.



KEVIN GERDES served 33 years with the Minnesota National Guard, culminating his career as Brigadier General for the 34th "Red Bull" Division. In 2012, he retired from the military, earned his doctorate, and served as the Director of the master's program at the Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs until 2023.



JOHN MORRIS grew up in the Air Force, served in the Army for 31 years and went to war three times. John and his wife, Kathy, have three daughters and six grandchildren. Two of his daughters are military veterans and two of his sons-in-law are currently serving in the military. He served with Colonel Matt Langer as the senior chaplain for the Minnesota State Patrol for five years.



DR. LAURA KITTLE came to St. Andrew's after living in Australia for 14 years. She taught ethics and social justice at the University of Notre Dame (Australia), and business ethics at Curtin University. She earned her doctorate in the field of philosophy, specializing in human rights. Laura has also presented her work at the United Nations in New York.



REV. KHADER KHALILIA is a Palestinian American Lutheran pastor from Brooklyn, NY, raised in the Greek Orthodox tradition. He now serves Redeemer-St. John's Lutheran Church and is the Program Director of Arab and Middle Eastern Ministries in the ELCA. He is active in ecumenical and interfaith work and regularly leads solidarity trips to the Holy Land. He proudly calls Brooklyn home.



January

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS OF BELIEF

January 7

Faith & Music—An Intimate Relationship
DR. RENÉ CLAUSEN

January 14

**Connecting with God in Nature—
 Capturing Creation in the Middle of the Night**
JUDD SATHER

January 21

Dance Like Nobody's Watching!
LAUREN MARTIN & MIKAYLA HOLMGREN

January 28

Passion Projects—Making a Difference
LEIGH ANDERSON

About Our January Presenters



DR. RENÉ CLAUSEN is Emeritus Conductor of The Concordia Choir, and known nationally and internationally as a premier conductor and composer. During his tenure at Concordia College in Moorehead, Clausen developed a choir that blends rich aesthetic expression, tonal refinement, and technical skill, serving as a model for choirs throughout the country. He has also been the Artistic Director of the ©Emmy awarded (twice!) Concordia Christmas Concert.



JUDD SATHER chases galaxies by night and builds unforgettable gatherings by day. As the force behind Stillwater's Loft 214 and JX Venue, he turns celebrations into living stories. With a camera in hand, Judd has trekked from Death Valley's sailing stones to New Zealand's glowworm caves, always chasing the perfect frame where starlight and earth light collide. Through photography, he loves to remind people they're part of something bigger, brighter, and a little bit magical.




LAUREN MARTIN is a dance educator and studio owner of Inspiration Performing Arts Center and has over two decades of experience nurturing dancers of all ages. Known for her creative leadership and commitment to character development through the arts, she blends technical excellence with heart and life lessons. Lauren specializes in curriculum design, performance preparation, and building strong, inclusive dance and music communities that empower students both on and off the stage.



MIKAYLA HOLMGREN is the first woman with Down Syndrome to compete in any Miss USA state pageant. She loves to inspire others through her dancing, modeling, and speaking. Mikayla has won the Miss Congeniality Award, the Spirit of Miss USA Award, and the Directors Award. Her dance career originated at Lauren Martin's studio. Follow her on Instagram [@mikholmgren_inspiring_others](https://www.instagram.com/mikholmgren_inspiring_others)



LEIGH ANDERSON is an educator at Willow Lane Elementary in White Bear Lake. Her passion is grounded in breaking the cycle of poverty. She has co-authored three books dealing with best practice in education and has presented both nationally and internationally. Her fourth book titled *Culturally Responsive Physical Education: Lifelong Wellness by Promoting Diversity, Community and Belonging* is scheduled to be released in Spring 2026.



February

UNDERSTANDING ATONEMENT

February 4 & 11

Why Did Jesus Have to Die?

DR. PHIL ANDERSON & REV. MICHAEL CARLSON

The Christian faith is rooted in a common affirmation of the atoning work of Christ on the Cross—his suffering, death, and resurrection. Christians through the ages, however, have had, and continue to have, different interpretations of this core belief, with implications for the Gospel's proclamation in words and action. Note: Pastor Mike will continue teaching on this topic solo on February 11.

About Our February Presenters



DR. PHIL ANDERSON is a retired professor of church history and historical theology at North Park Theological Seminary in Chicago, where he taught from 1979 to 2013. His research and writing include a primary focus on the religious dimensions of immigration and ethnicity. An ordained pastor in the Evangelical Covenant Church, he's a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Hovland, Minnesota.



REV. MICHAEL CARLSON has been St. Andrew's Lead Pastor since 2014. He attended the University of Minnesota and completed a MDiv at Wartburg Theological Seminary. Prior to St. Andrew's, he served several congregations in northern Minnesota and the Twin Cities as a youth minister and pastor.



April 8

Beyond the Yellow Arrows—Camino Lessons for Life

REV. BRIAN NORSMAN

Drawing from his Summer 2025 sabbatical walking along the Camino de Santiago in Spain, Pastor Brian Norsman will take you on a pilgrim's journey and share five spiritual insights, including The Camino Within, Sacred Companionship, and The Art of Traveling Light. Through spiritual practices and contemplative photography, participants will learn to notice God's presence and walk their own inner pilgrimage—wherever they are.

April 15

Every Soul Has a Sound—Becoming Whole in the Key of You

REV. DEDRA HERRON-SLACK

Rooted in Howard Thurman's wisdom, this LIFE Talk invites you to listen for the sound of the genuine—your soul's unique rhythm—and embrace wholeness as a sacred unfolding in tune with the divine melody within.

April 22

A Mysticism of Place—Prairie Spirituality

DR. TRISH ZIMMERMAN

Our environments, like the Midwestern prairies, are themselves places of transforming spiritual practice. We will explore how to cultivate living encounters with the Holy within our natural habitats.

April 29

Parenting After the Nest is Emptied

DR. JACK STOLTZFUS

Parenting doesn't stop when our kids reach 18 or 21 or even when they leave home. Parents face new challenges—midlife crisis, empty nest syndrome, sandwich demands, in-laws, grand parenting, how much to try to influence, financial support, etc. Dr. Jack will discuss these challenges and explore helpful ideas in this last stage of parenting.

About Our April Presenters



REV. BRIAN NORSMAN After eight years pastoring a church in Milwaukee, Brian was called to St. Andrew's in 2009 to be Pastor of Children, Youth & Family. Brian is currently leads the Pastoral Care & Spiritual Formation team. He earned his B.A. in Economics & Spanish from St. Olaf College, and his MDiv from Wartburg Theological Seminary. Before going to seminary at age 30, Brian was in the banking and investment world and owned a Scandinavian Tour Company specializing in heritage travel, pilgrimages, and adventures.



REV. DEDRA HERRON-SLACK is a midwife for the soul—an ordained minister, spiritual director, executive leader, and sacred presence in beloved communities. Rooted in Black womanist wisdom, she curates spaces of rest, ritual, and renewal. Through Soul Sabbath Spiritual Wellness, she births healing and wholeness—offering grace-filled guidance that honors the Divine within us all. Her calling is clear: to lead with presence, power, and prophetic love.



DR. TRISH ZIMMERMAN lives and loves on the Minnesota prairie. She teaches in Religion and Environmental Conversations at St. Olaf College. Nourished by decades of studying Christian mystical texts, she draws rescue wisdom from our natural world. Her current book is *A Mysticism of Place*.



DR. JACK STOLTZFUS is a clinical psychologist and America's Launch Coach.™ His mission is to help parents launch young adults to be self-sufficient and responsible, yet maintain a caring bond with their parents. He counsels parents and writes about young adult challenges, his current role as a parent of adult children, and his experience working with parents struggling to balance love and backbone while letting go. He's the author of two books: *Growing Apart: Letting Go of Our Adult Children*, and *The Parent's Launch Code: Loving and Letting Go of Our Adult Children*.



Notes



Wednesday Nights

ADULT EDUCATION & WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

All events start at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary Fellowship Hall
(unless otherwise noted)

September 10, 17 & 24 • Volunteer Training Sessions

October 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 • LIFEU: Bible & Theology

November 5, 12 & 19 • LIFEU: Faith & Civic Engagement

November 26 • Thanksgiving Eve Worship (7pm, Sanctuary)

December • Watch for Advent Events!

January 7, 14, 21 & 28 • LIFEU: Creative Expressions of Belief

February 4 & 11 • LIFEU: Understanding Atonement

February 18 • Ash Wednesday Worship (6:30pm, Sanctuary)

February 25, March 4, 11, 18, 25 & April 1 • Lenten Worship
(6:30pm, Sanctuary)

April 8, 15, 22 & 29 • LIFEU: Shalom—Wholeness, Peace, Wellness

LIFE GROUPS

Start October 1

7:25-8:15pm

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNER

September 10 through May 13

Served 4:45-6:15pm

Sanctuary Fellowship Hall

A delicious house-made meal open to everyone! For those heading to kids and adult choir rehearsals, Confirmation, and LIFEU... and anyone else looking for a break from cooking. Dinner is “pay-as-you’re-able.”



ST. ANDREW'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

900 Stillwater Road • Mahtomedi, MN 55115
saintandrews.org
651.426.3261

