ELDER WORKSHOP

JANUARY 16
ST. JOHN'S, RED BUD

JANUARY 30
TRINITY, EDWARDSVILLE

Click below for descriptions of the sessions. Registration and additional information can be found online at sidlcms.org/events.

Keynote Address

"The Lay Elder in the Lutheran Church" by President Curtis

Session Descriptions

Session 1 "Pastors and Elders Working Together to Form Stewards" by Rev. Dr. Wayne Knolhoff

Session 2 "Leadership – Vitality – Wellness" by Rev. Jonathan & Deac. Dr. Tiffany Manor

Session 3 "Sheep Judge their Shepherds" by Rev. Benjamin Ball

Session 4 "Right-sizing Church Leadership for the Size of the Congregation" by Rev. Dr. David Peter

Session 5 "The Elder in Worship" by President Curtis

Session 6 "Close(d) Communion: Pastor and Elders as a Team" by Rev. Timothy Sims

Session 7 *(for January 16)* "Spiritual Care Skills" by Rev. Dr. David Schultz

Session 7 *(for January 30)* "Worship Whys and Wherefores" by Rev. Will Weedon

Session 8 "How to Shepherd the Lost Sheep (Saving Inactive Members)" by Rev. Michael Walther

Schedule of the Day

8:00am	Registration
8:30am	Matins
9:15 am	Keynote Address
10:15am	Breakout A
11:15am	Breakout B
12:00pm	Meal Break
1:00pm	Breakout C
2:00pm	Closing Devotion

Keynote Address: "The Lay Elder in the Lutheran Church"

Your congregation has entrusted you with a task that is vital to the Church and her Ministry. President Curtis will explore the history, duties, challenges, joys, expectations, and best practices of being part of a very special band of brothers: elders in a Confessional Lutheran congregation.

Rev. Heath Curtis serves as the District President for Southern Illinois since being elected in 2025. He has served the church for many years, including as the Coordinator for Stewardship at Synod (2013-2025) and in suburban and rural churches. President Curtis has translated many works and published many books which most recently include *Five Things You Can Do to Live a Jesus-Centered Life* (CPH); *Stewardship Under the Cross: Stewardship for Confessional Lutheran Parishes* (lcms.org/stewardship); *Stewardship for the Care of Souls* (Lexham Press with co-author Nathan Meador); *Telling People What to Think: A Concise Homiletics for Lutheran Parish Pastors* (amazon.com); and *The Small Town Lutheran Church and Pastor* (amazon.com). He and his wife Rebekah have been blessed with eight children.

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Session 1 "Pastors and Elders Working Together to Form Stewards"

Many congregations connect stewardship primarily with money. Biblical stewardship concerns all of life. This session will help pastors and elders focus on teaching Biblical stewardship adaptively to assist in raising stewards in the congregation, not just raising money. A variety of resources and helps will be shared to assist leaders in this process.

Rev. Dr. Wayne Knolhoff has served the church as a Lutheran teacher and pastor and has experience working with stewardship and missions in the Iowa District East and the Missouri District of the LCMS. In addition, he served as the Director of Stewardship for the LCMS and as the Placement Director at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. He currently lives in Ballwin, Missouri with his wife Joyce.

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Session 2 "Leadership – Vitality – Wellness"

Join this interactive session to explore and discuss how to become an effective leader who enhances the life and well-being of your congregation. Topics will include Christ-centered decision-making, conflict resolution, and building trust among members and staff as we identify ways to intentionally develop a caring environment among pastors, church workers, and members. Gain insights from experienced lay volunteers and church staff leaders, Jonathan and Tiffany Manor, who now serve as leaders in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's Worker Wellness efforts.

Deaconess Dr. Tiffany Manor serves as the Managing Director of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod's Office of National Mission leading Life & Health Ministry, Worker Wellness and other Mercy departments. After a first career in marketing, she received an M.A. from Concordia Theological Seminary and earned a doctorate from Bethel University. She is married to Rev. Jonathan Manor; they have four children and four grandchildren.

Rev. Jonathan Manor serves as Director of PALS and Continuing Education in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod's Office of Pastoral Education. After a first career in business administration, he received his M.Div. from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and served as a parish pastor for 18 years prior to his current position. He is married to Deac. Dr. Tiffany Manor; they have four children and four grandchildren. *Return to Session List*

Session 3 "Sheep Judge their Shepherds"

Our Lord Jesus teaches us to "Beware of false prophets" (Matthew 7:15-23). The elders of our congregations must be men who know and believe the doctrine of the Lutheran Church. We will examine the Scriptural responsibilities of laymen who lead our congregations, using as a guide C.F.W. Walther's 1842 sermon on Matthew 7:15-23. This session will help pastors and elders serve according to Christ's good and gracious will for His Church, and clarify the chief duties of men who serve as elders in our LCMS congregations.

Rev. Benjamin Ball serves as Senior Pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church and School in Hamel where he was called in 2012. He is the 2nd vice-president of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod representing the Central region, and was first elected as a vice-president in 2019. He has also served as the second vice-president of the Southern Illinois District (2018–2019), several terms as a circuit visitor in both the Northern Illinois and Southern Illinois districts, and currently serves on the Board of Regents of Concordia University, Nebraska. He is married to Serena, and they have been blessed with five children; Sophia (21) who attends Concordia University, Nebraska, Alethea (18) who attends Concordia University, Chicago, Elijah (16) who attends Metro-East Lutheran High School, Irene (14) and Zoe (5), who attend St. Paul, Hamel. *Return to Session List*

Session 4 "Right-sizing Church Leadership for the Size of the Congregation"

God uses different sizes of congregations—small, midsize, large. The social dynamics of these size cultures require different approaches to both pastoral and lay leadership. This workshop will guide you to lead the size of your church effectively and to maximize its possibilities for ministry and mission.

Rev. Dr. David Peter is Professor of Practical Theology and Dean of Faculty at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, where he has served for almost three decades. He has pastored churches in Peoria, Illinois, and St. James, Missouri. He resides in Kirkwood, Missouri, with his wife Tonya. *Return to Session List*

Session 5 "The Elder in Worship"

The elder has a special role to play in the worship life of the church. This breakout will cover everything an elder might be asked to do on Sunday morning (and what he should not be asked to do) in a very practical manner: greeting people, assisting with the implementation of communion fellowship, demonstrating engaged worship in the pew, acting as usher, assisting with the liturgy and communion distribution, and even leading an entire prayer service when the pastor is absent due to illness, emergency, or long-term vacancy.

Rev. Heath Curtis serves as the District President for Southern Illinois since being elected in 2025. He has served the church for many years, including as the Coordinator for Stewardship at Synod (2013-2025) and in suburban and rural churches. President Curtis has translated many works and published many books which

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Session 6 "Close(d) Communion: Pastor and Elders as a Team"

Close(d) Communion is the faithful and loving practice of Christ's Church. Sometimes being faithful and loving is difficult. That's where "practice" comes into play. This session will *not* be an "I've got everything figured out!" presentation from a know-it-all pastor. Instead, it will explore ways that pastors and elders can work together in this difficult, yet faithful and loving practice for the sake of God's people.

Rev. Timothy Sims In twenty years in the pastoral ministry, Pastor Sims has served Oklahoma Ave. Lutheran Church in Milwaukee, WI and St. John Lutheran Church & School in Chester, IL. He has also been involved with multicultural ministry, served as a Circuit Visitor, and trained and served as a District Reconciler. He and his family love the rural, small-town life in southern Illinois. He and his wife Keri are "near-empty nesters" with three sons. *Return to Session List*

Session 7 *(for January 16)* "Spiritual Care Skills"

In this workshop, participants will learn skills of active listening, ways to share scripture, engage in offering prayer, and best approaches on how elders can provide follow up with their members.

Rev. Dr. David Schultz has served as a pastor for 11 years and currently serves at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Wood River, Illinois. He also serves the Southern Illinois District as chairman of the Board of Missions. He earned his Doctor of Ministry degree from Concordia Seminary St. Louis, in 2021, focusing on equipping lay elders with spiritual care skills. David and his wife, Jenna, are blessed with six children: Leah, Luke, Hannah, Silas, Rachel, and Peter. *Return to Session List*

Session 7 *(for January 30)* "Worship Whys and Wherefores"

A brief workshop on the rationale behind Lutheran worship (liturgy and hymnody): We'll see how it is a prayed version of our Lutheran confession of the faith; how it is designed from start to finish to confess that faith; how it aims at the consolation and healing of consciences; and how it offers us in this world already the joys of the age that is to come at the glorious Appearing of Jesus.

Rev. William Weedon serves as an assistant pastor at St. Paul Lutheran Church, a catechist for Lutheran Public Radio, and is the former Chaplain and Director of Worship for the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. He is author of several books, including *Thank, Praise, Serve, and Obey* and *See My Savior's Hands*. He and his wife Cindi have been blessed with three children and fifteen grandchildren. *Return to Session List*

Session 8 "How to Shepherd the Lost Sheep (Saving Inactive Members)"

Five pastoral visits and five phone calls on a Sunday afternoon each week can dramatically keep people from falling away from Christ. This will increase worship attendance and giving. This will bless your congregation and help you be a better shepherd. But how do you get this work going and keep it going? Come find out!

Rev. Michael Walther has served in ministry for forty years in small parishes, campus ministry, and in a large parish. In all these settings he has focused on preaching, teaching, visitation, and administration. At first, inactive ministry was more about good intentions than actual results. But with an – *I just have to do this* – spirit, along with prayer and a lot of trial and error, everything changed. The first thing he asks for when helping any church is their inactive list.

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