

Synod School 2024



# More Than We Can Imagine

**July 21-26, 2024**

**Buena Vista University  
Storm Lake, Iowa**

# Table of Contents

	<b>Page</b>
Synod School Purpose and Theme . . . . .	1
The Synod School Community Covenant . . . . .	2
Synod School Schedule. . . . .	3
Convocation Speakers. . . . .	5
Worship Leaders . . . . .	6
Artist in Residence. . . . .	6
Worship and Spiritual Formation . . . . .	7
Synod School in Mission . . . . .	8
Afternoon Activities. . . . .	8
Evening Activities . . . . .	9
Children and Youth Programming . . . . .	10
Online Registration. . . . .	15
Accommodations . . . . .	16
Fees. . . . .	20
Scholarship Information . . . . .	22
Registration for Adults . . . . .	23
Course Descriptions . . . . .	24
All Morning Classes . . . . .	24
Adult Classes AM 1. . . . .	26
Adult Classes AM 2. . . . .	32
All Afternoon . . . . .	40
Adult/HS Classes PM 1. . . . .	41
Adult/HS Classes PM 2. . . . .	47
Registration Form for Adults . . . . .	54
Registration Form and Health Information	
for Children and Youth . . . . .	55
Staff and Committee. . . . .	57

# What is Synod School?



Synod School is a learning and personal enrichment experience for people of all ages. We seek to create an environment of hospitality, healing, and hope. The week is designed for laity, clergy, individuals and families with classes and activities for adults, youth, and children.

2024 is the 70th year of Synod School in Iowa. We have many great events planned for this week! People will come from all over the country with their friends and families to share in this week of worship, study, play, and life together. It is an opportunity to learn something new, to continue conversations begun by keynote speakers with others over meals or a board game, to share talents of creativity and music, to worship without being in charge, to be energized for service, and to enjoy not having to cook for a week.

## 2024 Synod School Theme: More Than We Can Imagine

*Now to God who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to the power that is at work within us, to God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*

Eph. 3-20-21

The group that gathered to plan for the first Synod School event seventy years ago could not have imagined what brings us to Synod School in 2024. It has become more than they could have imagined! Multi-generation families, tie dye, more classes proposed than we have room for, “the best week of the entire year”...

As we look to the future of the Church, what will it look like? What innovations are already happening? What is yet to come? As we think about the lives of the young people in our lives, what will their futures be? What innovations will renew their lives and ministries? God is already doing things we cannot even imagine. What difference can that make in our lives and ministries?

## For additional information contact

### Deb DeMeester

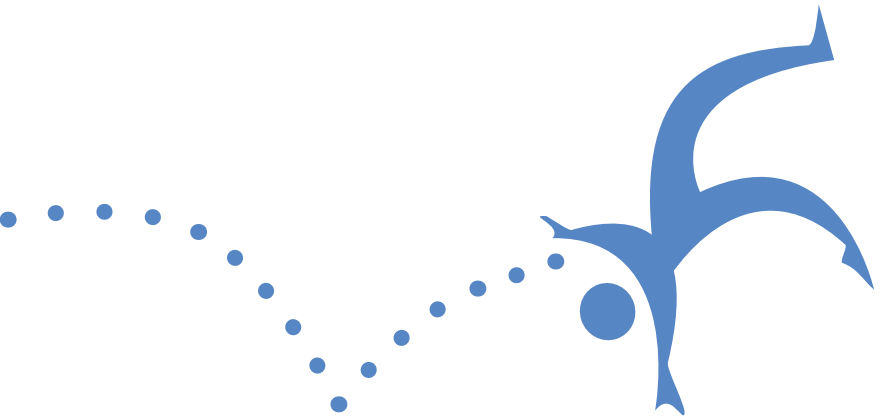
Director of Leadership  
Development  
Synod of Lakes and Prairies  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
2115 Cliff Drive  
Eagan, MN 55122-3327

ddemeester@lakesandprairies.org  
www.lakesandprairies.org  
Facebook Group: "Synod School:  
Is this heaven? No, it's Iowa!"

Synod School is a leadership development ministry of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

# The Synod School Community Covenant

At Synod School we seek to live in a strong, caring, and responsible community—a place where we treat everyone like extended family members and live with compassion toward each other and the BVU staff. We will work together to create an environment of hospitality, healing, and hope for all participants. We commit ourselves to being good stewards of the environment, our resources, and campus property. We will seek and honor God's presence in each person.



# Synod School Schedule

## Saturday

3:00 p.m.

Early Registration begins

## Sunday

1:30 p.m.

Registration begins

4:15-4:45 p.m.

Faculty Orientation Meetings

4:45-6:30 p.m.

Dinner in Siebens Forum

6:00-6:45 p.m.

Open House for Children and Youth Programs

6:45-7:00 p.m.

Gathering with Music in Schaller Memorial Chapel

7:00-7:45 p.m.

Opening Worship

7:45-8:00 p.m.

Welcome and Orientation

8:00 p.m.

Fellowship and Hospitality on the lawn and a campus tour (First Timers encouraged)

10:00 p.m.

Quiet Time in Dorms

11:00 p.m.

Curfew

## Monday-Thursday

6:30-8:00 a.m.

Breakfast

8:05 a.m.

*Drop Off begins for children infants through K (Dixon Eilers)*

8:15 a.m.

A Song and a Prayer

8:25 a.m.

Elementary children and youth released to classes

8:25 a.m.

Announcements

8:30-9:15 a.m.

Adult Convocation in Schaller Memorial Chapel

9:30-10:30 a.m.

Morning AM 1 Classes

10:45-11:45 a.m.

Morning AM 2 Classes

11:50 a.m.

*Pick up children from Dixon Eilers*

11:45-1:30 p.m.

Lunch

1:00-2:00 p.m.

Free Time/Art Share/Quiet Time in Dorms

2:05 p.m.

*Drop Off begins for children*

2:15-3:30 p.m.

Afternoon PM 1 Classes

3:45-5:00 p.m.

Afternoon PM 2 Classes

5:05 p.m.

*Pick up children from Dixon Eilers*

5:00-6:30 p.m.	Dinner
6:40 p.m.	Announcements in Schaller Memorial Chapel
6:45-7:30 p.m.	Evening Worship
7:45 p.m.	Evening Activities
10:00 p.m.	Quiet Time in Dorms
11:00 p.m.	Curfew

## Friday (NEW Schedule)

7:00-8:45 a.m.	Breakfast
8:00-9:00 a.m.	Packing Time—out of rooms by 10:00 a.m.
8:50 a.m.	<i>Drop Off begins for children infants through K (Dixon Eilers)</i>
9:00 a.m.	A Song and a Prayer
9:10 a.m.	Elementary children and youth released to classes
	Announcements
9:15 a.m.	Convocation (30 minutes)
9:55-10:45 a.m.	Morning AM 1 Classes
10:55-11:45 a.m.	Morning AM 2 Classes
11:50 a.m.	<i>Pick up children from Dixon Eilers</i>
12:00-12:30 p.m.	Closing Worship Celebration of Future—featuring ritual for children and youth
12:30-1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:30 p.m.	Off campus and on the way home!



# Convocation Speakers

**Dr. Corey Schlosser-Hall** serves as the Deputy Executive Director of Vision, Innovation & Rebuilding for the Presbyterian Church (USA). “Reinventing ministry for the common good, kin-dom of God” is how Corey thinks about his vocation. He hosts a podcast, “On the Verge,” a series of conversations with people who take great ideas and turn them into something real! Prior to beginning as Deputy Executive for Vision, Innovation and Rebuilding with PMA, he served as Executive Presbyter (EP) for Presbytery of the Northwest Coast from 2006-January 2022. A Ruling Elder, Corey grew up in the Dakotas and graduated from the University of Oregon. He earned a Ph.D. in Organizational Communication from the University of Minnesota and is an ICF credentialed leadership coach. Corey and his spouse, Adrienne, are parents of two daughters: Maya Ruth (23) and Hannah Rose (19). Corey likes to do anything with his wife and daughters, engage in CrossFit, and listen to good music.



**Rev. Brendan McLean** will lead the Youth Convocation. Originally born and raised in the Midwest, Brendan has been a Texan for more than six years, serving currently as the associate pastor at First Presbyterian Church of Tyler, Texas. He has served in ministry in a variety of ways—working in an internship as a hospice chaplain in Austin, leading worship for migrant teen boys in Dallas, coordinating small groups for the Youth Celebration conference at Mo-Ranch, and serving as a spiritual advisor for summer camp at Gilmont Camp and Conference Center to name some. His undergraduate degrees in comparative religion and music show that Brendan is a man of many interests: glass blowing, acrylic painting, hiking, kayaking, reading, music, movies, museums, good food, exploring new places, and spending time with his loved ones (including his partner, Kala, and their dog, Arowyn). Many who know him and love him would describe him as “essentially a golden retriever.”

# Worship Leaders

.....  
**Evening worship** will be led by a different team of people each evening. Our preachers for our 70th anniversary will be:

- **Elona Street-Stewart**, Synod Executive
- **Scott Prouty**, Pastor, Redwood Falls, MN
- **Sarah Dickinson**, Pastor, Omaha, NE
- **Andrew Davis**, Pastor, St. Peter, MN
- **Katie Styr**, Pastor, Milan, IL and
- **Brendan McLean**, Youth Convocation Leader, Associate Pastor, Tyler, TX.

**Morning Song and a Prayer** will be led once again

by the **Rev. Dr. Matt Sauer**, Pastor of Manitowoc Cooperative Ministry and innovative ministry between First Presbyterian Church and Peace United Church of Christ in Manitowoc, WI. Matt is a community builder bringing Gospel Justice to work in Manitowoc. He is a graduate of Lake Forest College, Union Presbyterian Seminary, Presbyterian School of Christian Education, and McCormick Theological Seminary. Married to Meredith, they have two children, Olivia and Josh, who have grown up at Synod School.



## Artist in Residence



**Jan Davison** has had a passion for art as long as she can remember. In college she studied graphic design and journalism, and spent her junior year studying art in Florence, Italy. During her working career, Jan was a freelance graphic artist for 25 years and then served as director of communications at her church, Westminster Presbyterian in Des Moines, until retirement. She also was a volunteer art instructor at the Iowa Correctional Institution for

Women. Jan enjoys drawing, painting, and writing poetry, and loves to express her faith through these creative endeavors. She serves on Westminster's Visual Arts Committee, curating art exhibits in the church's gallery and Sanctuary. Along with her daughter, Erin Davison-Rippey, she also coordinates the Synod School Spirituality Center. Jan is creating a series of seven paintings designed especially for Synod



School. The theme for the series is “Gifts from God: More Than We Can Imagine.” Each painting represents a particular gift from God: Love, Peace, Justice, Hope, Wisdom, Forgiveness and Grace. The seven 20” x 20” works reflect various painting styles, from abstract to realistic. Each of the themes will be supported by a Scripture reference, plus a short commentary on the painting. This series, along with other works by Jan, will be on display in Siebens Forum near the fireplace.

## Worship and Spiritual Formation



Whether you’re a first timer or longtime attendee, Synod School is an exceptional experience, especially because of the many opportunities it offers for enriching worship and nurturing spiritual practices. Every class or activity offered during the week enriches our faith lives. Some classes and experiences are included especially because they invite us to worship and engage God in ways that may be new to us. All worship experiences are planned to be intergenerational.

### Morning Song and Prayer

A time of song and prayer to start our day together.

### Evening Worship

The community gathers for worship each evening after dinner. Other activities are not scheduled during this time so that everyone may participate. Children and youth are encouraged to attend worship, and everyone will be invited to participate in a variety of ways. Communion will be celebrated on Thursday evening. A special offering for the Synod School Scholarship Fund will be received during worship on Wednesday.

### Spiritual Direction

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to meet with a spiritual director? Would you like some help in weaving together your Synod School experience so that you can discern what the Spirit might be trying to communicate to you during this week? Experienced spiritual directors will be offering free spiritual direction to Synod School participants in an atmosphere of prayer to help you become more aware of and responsive

to the presence of God in your life. Participants may sign up for individual spiritual direction sessions throughout the week at the Synod School office.

## Personal Spiritual Reflection

Visit the Spirituality Center for a time of quiet, personal reflection. Experience contemplation and prayer in new and creative ways and join others in meditative coloring of our community mandala. You can also sign up to receive an electronic document with ideas and instructions for creating a Spirituality Center in your own church. The Spirituality Center, with its 10 prayer stations, is open daily from morning through evening for people of all ages to enjoy.

## Synod School in Mission

This year we will be compiling kits for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. You will have the opportunity to donate towards this project *when you register*. Materials will be purchased in bulk and then put together at Synod School. In addition, we will partner with Lakeside Presbyterian Church to support their lunch program, serving local children in poverty through the “Dollar a Day” project.

## Afternoon Activities

### Art Share

During the afternoon break, Art Share offers everyone the opportunity to create a special Synod School memory. Synod School participants take turns during the week offering a mini-experience of their particular art or craft. You can bring something you already have to embellish or purchase a t-shirt or tote bag for a project. You can also bring your “UFOs” (unfinished objects) to work on (and maybe finish). Watch for special opportunities for children to be creative.

Cindy and Tim Lowe (and team) offer the opportunity to silk screen the theme and logo from Synod School during this time.

# Evening Activities



After evening worship, there are optional learning, mission, or fellowship opportunities available. Pick and choose at your own pace.

## **Mini-Courses**

On Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings, you can spend an hour in one-time only sessions addressing a wide range of topics. Prior registration is not required for evening mini-courses. One of these will be a time to continue the discussion begun each morning with convocation speaker Corey Schlosser-Hall. Each evening's mini courses will be listed in the Program Guide you receive at registration. They will also be posted daily on the bulletin boards near the Synod School Office as well as in the announcement slides prior to worship services.

## **Movies**

On a couple of evenings during the week, you can choose to watch a movie selected by the Synod School Committee. The rating of each movie will be posted for parental discernment.

## **Coffee House and All School Dance**

Visit over refreshments at the Coffee House after mini courses on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings. Live music and entertainment will be provided by our many talented Synod School musicians. Watch the announcements during the week for the schedule. On Wednesday everyone is invited to The All-School Dance.

## **Board Games**

Join with others in the CRUSH to play cards or board games. Learn something new or play your favorite game with participants of all ages.

## **Tie Dyeing**

On Monday and Tuesday evenings, join the Synod School tie-dye craze led by Sue Rutford. Bring a 100% cotton article of clothing or another item to dye, or plan to purchase a t-shirt or tote bag from Sue to transform into something unique. We reserve the right to limit the number of pieces an individual can dye so that everyone interested can participate.

# Children and Youth Programming

Programming for children and youth is based on the grades they will *enter* in August or September. All children and youth must have a parent or an accompanying adult at the school. Because the Synod of Lakes and Prairies values and encourages family participation, prices reflect subsidies for all children and youth.

Parents and accompanying adults are strongly encouraged to stop by their children's or youth's designated classroom between 6:00-6:45 p.m. on Sunday for an Open House to meet teachers and learn more about the program plans, procedures, and expectations for the week.

## Children's Programs

Children (infants through 5th grade) participate in carefully planned programs appropriate for each age group during convocation and the four scheduled class periods. Younger children are grouped as infants through young 3-year-olds and older 3 year-olds through kindergarten. They will use their senses to experience and explore the wonders of God's creation through use of art, music, scripture, and age-appropriate activities. Elementary classes (grades 1-5) are multi-graded and use a workshop rotation strategy where they will have three different classes each morning and each afternoon. **This year all children's programs will be in Dixon-Eilers.**

## Middle School Program

All middle school youth (entering grades 6-8) will have planned programming in the morning, including a convocation time with Brendan McLean, as well as small group activities.

## Morning Schedule

8:15-8:25 a.m.	Morning Song & A Prayer	Schaller Chapel
8:25-8:45 a.m.	Attendance & Ice Breakers	Siebens Forum 100
8:45-9:45 a.m.	Convocation with Brendan	Anderson Auditorium
9:45-10:00 a.m.	Bathroom Break	
10:00-10:45 a.m.	Small Groups	Various locations
10:45-11:45 a.m.	Classes	Various locations

Middle School youth will pre-register for their two afternoon classes each day. Thursday afternoon will feature an All-Afternoon Middle School Outing to Kings Pointe Waterpark. *Afternoon classes need to be selected at the time of online registration. Some classes will have limited numbers.*

## **Afternoon Classes for Middle Schoolers**

### **Monday**

*Choose either the all-afternoon class or one from PM1 and one from PM2.*

### **All Afternoon Basic Cooking - limit 12 participants**

This class will cover basic cooking skills—safety, reading recipes, shopping, organization—along with some time cooking some basic, easy recipes in an effort to give participants a good baseline for cooking.

### **PM1**

#### **Outdoor Games - PM1**

Join in the fun of outdoor sports including but not limited to ultimate frisbee, soccer, 9-square, capture the flag. Time may also be spent inside the fieldhouse for volleyball, basketball, and dodgeball.

#### **Something Artsy - PM1**

Feeling crafty? This class will offer opportunities to create your own masterpiece or work on a group art project. You can also bring something you're working on. Maybe friendship bracelets, beading, a painting? The options are endless.

### **PM2**

#### **Board Games PM2**

Each day join in the fun of group board and card games. Some examples include Spoons, Kids Against Maturity, Dance Charades, and more! You are also invited to bring your own board game or card game to share with the group.

#### **Outdoor Games - PM2**

Join in the fun of outdoor sports including but not limited to ultimate frisbee, soccer, 9-square, capture the flag. Time may also be spent inside the fieldhouse for volleyball, basketball, and dodgeball.

## Tuesday

*Choose either the all-afternoon class or one from PM1 and one from PM2.*

### All Afternoon Advanced Cooking - limit 12 participants

This class will cover basic cooking skills—safety, reading recipes, shopping, organization—along with some time cooking some basic, easy recipes in an effort to give participants a good baseline for cooking.

#### PM1

##### **Outdoor Games - PM1**

Join in the fun of outdoor sports including but not limited to ultimate frisbee, soccer, 9-square, capture the flag. Time may also be spent inside the fieldhouse for volleyball, basketball, and dodgeball.

##### **Something Artsy - PM1**

Feeling crafty? This class will offer opportunities to create your own masterpiece or work on a group art project. You can also bring something you're working on. Maybe friendship bracelets, beading, a painting? The options are endless.

#### PM2

##### **Board Games PM2**

Each day join in the fun of group board and card games. Some examples include Spoons, Kids Against Maturity, Dance Charades, and more! You are also invited to bring your own board game or card game to share with the group.

##### **Outdoor Games - PM2**

Join in the fun of outdoor sports including but not limited to ultimate frisbee, soccer, 9-square, capture the flag. Time may also be spent inside the fieldhouse for volleyball, basketball, and dodgeball.

## Wednesday

*Choose either the all-afternoon class or one from PM1 and one from PM2.*

### All Afternoon Advanced Cooking - limit 12 participants

This class will cover basic cooking skills—safety, reading recipes, shopping, organization—along with some time cooking some basic, easy recipes in an effort to give participants a good baseline for cooking.

## PM1

### Outdoor Games - PM1

Join in the fun of outdoor sports including but not limited to ultimate frisbee, soccer, 9-square, capture the flag. Time may also be spent inside the fieldhouse for volleyball, basketball, and dodgeball.

### Something Artsy - PM1

Feeling crafty? This class will offer opportunities to create your own masterpiece or work on a group art project. You can also bring something you're working on. Maybe friendship bracelets, beading, a painting? The options are endless.

## PM2

### Board Games PM2

Each day join in the fun of group board and card games. Some examples include Spoons, Kids Against Maturity, Dance Charades, and more! You are also invited to bring your own board game or card game to share.

### Outdoor Games - PM2

Join in the fun of outdoor sports including but not limited to ultimate frisbee, soccer, 9-square, capture the flag. Time may also be spent inside the fieldhouse for volleyball, basketball, and dodgeball.

## Thursday

Go to Waterpark.

## High School Program

High school youth (entering grades 9-12) will have a convocation time with Brendan McLean, small group discussion, and morning classes.

8:15-8:25 a.m.	Morning Song & A Prayer	Schaller Chapel
8:25-8:45 a.m.	Group Gathering	Anderson Auditorium
8:45-9:45 a.m.	Convocation with Brendan	Anderson Auditorium
9:45-10:00 a.m.	Bathroom Break	
10:00-10:45 a.m.	Small Groups	Various locations
10:45-11:45 a.m.	Classes	Various locations
2:15-5:00 p.m.	Classes	Various locations

High school youth will take two adult/HS classes. *Afternoon classes need to be selected at the time of online registration. Register early for craft classes as they fill up.*

## Lakeshore Center Collaboration

Synod School welcomes a team of camp counselors from Lakeshore Center at Lake Okoboji who will provide leadership for portions of the Children and Youth Program as well as evening games on the lawn.

## Responsibility for Children and Youth

Parents or accompanying adults are responsible for their children and youth during worship, mealtimes, and at all times other than when they are in supervised, scheduled events for children and youth. There is information on the website with suggestions of ways to make Synod School experiences great for all ages and clarify expectations.

Parents/responsible adults are expected to enforce the 10 p.m. quiet time in the dorms and the 11 p.m. curfew by making sure all children and youth are in their own dorms at the appointed times.

## Guidelines for Safety of Our Children and Youth

The safety of the children and youth at Synod School is a paramount concern of the Synod School Committee. While at Synod School, please remember that Buena Vista is a college campus and not designed with young children in mind. Bikes, skateboards, skates, and other similar recreational equipment that would compete with pedestrian use of the sidewalks are not permitted on campus. While we believe that Storm Lake is a safe community, vigilance is always wise. Please supervise your children closely when they are outside to ensure their safety. We have never had a serious mishap, but children and young people should be appropriately supervised *at all times*, including during mealtimes and worship. We offer these guidelines:

- **Elementary and younger children** should be under adult supervision at all times.
- **Middle school youth** should be in groups when outdoors or visiting restrooms, and after dark should walk outdoors only with adult supervision.
- **High school youth** should stay in groups or pairs when walking outdoors or visiting restrooms and after dark should only walk outdoors in a group.



# Online Registration

To register for Synod School, beginning at noon April 1, 2024, go to [www.lakesandprairies.org/SynodSchool](http://www.lakesandprairies.org/SynodSchool) and click on the Registration link.

A few things to pay attention to as you register:

- **If you are registering as a family,** register each person BEFORE checking out.
- **If you are registering a middle school or senior high youth,** please include his/her/their email as the instructors will send at least one email with small group information prior to Synod School (or be sure to forward it!).
- **If you are registering a middle school or senior high youth,** they will need to select their two afternoon classes during the online registration process. Please note that a lot of the craft type of classes have limits so early registration is advised.
- **Linens Packages are no longer available.** BVU has been unable to find a vendor within three hours of Storm Lake to launder them so has decided to discontinue this service altogether.
- **If a class has a limited enrollment,** you will see that in the catalog and when you choose your classes. If a class has already reached its enrollment limit, you will have the option of joining the waiting list.
- **All materials you will need for Synod School** will be added to the registration website as they are available. Only those who request materials by mail or who register by mail will receive them by mail. Materials (maps, registration information, packing lists) will be online by July 15 for you to download.
- **Set up an account.** After you complete your registration, you will be invited to set up an account. We advise you to do so in order to make changes to classes, etc.

**Payment by Check:** If you do not want to pay your registration fee online, you may register online but pay by check. Please send payments to the Synod School office (address on page 2). All payment deadlines apply. We will post it to your registration online so that you can see it was received. (Same is true for scholarships/payments from churches or presbyteries.)

**Register by Mail:** If you would like to register by mail, please complete the form at the back of the book and mail it to the Synod School office with your payment. We will register you.

**Service Dogs and Service Dogs in Training:** Any service dog expected to be present at Synod School must be pre-approved by the Synod School Committee prior to July 1. If a dog is in training, a discussion will be held to determine when and where the dog can be present. There is a legal distinction between what is required for licensed service dogs and dogs in training. No other kind of service animal is permitted at Synod School.

## Accommodations



### Accessibility

All Buena Vista classrooms are handicapped accessible. The university has limited residence hall accommodations for people with physical disabilities. Elevators are available in four of the halls, but not in the suite buildings. Limited first-floor housing is available. If you need accessible or first-floor housing, please indicate that on your registration form and include the specific limitation which must be addressed. If you have other special needs or requests associated with your housing, **please register as early as possible and make your specific needs known on your registration form.** We will work with the college to meet needs to the best of our ability, using the college's available resources.

### Meals

All meals are served in the college cafeteria. A variety of items are available at every meal which should accommodate all special dietary needs.

### Special Needs

If you have dietary limitations or needs (food allergies, gluten intolerance, lactose intolerance, vegetarian, etc.) or if you have housing requests (such as a particular roommate or special considerations in housing assignments), please indicate that on your registration form and we will communicate that information to the college food service and housing coordinator.

## Housing

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- There will be no linen service provided any more. BVU is no longer offering this. If you are traveling from a distance, you can mail yourself a package or make arrangements with friends who are driving.
- **BVU is constructing a new apartment building on campus that will be available to us in 2025. As a result, suite availability is severely limited. We ask those who have traditionally stayed in suites but who don't necessarily need to be in a suite to consider dorm housing this summer. If you need to be in a suite, register as soon as possible. We will establish a waiting list for those who request but don't get a suite.**
- All registrants residing on campus will be housed in campus residence halls and will eat in the cafeteria.
- All rooms are air conditioned.
- All rooms have two single beds that take XL Twin sheets.
- The "dorm" buildings have bathroom facilities "down the hall," and group lounges on each floor.
- The "suite" buildings have multiple suites of 3 bedrooms (with two beds in each bedroom) that share a communal living room; each suite bedroom has a private bath.
- Requests for single rooms in the dorms will be accommodated, as available, on a first-come, first-served basis. Singles are not available in the suites. There may be more limited availability due to needing more dorm rooms for those unable to get suites.
- Registering for a "double" means that you will share the room with another person, either of your choosing or assigned by the housing coordinator.
  - If you are requesting a specific roommate, both registrations must be received before you will be put on the room assignment lists.
  - If you do not request a particular person as a roommate, we will select one for you.

Please note that suite rooms are limited and assigned according to your registration date. If no suite rooms are available when your registration is received, you will have to register for a dorm room and can choose to be placed on a waiting list for a suite if you desire.

You can see typical room layouts at <https://www.bvu.edu/student-experience/storm-lake-campus/living-on-campus>

## Sleeping Options for Children and Middle School Youth

Children through 8<sup>th</sup> grade are provided with two housing options:

- **Bed:** Children are assigned a bed in a dorm or suite.
- **Camper:** If both beds are already full in a room, children and youth *up through 8th grade*, can “camp” in the room. This may mean a portable crib, a sleeping bag on the floor or on a cot or air mattress brought from home. There must be at least one adult in the room or an older youth who is acceptable to parents. Up to two children can be “campers” in each room but no more than 4 people can be assigned to any room. Families choosing this option should also bring all sleeping supplies and linens needed for each “camper.” Note, both beds in a room must be filled before someone can be registered as a camper so if there are just two people in a room, both must pay for the beds. If a family requires more than one room for housing, adjacent rooms will be assigned.

## What to Bring...and Updates/Questions

Synod School is a wonderful week full of inspiration and joy. It is also a week when 600 people live together in community and in dorm rooms. Not all of the accommodations will be perfect for everyone. So, if you are particular about *anything*, **BRING IT WITH YOU!** We encourage you to read or re-read the “tips” on our *Questions and Answers* sheet, available online now. You can also check out the Synod School Facebook page for ideas or to ask questions, too (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/77936670308/>). Once the Synod School app is up and running, we will announce that both on Facebook and to those who are already registered. It is another site for information and questions. The Synod School Committee will do our best to make your week wonderful.

## First Timers

We expect many will be attending Synod School for the first time. We will have a tour of the campus on Sunday after worship for any first timers who are interested. There will also be a place of hospitality set up in Siebens Forum throughout the week as a place to meet people and build relationships.

## Commuters

Commuters are welcome at Synod School and are encouraged to participate in all aspects of the school. Registration should be completed in advance of Synod School to ensure that the desired courses are available. A la carte meals may be purchased at the Synod School Office.

## Information about Buena Vista and Storm Lake

The Buena Vista campus is in the city of Storm Lake, Iowa. For maps, pictures, and other information about the college, city and region, go to [www.bvu.edu/campus-life/storm-lake/](http://www.bvu.edu/campus-life/storm-lake/).



# Fees

Fees include tuition (\$100/adult; \$25/child/youth), per capita (a daily fee of \$7.00 per person no matter what the age) paid to cover maintenance to BVU, snacks, and other expenses. On campus participants also include meals and lodging. Commuters pay for their meals at Synod School, based upon which meals they eat.

## Birth - 2 years staying on campus

Camper	\$75
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## Age 3 through grade 5 staying on campus

Double Dorm Room	\$195
Double Suite Room	\$225
Camper in Dorm or Suite	\$185

## Middle School Youth (Grades 6-8) staying on campus

Double Dorm Room	\$255
Double Suite Room	\$290
Camper in Dorm	\$245
Camper in Suite	\$260

## High School Youth (Grades 9-12) staying on campus

Double Dorm Room	\$315
Double Suite Room	\$360

## Adults staying on campus

Double Dorm Room	\$390
Double Suite Room	\$450
Single Dorm Room	\$470

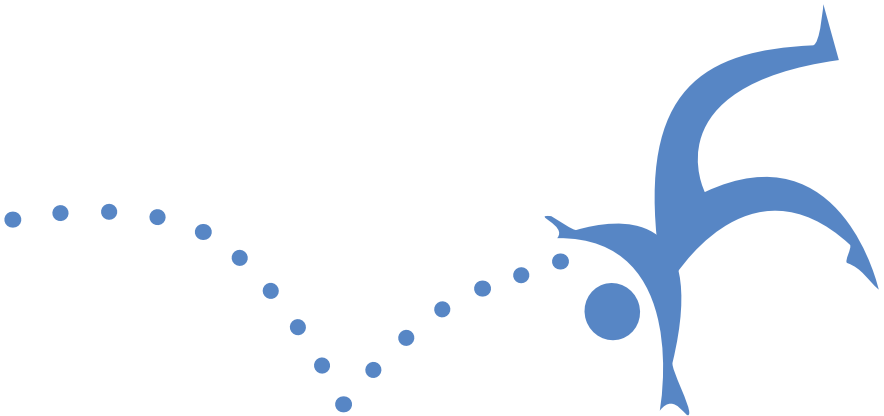
## Commuters

Adults	\$145 plus meals
Children and youth	\$70 plus meals

*Early registration is encouraged, especially for those with special needs or requesting the suites.*

## Registration Deadline and Refunds

- Registrations must be received by July 1.
- We request that **all fees be paid by July 10**. Online registrants can check their balance due by logging into their registration at any time.
- \$100 per adult and \$25 per child/youth must accompany your registration.
- If you don't pay online, make check payable to Synod of Lakes and Prairies and send to 2115 Cliff Drive, Eagan, MN 51225-3327.
- If you wish to register additional people without using the online registration, registration forms may be downloaded from [www.lakes-andprairies.org](http://www.lakes-andprairies.org). **If you register by mail or email and do not receive a confirmation within two weeks, please call to make sure your registration was received.**
- **Refunds:** If you cancel prior to July 7 your registration fees will be refunded except for \$20/person to cover the administrative fees. No registration refunds are available for cancellations after July 7. On-site participation fees will be refunded if requests are received by July 7. They will be considered on a case-by-case basis after that, as we need to pay for the rooms and meals that we guarantee BVU on July 8.



# Scholarship Information



**First Timer Scholarships.** Because of the generosity of previous Synod School participants, we are able to offer a \$50 scholarship to the first 70 first-time registrants in celebration of our 70th annual Synod School. If you are a first-time attendee for Synod School, enter the code “First” at the end of your registration to receive a scholarship.

**The Paul & Salee Stanfield Scholarship Fund** will provide up to six scholarships for the 2024 Synod School. This fund will *match* local church scholarships up to half the cost of tuition, room, and board.

**Synod School Scholarships.** Other Synod School Scholarships are also available from the annual Synod School offering received from participants. These are ordinarily matching grants.

Application forms for the Stanfield and Synod School scholarships are available on the Synod School website (<https://lakesandprairies.org/engaging-leaders/synod-school/>).

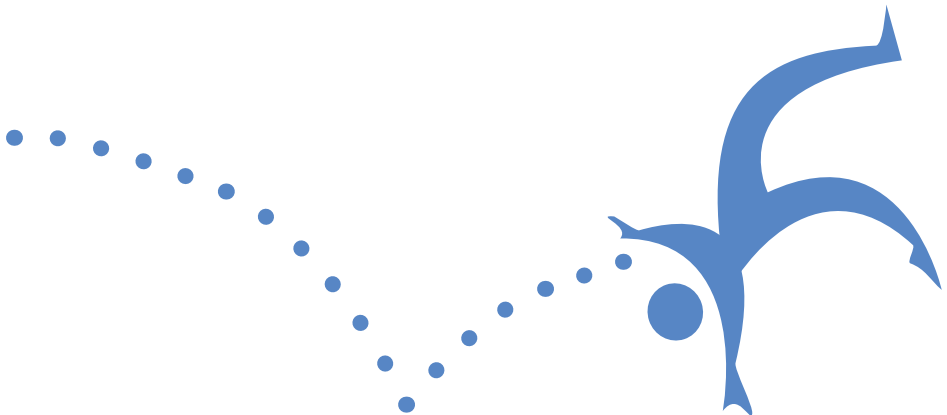


# Registration for Adults

## Dig into some areas of study!

If you are interested in focusing on a particular area, you might consider:

- Exploring the Bible: AM1-15, AM2-24, AM2-35
- Congregational Life: AM 02, AM1-20, AM2-23, AM2-28, AM2-32, PM 41, PM1-46, PM1-59, PM2-75
- Personal Wellness: AM 03, AM1-16, 1M1-18, AM2-29
- Active Movement: AM2-25, AM2-36, PM1-53, PM2-77
- Intersection of Faith and Public Life: AM1-06, AM1-07, AM1-11, AM2-33, AM2-34, AM2-40, PM1-49, PM2-67
- Intersection of Faith and Culture: AM1-12, AM2-26, AM2-37, PM1-48, PM1-57, PM2-62, PM2-63, PM2-65
- Environmental Care: AM1-21, AM2-39
- Leadership Development: AM 02, AM 03, AM1-09, PM-43
- Creative Endeavors: AM 01, AM 04, AM1-13, AM1-14, AM1-22, AM2-30, PM1-44, PM1-58, PM2-61, PM2-69, PM2-70, PM2-71, PM2-76
- Musical Engagement: PM1-45, PM1-50, PM1-51, PM2-64
- Christian Tradition: A1-17, AM2-27, PM1-52, PM1-54, PM2-73, PM2-74



# Course Descriptions

## All Morning Classes (9:30-11:45 a.m., Monday-Friday)

### **AM-01 Acrylic Painting for All**

If you've always wanted to paint but don't know where to start this is the class for you! Each student will create a painting of a monarch butterfly as well as an additional painting where they chose the design. You will be helped through each step. Class is limited to 15 participants. Class fee is \$15.

*Laura (Sherlock) Walsh is an energetic and enthusiastic teacher who wants to help people unlock their painting skills. She has a degree in Art Education from UNI and taught K-8 art for several years. Now she is the Kids Director at Westminster Presbyterian in Des Moines.*

### **AM-02 Church Leadership**

This course will discuss concepts of Christian leadership, where we are called to lead while following God. We'll discuss basic leadership traits and skills and leading in a challenging and changing environment, all while following God's will. We will also discuss basic church administration skills, such as reading and understanding balance sheets, P&L sheets, and activity sheets, leading Session meetings, and delegating and self-care. This will be a full and challenging course with both a pre-load and post-load!

*Loren Shellabarger is a recently retired PC(USA) minister living in Dubuque, Iowa. Loren considers himself a student of leadership and enjoys discussing all things involved in Christian leadership in a complex world.*

### **AM-03 Healthy Leadership from the Pulpit**

Healthy leadership is a life-long endeavor. For those who preach week after week, the pulpit becomes a place from which we lead. In this class, we will examine how our emotional intelligence intersects with our preaching, how scripture comes alive when we approach it in a holistic way, and how we can create space for the listener to encounter The Divine. Class fee is \$20/person.

*Cindy Halvorson is a gifted preacher and teacher, as well as a leadership coach, clergy coach, church consultant, and workshop facilitator, with a lifetime of*

*experience in faith-based organizations, all-things-church, and leadership development. She knows church life from years of experience as volunteer-extraordinaire to solo pastor to part of a pastoral team. Cindy's life is wonder-FULL due to the time she spends with her husband at their project farm, her adult children, and her grandchildren. She considers herself fortunate for being able to participate in meaningful work and delightful play.*

## **AM-04 Beginning Paper-Making and Book Construction**

Students learn to make paper themselves using techniques easily enjoyed at home. Home-made paper will be used to create booklets using simple sewn binding techniques, mixed media, and other art supplies. Students learn to use inclusions like flower petals and other materials to make their paper special. Everyone takes home several sheets of paper they've made and at least one book project. This is a wet media process, so good footwear and an apron are highly recommended. Class is limited to 9 participants. Class fee is \$15.

*Jennifer Schultz is an artist and costumer from Minneapolis, MN. When not working for the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, she teaches youth sewing and papermaking, creates and sells her own artwork, and runs a little vintage business on the side in addition to costuming the occasional community theater production.*

## **AM-05 Outdoor Cooking ABCs**

Ready to explore the basics of outdoor cooking? Join us as in learning how to cook with a(n): Open Fire, Grill, Smoker, Griddle Top, Cast Iron Dutch Oven, Deep Fryer. Learn how to select the best cuts of meat for what and how you want to cook. The course will be very hands-on. Class is limited to 20 participants. Class fee is \$30.

*Meet our Celebrity Chefs: Our very own Tie Dye Chef Boy-Arnie Hart is a retired reliability engineer who loves the aroma of cooking and has led outdoor cooking classes at Synod School for many years. Rose Miller is a Dutch oven cooking enthusiast who learned from her son, Eagle Scout Mike and his Boy Scout Troop 139 leaders, from Kearney, NE. Doug Rutford is at heart a food-ophile. He loves doing the cooking both at home and for large groups.*

## AMI Classes (9:30-10:30 a.m., Monday-Friday)

### **AMI-06 Hunger Outreach: For I was Hungry and You Gave Me Food**

Most churches have some ministry that reaches out to fight hunger and food insecurity in their community. Participants in this class will share their church's hunger programs and learn from others about what they do. The goal is to discover new ideas and best methods. Topics will include collecting food, operating food pantries, feeding programs, mobile food distribution, church gardens, community gardens, outreach efforts, advocacy, marketing and developing community partnerships. Participants will also learn about the Presbyterian Hunger Program and how their church can be designated as a Hunger Action Congregation by the PC(USA). Join us!

*Tom Stovall is a Ruling Elder at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Dubuque, Iowa. He is the Coordinator of the Westminster Hunger Outreach Program and serves on the Dubuque County Food Providers Network.*

### **AMI-07 If I Asked You to Walk with Me**

This class will focus on how to center the voice of immigrants as we ponder the work of allyship and relationship building. As the class learns to focus on the voice of the immigrant, students will be asked to do their own examination of cultural values and principles that obstruct one's ability to center the immigrant's voice. Several themes that will be highlighted: US dualism, white supremacy, paternalism, colonial systems and structures, US white nationalism, and xenophobia. We will journey through the past and present to push thought about how to prepare for a more just future—one guided by the voice and lens of the immigrant, migrant, and refugee. It will be a time to lead with curiosity and dream about transformation.

*Amanda Craft is the manager for immigration advocacy in the Office of Immigration Issues in the Office of the General Assembly. Before this role, Amanda served as a PCUSA mission co-worker in Guatemala and on the U.S.-Mexico border. She has an MA in religious studies from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary (LPTS). Amanda lives and attends church in Louisville, KY, and along with her husband is raising two boys.*

## **AM1-09 Leadership Development, NOT Leadership Acquisition**

The early church organically developed new leadership through one-on-one mentorship. This tried-and-true method of leadership development has been forgotten about in an age where leadership acquisition has become almost the exclusive way the church finds new leadership. Many PNC's say, "If only we could acquire the right pastor." We have relied exclusively on seminaries to supply new leadership instead of mentoring new leaders from within the church. Leadership was never meant to be possessed for a long period of time. Following a Pauline model, "What you have heard from me (Paul) through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well" (2 Timothy 2:2). This one-on-one model can be used effectively for developing new leaders including new ruling elders, deacons, Sunday School teachers, etc.

*Paul Snyder is the pastor of the Shared Ministry of First Presbyterian Church of Ashby and Our Savior's – Ten Mile Lake Lutheran Church of Dalton. He serves as the chair of the Small Church Residency Program in the Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys which is a program which matches first or second call pastors with small healthy congregations. He mentors the New Pastors' Cohort and mentors a ruling elder who is going through the Academy to become a commissioned pastor.*

## **AM1-10 Stories My Grandparents Told**

In this class, we will look at what oral history is, how it has been used to record the history of family members, local history, and the history of groups including church history. The class will cover how to prepare for conducting the interview, obtaining releases, and practice by creating a short video in honor of 70 years of Synod School.

*Brenda Griffin is a retired teacher who continues to teach in the Kentucky Adult Education where she teaches GED classes and ESL classes. She is a graduate of Sangamon State University (University of Illinois at Springfield) with a degree in History. While at Sangamon State she studied oral history and worked with Dr. Carl Oblinger on his book, *Divided Kingdom: Work, Community, and the Mining Wars in the Central Illinois Coal Fields During the Great Depression.**

## **AM1-11 Problems without Passports**

Most discussions of international affairs focus on governments and their actions. But many challenges stretch across borders, and affect extended areas: problems like climate change, migration, food, energy, and more. The class will look at how the world is—or isn't!—managing these problems without passports, and have time for whatever hot issues of the moment may arise.

*Bill Davnie is a retired Foreign Service Officer, and PCUSA minister. He is a member of Twin Cities Area Presbytery which he formerly served as Stated Clerk.*

## **AM1-12 Happy Accidents: The Theology of Bob Ross**

During class we will watch a few episodes of Mr. Ross' show, "The Joy of Painting" that aired on PBS from 1983 to 1994. We'll take time to explore how he shared his faith through the show and how we can adapt that to our lives today. In these times of questioning and deconstructing faith, the faith of Bob Ross still affects people of all ages 30 years after his death. How can we live our faith in a similar way that shines the love of God to all?

*Jessica Harrison is a certified ruling elder, full time branch manager, and nerd. She enjoys reading, knitting, and spending time with her friends trying new foods, playing different RPGs, and watching horrible movies (Llamageddon, Velocipastor, 65, Slotherhouse, and many more).*

## **AM1-13 More Earring Fun!**

This class will work with different materials to teach new skills in the art of making fun earrings. We will work with material that participants can continue to do at home. Participants should bring a basic jewelry tool kit for this class. Participants will leave at the end of the week with at least 8 pairs or more of earrings. Class is limited to 15 participants. Class fee is \$25.

*Linda Stovall is the moderator of the Mission Team at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Dubuque, IA. She is a member in the Dubuque Interfaith Green Coalition. She is a board member for the Dubuque Rescue Mission. She was a Ruling Elder Commissioner for the General Assembly in 2020 and 2022 for John Knox Presbytery. Linda is a retired preschool teacher.*

## **AM1-14 Mixed Media Methods and Intuitive Art Journaling**

Tap into your spirit to create art in a non-judgmental way to express and process emotions. We will discuss various methods of creation and how to use various supplies to give you more liberty in creating instead of focusing on “getting it right”. Using a prompt and a handful of chosen supplies, we will focus on following your intuition and simply creating to explore and process grief, anger, joy, passion, and more. We will use various mediums such as paint, texture paste, fabric, stencils, stamps, gelli printing, paper, thread, and more to create beautifully layered art. Feel free to bring any supplies you’d like to use or share. Very experiment based- there are no rules! Class is limited to 15 participants. Class fee is \$10.

*Paige Robertson is a self-taught artist who has been creating and sharing art since early childhood. She began selling art online in 2014 but found her niche when using intuitive art journaling as therapy after loss. She now primarily creates home decor, greeting cards, and digital art to help others find joy and comfort in life. You can find her work on Etsy, Facebook, or Instagram at WordsonaPaige.*

## **AM1-15 From Aaron to Zuriel: All Those Names in the Bible**

Well, maybe not ALL the names, but this class will look at the fascinating subject of Biblical names. From simple names such as Er to ridiculous ones like Mahershalalhashbaz, the course will cover the meaning of names, symbolic names, nicknames, people with 2 or 3 (or even 4!) names, and will try to answer questions such as ‘What is God’s name?’ and ‘What are we supposed to do with all those long lists of names?’ The course should be enlightening and fun for both those who love to dig into obscure facts as well as those who skip over the names whenever they read Scripture.

*Darrel Griffin is retired and lives in Georgetown, Kentucky, with his wife, two cats, and a dog. In his spare time, he enjoys teaching church history and the Bible, and supply preaching in local churches. His favorite week of the year is Synod School with all the interesting people to meet and courses to take.*

## **AM1-16 Finding Lost Connections**

Mental health issues are increasing. For as long as mental health has been researched it has been known that membership in groups, most notably religious groups, tends to decrease mental health problems. While religious engagement is decreasing in society as a whole, what can churches do to continue their support of the wellbeing of individuals and society? This class will explore this question using concepts and ideas from the secular book *Lost Connections: Uncovering the Real Causes of Depression – And the Unexpected Solutions* by Johann Hari as a jumping off point. How can we translate researched-based, psycho-social solutions for mental health into religious organizational practices and faith community engagement? (Book is optional reading. We will not go into this book's medical claims.)

*Karen D. Matuska, LPC, MDiv, is a Lutheran (ELCA) minister of mental and spiritual health based in Colorado Springs. She provides trauma therapy, spiritual direction and preaches throughout Colorado.*

## **AM1-17 What the Hell? The Stories We Tell About Damnation**

This class looks at literary depictions of hell and damnation from the Christian tradition, from Dante to Neil Gaiman. We'll look at how ideas of hell shift over time, what it means to be damned (and who is), and why the idea has such a strong grip on our collective imagination.

*Philip Goldfarb Styrts is an assistant professor of English at St. Ambrose University who teaches everything across the curriculum—including the authors in this class.*

## **AM1-18 Let's Talk about Grief**

Are you grieving? Is your congregation in grief? Is the world grieving all that it lost during a pandemic? More and more, grief seems to season our pastoral care work. This class will examine how to identify grief and its many facets, how to address collective grief, and how to carry your own grief as you care for others. We will explore how art and poetry can help to move us through our own journey, as well as guide grief support groups. In this ever-changing world, grief is something we all experience, but it rarely gets talked about directly. Let's talk about it here.

*Cathy M. Kolwey is a writer, artist, pastor, and chaplain who has worked at the intersection of spirituality and the arts for more than 20 years. She is the Director of Chaplaincy for Auburn Homes and Services in Carver County, MN, and was the artist-in-residence for Synod School in 2022.*



## **AM1-19 The Meaning of Religious Humor**

What's so funny about our faith? When we make fun of religion, are we laughing at God? Or at our own attempts to understand God? Can satire actually be productive for the church? How blurry is the line between irreverence and blasphemy? And why did that rabbi, that priest, and that minister walk into that bar, anyway? Take a fun and thoughtful look at how entertainers have laughed at religion. Through our laughter, we'll try to answer the deeper questions posed by everyone from Mel Brooks and Monty Python to "South Park" and "Good Omens." And be prepared to share your own favorite jokes as well!

*Mark Bedford is the pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Sioux City, Iowa. He and his wife, Rev. Beth Hamilton, live with their cat and their cocker spaniel, who are not spoiled at all. Mark has taught previous Synod School courses on movie heroes and villains and Biblical ethics.*

## **AM1-20 Changing the World One Confirmation Class at a Time**

Come and explore a "new-old" approach to confirmation as we take a look at a curriculum available through Presbyterian Outlook Magazine and author Mark Hinds, "Changing the World: Confirmation for the Missional Church." Moving away from "membership confirmation" to "missional confirmation" this curriculum focuses on inspiring teenagers to change the world, in big and small ways, in service to Jesus Christ. We will be looking at the rationale of this shift and move through the curriculum sampling various activities.

*Jan Christensen currently serves as Pastor at Presbyterian United Church of Christ in Le Mars, Iowa. A teacher and middle school counselor in a former life, she is always on the look-out for good programs for confirmation.*

## **AM1-21 Climate Change Fiction**

We may know climate change is coming, but have we really grappled with its social and emotional impact? In this class, we will read and respond to some of the most beautiful and powerful excerpts from contemporary fiction about climate change. My goal is to help us envision the scale of the problem more concretely and also generate effective spiritual/theological ways of responding to this crisis both within and without the church. We will read excerpts from novels by Lily Brooks-Dalton, Kim Stanley Robinson, Jarrod and Neal Shusterman, and Richard Powers; short stories

by Amanda Baldeneaux and Charlie Jane Anders; and poetry by Margaret Atwood and Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner.

*Sarah Outterson-Murphy has a PhD in Shakespeare studies and teaches high school English in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.*

## **AM1-22 Introductory Wire Weaving**

Curious about woven wire jewelry? Learn a basic wire weave (or two) using anodized aluminum wire to make several pendants and bracelets. Aluminum wire is a great way to learn; it's lightweight and easy to manipulate in a size that lets you see what you are doing as you weave – and you'll love the results. Bringing a set of basic jewelry tools will be useful. Class is limited to 10 participants. Class fee is \$5.

*Marjorie Goldfarb is a now retired writer/editor who has been making jewelry for many years. She accumulates wire, chain maille rings, beads, and stones the way knitters collect yarn and quilters collect fabric.*

## **Morning 2 Classes (10:45-11:45 a.m., Monday-Friday)**

### **AM2-23 Preaching and Celebrating the Season of Creation**

Observed by Orthodox, Catholics, and Protestants worldwide, "Creationtide" is an opportunity to answer God's call to "Creation Care." Class participants will consider sermon texts, ideas for worship services including Blessing of the Animals and Blessing of the Crops, hymn selections, and strategies to move congregations to implement "Creation Care" through specific actions like establishing a "green team" and seeking Presbyterian Earth Care (PEC) certification. When done, participants will have worship and discussion plans for the four weeks of the Season of Creation.

*Retired Teaching Elder Paul Uzel has served small rural and urban Iowa churches for thirty years. He has also been a US Immigration Inspector, a probation officer, a halfway house worker, a state child protection social worker and a family therapist. He and his spouse, Joyce, have three adult children and four grandchildren, all of whom live in Iowa.*

### **AM2-24 Reading the Bible on Turtle Island**

This class will be based on my forthcoming book by the same title (to be published with InterVarsity Press, 2025) on Native American interpretations of the Bible. The course will cover topics including: the medicine

wheel of interpretations, reading Genesis with Native Creation Stories, The Vision Quests of Paul and Jesus, Shalom and Right Relations, and Boarding schools/Land Back/Joy.

*Chris Hoklotubbe (Th.D. Harvard University) is an assistant professor of Classics at Cornell College and the Director of Graduate Studies of NAIITS: An Indigenous Learning Community. He is the author of Civilized Piety: The Rhetoric of Piety in the Pastoral Epistles and the Roman Empire and numerous articles on Early Christianity and Indigenous interpretations of the Bible. He is the lucky husband of Stephanie and father of Claire and Emily. He is happy to have found Synod School through Burns Stanfield, who was his field education supervisor and pastor during graduate school.*

## **AM2-25 Intermediate Pickleball**

Pickleball is a growing sport in America. You have learned the basics but now you are wanting to learn some specific tricks of the game. This class will go beyond the fundamentals of Pickleball and focus on some more in-depth strategies. Balls will be provided but **BRING YOUR OWN RAQUET**. Class is limited to 12 participants.

*Matthew Tatschl has played pickleball for the better part of 4 years now. He brings a tennis background into this sport (along with a competitive nature). He enjoys hanging with friends, sports and being outside.*

## **AM2-26 The Music, Spirit and Faith of Paul Simon**

Paul Simon has been recording thoughtful, imaginative and catchy music for 60 years. From his work with Art Garfunkel as a leading voice in the folk revival of the '60s, to his playful and often provocative solo work in the '70s and '80s, to 2023's "Seven Psalms" his music has always offered more depth and insight than one expects from popular music. This course will survey his entire career.

*Tom Willadsen has been a Presbyterian pastor for more than 30 years. He has been a fan of popular music far longer. His passion is connecting the message of the gospel to everyday life. He is the author of "OMG! LOL! Faith and Laughter" and "Gratitude on the Prairie" and a contributing writer for The Immediate Word. He currently serves Spanish Springs Presbyterian Church in Sparks, Nevada as Transitional Pastor.*

## **AM2-27 What Can Christians Learn from Medieval Mystics**

While Christian mysticism is as old as Christianity itself, Medieval Europe saw a flowering of Christian mysticism that emphasized direct experience of God. Although our world today is very different from that world, Christians today can learn much from the writings and teachings of figures such as Meister Eckhart, Hildegard of Bingen, Julian of Norwich, and the anonymous author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*. As one author observed, "To rediscover the story of the Christian mystics is a great adventure. . . . The Christian mystics speak to us across the centuries, and if we listen, we can learn something about the deepest experiences of their lives, so that we too may glimpse the glory of God and feel the healing touch of the Spirit." This course will invite us to reflect on what the lives, writings, and insights of some of the great Christian mystics of medieval times mean in our own lives and help us understand that we are all invited to the depth of experience of God realized by these mystics.

*Susan Stabile is a Distinguished Senior Fellow at the University of St. Thomas School of Law and an adjunct Instructor in Theology at St. Catherine's University, where she also co-directs a Lilly Grant to bring contemplative practices to congregations and parishes. An experienced spiritual director and retreat director, Susan offers retreats and other programs of spiritual formation in parishes, retreat houses and other venues around the country. She also teaches in the Sacred Ground program for the training of spiritual directors and for training directors to lead others in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. Susan previously served as Director of the University of St. Thomas's Office for Spirituality, and is the author of numerous publications, including Growing in Love and Wisdom (Oxford University Press 2013). She also authors a blog, Creo en Dios! (<http://susanjoan.wordpress.com>), on which she posts spiritual reflections and podcasts.*

## **AM2-28 Let the Children Worship**

With more of our churches moving away from the old style of age-level Sunday school classes for kids, we need to talk about how and where faith formation happens. Let's consider elements of the worship service and how children can be included, how they can lead, and what an intergenerational approach to worship does for us all. Topics will include the children's sermon, communion, baptism, using children as liturgists, acolytes, ushers, and greeters, and more.

*Katie Estes is a seasoned pastor and educator currently serving in Green Bay, Wisconsin who loves the experience of intergenerational worship.*

## **AM2-29 Your Family Genogram**

The families that raised us taught us the basics of how to deal with people (or not)—first, at home, and later, at school, church, work, and in the larger community. This class will explore the use of a simple tool called the family genogram to study the dynamics of your family and your place in it.

The genogram is a graphical representation of your family tree—the usual names, dates, and places, but with additional information about family traditions, roles, patterns of behavior, illnesses, emotional relationships, and more. Drawing on family systems theory, creating and studying your family genogram can help you better understand your own behaviors and learn to become a more self-differentiated person.

*Randi Henderson is a life-long genealogist, keenly interested in both the family stories we pass down and those we try to forget. A retired Presbyterian pastor, she has discovered that sometimes the sins (and often the blessings) of the parents ARE passed on—to the third, and even the fourth, generation.*

## **AM2-30 Bread Baskets**

In this class, you will weave a round wicker table basket, with a decorative base and rim, that can be used to serve bread, fruit, or anything you'd like. No experience is necessary but being a confident crafter is helpful. Class is limited to 15 participants. Class fee is \$15.

*Jennifer Giles is from Urbandale, IA, and works in a medical research lab. In her spare time, she teaches her three boys how to weave baskets. Donna Gray is a PC(USA) pastor currently serving two small rural United Methodist Churches part-time in Dickens and Gillett Grove, Iowa.*

## **AM2-31 What is Much, Much Harder Than Jeopardy? British Quiz Shows That Are Really Challenging**

Many American game shows feature loud music, huge prizes, and celebrities. Jeopardy! has been the notable exception, with a well-earned reputation for integrity and seriousness. But there are game shows in the UK that feature much harder questions than Jeopardy! and in some of them there is no prize at all. Join former Jeopardy! contestant Rick Goldfarb as we explore the charms and perils of five British game shows: University Challenge, the British version of College Bowl, Countdown (which requires a mind like a dictionary and superb arithmetic skills), Only Connect, which may be the basis of a popular New York Times

puzzle, Fifteen to One, which went through 45 contestants every week for years, and Pointless, a game where you try to prove you know what no one else knows.

*Rick Goldfarb, taking a break from teaching baking classes, lost on Jeopardy! during the Clinton Administration.*

## **AM2-32 How am I Supposed to Create Accessible Spaces and Learning Tools**

Did you know that 25% of people, in a recent workforce survey, indicated they have a disability? Accessibility is a general term that many people have heard of but may not understand exactly what it means. Accessibility is the practice of making information, activities, or environments meaningful and usable for as many people as possible. We will review the principles of Universal Design and Universal Design for Learning, what they mean, and simple ways to incorporate them into daily routine.

*Dawn Griffin is an Instructional Designer for the Human Development Institute (HDI) at the University of Kentucky. HDI is Kentucky's Center on Disability and is part of a nationwide network of University Centers of Excellence. As an Instructional Designer, Dawn creates online trainings primarily for Early Childhood Professionals utilizing principles of accessibility.*

## **AM2-33 Dead Philosophers, Living Ideas**

Every once in a while, someone comes up with a grand theory that explains what is wrong—or right—with the world. These ideas persist long after the original thinker has died, and end up baked into society in ways we may not notice. We'll interrogate some major theories, learn a little about who gets credit for them from Marx to Foucault, and talk about where they missed the boat.

*Katie Styr is a pastor in Milan, IL and lives in Davenport, IA with her husband, daughters, and elderly dog. She likes playing board games and baking, and mostly reads fiction books.*

## **AM2-34 Banned Books and Faith**

Book censorship goes back to the earliest years of the Christian church. Many historically controversial books are now regarded as classics, including the Bible, works by Shakespeare, and even Mickey Mouse comics. In this course we explore the history of censorship in the US,

focusing on issues—past and present—that fuel book banning. Using the ALA’s Library Bill of Rights, we will consider themes that challenge us most, explore the intersection of literature and faith, and discuss how individuals can voice their approval or disapproval of their library’s holdings.

*Denise Group, Honorably Retired Teaching Elder from North Central Iowa, currently serves as the Library Director at Corwith Public Library. In addition to her seminary training, she also holds a Masters in Technical & Expository Writing from the University of Arkansas-Little Rock. Shannon Borgman is a pastor for four small churches in Northern Kansas. She loves to listen to books on tape as she travels between her congregations. In her spare time, she runs and drinks a lot of coffee. Shannon earned her bachelor’s from Whitworth and an MDiv from Portland Seminary. She started in children/youth ministry and is now in her fifth year of her first call.*

### **AM2-35 It’s All Greek to Me: The Gospel of John**

Though we read the New Testament in English, it was originally written in ancient Greek. In this course we will discuss selections of the Gospel of John and consider how an understanding of the Greek text can enhance an interpretation of the passage. Join us to get ideas for your sermons, Bible studies, or Sunday School classes. No knowledge of ancient Greek is necessary to participate in this course.

*Matt Sherry is a PhD candidate in classical literature at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He specializes in Latin poetry, including the influence of Greek texts on Latin authors.*

### **AM2-36 Ballroom and Swing Dance**

Whether you’re attending a wedding, going out for a night on the town, or just enjoying the Synod School dance, being out there moving and grooving on the dance floor makes it all that much more fun. Join us for a week of fellowship and learn two of the most exciting and useful dances out there—the passionate Tango and lively Swing! Beginner and advanced dancers are welcome—come on your own or bring a partner.

*Jill and Jason Johnson are retired ballroom dance teachers and competitors from Saint Paul, MN.*

## **AM2-37 Time Present, Time Past, Time Future: Reading T.S. Eliot's Four Quartets**

The four poems that T. S. Eliot published together as *Four Quartets* are not as famous as “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” or “The Waste Land,” but he and a few critics consider them the finest work of his career.

Together, the poems have a remarkable historical dimension (they were mainly written during the Second World War), a remarkable personal dimension (they reflect some of Eliot’s own life crises), and a remarkable spiritual dimension (they often draw on Eliot’s reattachment to Christianity in middle age). Above all, they are about his and our experience of time—how past, present, and future braid themselves into a whole in our lives.

We will read and unpack one poem a day. The poem will be read aloud at the beginning of each session (in other words, no homework). No particular expertise in understanding poetry is required—just a willingness to explore a sometimes demanding but endlessly fascinating example of modern poetry.

*Scott Stanfield is Emeritus Professor of English at Nebraska Wesleyan University. He has been teaching in Synod School since 2000.*

## **AM2-38 I Can Do What ELSE with My iPhone/iPad?!?**

You may know the basics of how to use your iDevice, but could use a deeper dive into some of the useful apps. In this course, we will look more closely at settings that can make your life easier; how to take better photos, edit them, and store them, and other apps based on class requests. If you attended last year’s class, this will build on what we learned, but it certainly isn’t a prerequisite. Bring your iPhone and/or iPad and pick up some new tips and tricks!

*Cory McCune is a high school librarian who also has an endorsement in Instructional Technology Leadership. She is a certified Apple Teacher and Apple Learning Coach, as well as her family’s personal tech support.*

## **AM2-39 Eco-Hacking Your Church Building**

Explore exciting ways to update your church building and grounds to save money and care for God’s creation. Topics will include:

- 1) Energy Audits & Efficiency
- 2) Alternative Energy Solutions



- 3) Hacking Old Building Systems with New Tech
- 4) Grants, Loans, Budgets, and Financial Incentives
- 5) Stormwater, Rain Gardens, and Outdoor Beauty
- 6) Space Sharing as Sustainable Ministry
- 7) Automation, Security, and Hospitable Technology
- 8) Tools and Resources for Quick Results

Learn new ideas, share your successes and challenges, and collaborate. You're invited to bring photos of your lighting, HVAC, thermostats, or problem areas to explore solutions specific to your building.

*Cader Howard serves as the pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Stillwater, MN, where he has led the congregation and updated their old building for 11 years. Prior to moving to Minnesota, he served two congregations in Atlanta with large, old buildings. He is passionate about using technology to make our buildings sustainable so they can be a tool, not a hindrance, for bold ministry in our communities.*

## **AM2-40 Whose Holy Land?: Palestine & Israel in the Mission of Jesus Today**

This class will explore the hot topic of Palestine & Israel with the eyes of a missionary through five particular lenses:

- 1) Jesus and Judaism - Then & now.
- 2) Land and Covenant - When & where?
- 3) Justice and the People - Whose & which?
- 4) Zionism and the Jews - Who's in?
- 5) Today and tomorrow - What comes after this?

Class fee is \$25 for a book and notes.

*A member of the Israel/Palestine Mission Network of the PC(USA), Kevin Bushnell has both worked in and taught extensively about Israel and Palestine. Originally from Omaha, NE, he has worked in missions in Mexico, Palestine, Cuba, India, and the US. He is a member of Dundee Presbyterian in Omaha.*

## All Afternoon Classes (2:15-5:00 p.m., Monday-Thursday)

### **PM-41 Congregational Revitalization—Helping Healthy Systems Grow**

Our church is dying—how do we bring it back to life? In this course we'll explore the dynamics that led to the congregation's current situation, deal with the grief of what we've lost, and identify possible paths to restoration. Students will explore the need for church leadership to define a common, missional outlook. With more and more churches finding themselves without a full-time pastor, who is going to lead this change? Is an outside consultant the answer?

Our discussions will challenge the traditional church model and test-fit possible options for renewal. Can our congregation agree on what a healthy congregation and ministry look like moving forward? If new people do join us in God's ministry, how do we disciple them? Do we have the energy for this spiritual endeavor?

Congregational revitalization is a complex and deliberate process. Is it right for your congregation?

*Ian McMullen has spent most of his life in Iowa. He embraced his call as a Minister of Word and Sacrament after a career in computer engineering. After seminary, Ian served 1st Presbyterian Church in Maxwell, Iowa where he practiced church revitalization and consulted with churches in their own ministry contexts. In 2019 he was called to be an Executive for the presbyteries of North Central Iowa and Prospect Hill and now also the Presbytery of Des Moines.*

### **PM-42 Canceled**

### **PM-43 Leadership Training to Make a Difference**

Unleash your capacity to impact the social, political, environmental, and economic decisions affecting our lives.

- 1) Learn about the history of social movements, explore your own family story and personal experiences around race and equity in society.
- 2) Learn how to address structural racism through effective organizing.
- 3) Practice new behaviors and craft effective actions that win change.
- 4) Reexamine your strengths and develop the skill of learning the stories and motivations of others.

*Kathryn Lozada has been an organizer with ISALAH in Minnesota for six years. She grew up in a very social justice-oriented Presbyterian church, served as a Young Adult Volunteer with BorderLinks in Tucson, and is proud of contributing to ISALAH's significant legislative victories: Paid Family & Medical Leave, 100% Clean Energy by 2040, Public Option for healthcare, and \$1 Billion for housing! Andrew Davis is pastor of Union Presbyterian Church in Saint Peter, MN, and has been active in ISALAH for a decade.*

## **PMI Classes for Adults and Senior Highs**

**(2:15-3:30 p.m., Monday-Thursday)**

### **PM1-44 Introduction to Line and Wash Part 1**

Line and wash has nothing to do with hanging clothes out to dry, but rather is a watercolor technique that combines a line drawing with a watercolor painting. Since a lot of the structure of the painting is established by the line drawing itself, the painting involves washes of color—hence the name, line and wash. This course will take you through some simple projects covering the basics of this technique, and creating some impressive artwork. While no previous experience or artistic skill is required this course will involve more drawing than previous courses taught by this instructor. This is a repeat of the class offered last year (2023). Class is limited to 20 participants. Class fee is \$10.

*Howard Chapman is a retired Presbyterian pastor and has been working in watercolors for many years. He has attended watercolor classes and workshops in places like Tuscany, Italy, Ghost Ranch NM, and Door County WI. He has taught the "Wade into Watercolors" classes in previous years and was the Synod School Artist in Residence in 2014.*

### **PM1-45 Sing a New Song: Sing an Old Psalm**

Psalm singing is foundational to our gathered worship as Presbyterians, but unfortunately we don't tend to do very much of it anymore. Learn how to introduce your congregation to a wide variety of Psalm-singing practices, from traditional Scottish metrical psalmody to plainsong, the Gelineau/Grail Psalms, "Presbyterian Chant (Hal Hopson), Taizé, Iona, and more, with creative ways to introduce new musical forms to worshippers. Learn about the different types of Psalms and how to incorporate the lectionary's Psalm of the Day in your worship as more than just a call to worship or responsive reading.

*John Allen T. Bankson is the Director of Music at the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Birmingham, Alabama. He is a graduate of Samford University, where he studied voice with Randall Richardson and piano with Don Sanders. John Allen also earned a Master of Divinity degree from Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi, and a Master of Music degree in Choral Conducting from the University of Southern Mississippi, where he studied conducting with William Weinert, composition with Luigi Zaninelli, and organ with Paul Andersen. An ordained PC(USA) minister, John Allen has pastored churches in Louisiana and Mississippi. He is the author of numerous journal articles as well as two books and several works of choral music.*

### **PM1-46 A New Biblical Vocabulary for Stewardship**

Are you, as a volunteer leader or pastor, tired of organizing your church's fundraising campaigns around the same-old stewardship texts? Are you weary of invoking "time and talents" or "scarcity versus abundance" year after year? Are you looking to breathe new life into your community's conversations about work, money, and giving? In this class we will study some under-utilized and less familiar biblical texts, particularly from the Old Testament, with an eye to enlivening your church's stewardship campaigns. We will consider how different parts of the Bible offer different pictures of what it means to live a faithful, flourishing life, and we will think together about how the Bible's ancient texts might help us to chart a distinctively Christian path in our 21st-century late-capitalist society.

*Cameron B. R. Howard, Ph.D., is associate professor of Old Testament at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, and a ruling elder at First Presbyterian Church in Stillwater, Minnesota. She is passionate about equipping and empowering both clergy and laypeople to be knowledgeable, confident, joyful readers of the Old Testament.*

### **PM1-47 Chocolate - Why We Want It! NO. Why We Need It!**

A light-hearted look at all things chocolate: from the production process to how it's used in literature, from TV shows to cooking, from its health aspects to romance and how to sweeten your life. Tasting will be required. 2 chocolate recipes will be requested before class starts to be put into our class chocolate cookbook. Class is limited to 25 participants. Class fee is \$5.

*Tammie McCarthy - chocolate lover since forever! - and Polly Exferd - chief ding-a-ling and chocolate lover - will co-teach this class.*

## **PM1-48 The Theology of M\*A\*S\*H\***

M\*A\*S\*H\* is one of the most iconic television series of all time.

Categorized by its irreverent humor which helps the characters escape from the horror and depression of Korea, it also had numerous episodes that dealt with religion, morals, and what is good in an unfortunate time and place.

In this course we will watch eight different episodes and then discuss the various implications that the characters have to deal with. We will also look at the history of those who created and those who contributed to a part of Americana.

*Dirk R. Brinkmeyer is a member of Peace Presbyterian Church in Bradenton, Florida.*

## **PM1-49 Central and Eastern Europe: The Legacy of Soviet Times**

The war in Ukraine has had a rippling effect of fear and memory across the former Eastern block. The course will look at shifting borders before, during and after the Soviet Union and the legacy of Soviet occupation and domination, as well as the evolving response to the current crisis.

*Ellen and Al Smith have served mission co-workers in Eastern Europe since 2001, Al is now retired, but Ellen continues to serve as Regional Liason for Central & Eastern Europe.*

## **PM1-50 Intermediate Paper & Books Studio**

Papermaking and book construction for students with some prior experience at both: using our skills on advanced projects. Bigger paper sheets! Tunnel and flag books, and more! Limited to 8 participants. Class fee is \$15.

*Jennifer Schultz is an artist and costumer from Minneapolis, MN. When not working for the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, she teaches youth sewing and papermaking, creates and sells her own artwork, and runs a little vintage business on the side in addition to costuming the occasional community theater production.*

## **PM1-51 Knitting a Mistake Rib Scarf**

In this class, we will learn to knit the mistake rib, a stitch pattern that is easy and fun for knitters of all experience levels. The mistake rib produces a reversible fabric with deep valleys and high peaks, suitable for dish-cloths, scarves, and blankets. Knitters will have the option of making a scarf or cowl. The class is open to new and experienced knitters. We ask that students bring their own yarn and materials. A list of suggested materials will be sent prior to the start of Synod School. Class is limited to 16 participants.

*Barb Straus and Julia Norman are a mother-daughter teaching team who enjoy participating in the Synod School craft culture. Barb lives in Lincoln, Nebraska and Julia in Livonia, Michigan.*

## **PM1-52 Hope: A User's Manual**

How do we live as hopeful people when we know that things don't always work out the way we hope they will? How do we work for the world God intends, even though we know that the work is too big for any of us? With guidance from author MaryAnn McKibben Dana, we will explore what hope is, what hope isn't, and how to act in hope when everything seems hopeless.

*Nathan Williams tries to cultivate hope as he parents two kids and pastors one congregation who all want to make a difference in a daunting world.*

## **PM1-53 Ultimate Sports 1**

Participants will engage in a variety of team sports ranging from Ultimate Frizbee to Soccer, but also including basketball, volleyball, and football. Expect to get a good workout. The youth who participate in the class play "all out." Adults and Senior Highs will be welcomed.

*Tim Maxa is Pastor, United Presbyterian Church, Lenox, IA and Sharpsburg Presbyterian Church, Sharpsburg, IA. Jazelle Group will assist in the class.*

## **PM1-54 Being Community**

For seventy years, Synod School has been an experience of intentional community seeking to be an environment of hospitality, healing and hope. We covenant together to be welcoming to each other, to honor others by being quiet at night, obeying the rules, being good stewards of our environment, and being responsible for our family members. Much

like this, Benedict through his Rule written over 1500 years ago, also intentionally seeks to foster healthy communities of faith through commitment to three vows/values. He says, stay put (Stability), listen to the people and to life around you and respond to who God is calling you to be and what God is asking you to do (Obedience), and be open to the ways in which God will transform you as you live the Christian life (Conversion). Come explore how these three commitments may foster well-being to the various communities in which you participate; whether they are family, church, or Synod School. We will discuss why these are important along with ways to implement them in our daily lives as we seek to experience Christ-centered living together.

*David Waggoner is a deep thinking and talented tech guy. Dee Waggoner has been a Benedictine oblate for many years, and a student of Christian Spiritual Formation for over forty.*

## **PM1-55 Pilgrimage**

People have been walking across Spain on the Camino de Santiago for a thousand years. In the past few decades, interest in the Camino has surged. What is it like to walk an ancient pilgrimage? What does it mean to be a pilgrim? And how can we be pilgrims if we can't afford the time or money to fly to Spain? You'll hear stories of what it was like walking the Camino and what it means to be a pilgrim in our own lives.

*Suzanne Gorhau, a pastor and retreat leader, walked almost 500 miles across Spain on the Camino de Santiago last year.*

## **PM1-56 Chemistry and Food**

Why do onions brown when you saute them but not when you boil them? Why are marshmallows squishy? What exactly is gluten and why are gluten-free breads so crumbly? Find out the answers to these questions and more when you explore the science behind your food (and taste the results of the experiments!) Class is limited to 15 participants.

*Melanie Hauser is an Assistant Professor of Organic Chemistry at Buena Vista University (in addition to being the chaplain!). She loves to teach classes that bridge the divide between science and everyday life. She developed the Chemistry and Food class that is taught as an elective at BVU. Her passions are varied and include faith, quilting, and cats. Reepicheep, the Campus Therapy Cat and Unofficial Synod School Mascot, highly recommends this class.*

## **PM1-57 The Gospel and Harry Potter**

The original Harry Potter Books offer so much theology with their exploration of confession, sacrifice, atonement, community, and evil—just to name a few! Revisit the HP7 (or visit them for the first time) with an eye for using these familiar stories to create meaningful conversations for youth and adults alike.

*Doodle Harris is the Chaplain and Director of Service Learning at Hastings College. Doodle has a passion for combining pop culture and theology, an insatiable need to read, and a passion for young people!*

## **PM1-58 Acoustic Sounds**

Musicians, players, singers, and listeners of all skill levels are invited to gather together in Acoustic Sounds to share musical talents and interests in a relaxed atmosphere. Bring your instrument, voice or simply a desire to help the group pick out songs to play. It's a four-day sing-a-long of popular songs from yesterday and today! We pick the songs in class and typically work from very rudimentary chord charts. Original music is welcome too!

*Curt Anderson lives in Los Angeles and Mac Stanfield lives in Des Moines each as musicians, songwriters, performers, and production support persons ... with day jobs.*

## **PM1-59 Revamp Your Mission Trips**

Are you ready for new perspectives on the mission trips your church takes with youth and adults? Have you questioned why we take these trips in the first place or how they could be better? In this class we'll discuss the commonalities and existing ideas, discuss and share new ideas and best practices, and leave you with a renewed perspective about how to impact not only the people and places you work with on your trips but also the people you take on them long after they return home.

*Drew Robertson is the Youth Director at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Des Moines, Iowa, where he works with 6th-12th graders and completes other duties as assigned. Drew has been working in youth ministry for 15 years and grew up around church his entire life as the third generation of his family to be in Ministry. Drew has been a part of or led Mission Trips to Los Angeles, New York City, Chicago, New Orleans, Dallas/Fort Worth, Kansas City, and St. Louis.*



## **PM1-60 CNC, Laser Engraving and 3D Printing**

This is a class for those with interest and/or experience in CNC, laser engraving, and 3D printing. CNC stands for computer numerical control, and is the basis for automatic routing, milling, engraving, or 3D printing. While I'm no expert, I want to share my experience and learn from others. I envision this as a class that would benefit those with experience, as well as serve as a knowledge base for those thinking about entering the CNC world. My hope is that some experienced users (including myself) can bring examples of some of their projects. We can discuss entry level equipment, safety issues, software options etc. I plan to bring the laser engraver and 3D printer for demonstration. I'd love it if someone had a desktop CNC they were willing to bring and demonstrate.

*Rollin Wycoff is a lifelong tinkerer with many interests. He has a small tabletop laser engraver and a semi-commercial scale CNC router (4ftx8ft Gerber Sabre 408), and he plays with his son's desktop 3D printer.*

## **PM2 Classes (3:45-5:00 p.m., Monday-Thursday)**

### **PM2-61 Life and Landscapes in Watercolor Painting**

Basic watercolor techniques and exposure to many artists, styles, and themes. Then we paint! Starting with landscapes and working into Still Life, Abstract, and, possibly, portraits. For the more adventurous they should be able to complete 3 paintings; for the more reserved at least 1. The exposure to contemporary thoughts on Art, Art Careers, and different stylistic expressions should give everyone lots of 'food for thought.' Plus, we'll have fun! Class is limited to 25 participants. Class fee is \$10.

*Carrie Fuentes is a lifelong artist with a M.A. from MSUM in MN that started her on a career of exhibitions around the country, until she started teaching A.P. Art classes at a private Catholic school in CA. Since her focus on religious iconography - re interpreted - was a major contributing factor in her art she continued to exhibit and paint until losing most of her original works in a 'house fire' in Malibu, CA, (along with 330 other home owners). This brought about a premature mid-life crisis where she chose not to paint for 20 years. After raising three children, she followed her husband to Northern Virginia where she then attained her teaching license for K-12 Art. Her passion was reignited and she has been teaching K-6 and Enhanced Art classes for 10 months of the year; and painting for 7th-11th grade for 1 month of the year for the Institute of the Arts, FCPS. She joins her sister, Cindy Lowe, and mom, Diane Wray-Williams for her first Synod School.*

## **PM2-62 Tick Tock, TikTok**

An exploration of TikTok, how it works, how to use it as a medium, and how to make content consistent with your message. TikTok, and other short video formats, are becoming more and more popular, and more and more controversial. But underneath all the hype and hoopla is an emergent form of media that can be used responsibly, if one only cares to learn. Explore the content, learn about the algorithm, the controversy, and make your first steps of creating similar content yourself.

*Dan McCurdy is a Presbyterian Pastor, a proud Father, and an avid Storyteller.*

## **PM2-63 Redemption in Schitt's Creek**

Can one truly change their life? The Christian faith says that transformation is possible, moving from sinner to saint is the work of redemption. So, what factors help in changing a life of self-absorbed narcissism to a life of outward-focused service? Using the Canadian sitcom Schitt's Creek as our starting point for discussion we will explore redemption on an individual and cultural level.

*Matt Sauer is a husband, father, and community activist for justice. Matt is the pastor of Manitowoc Cooperative Ministry (a PCUSA/UCC ministry), specializing in Community Engagement and Transformation. He moonlights as an advisor in the ACTS DMin in Preaching at McCormick Theological Seminary and as a Police/Hospital Chaplain.*

## **PM2-64 Songs of Hope and Inspiration**

Through the pop/rock music genre we'll explore songs of the 1960s and 1970s that lifted us up in our youth and have remained with us to this day. The music will include hit songs and album cuts. We will also feature participants' favorites from "back in the day." Through listening and discussion we will share why these particular notes and words moved us then and remain meaningful to us now. Class is limited to 30 participants.

*Mike Quady is the Clerk of Session at Buffalo (MN) Presbyterian Church. He's also a former broadcaster, elementary school teacher, and pop/rock music fan.*

## **PM2-65 We're Here... \_\_\_\_\_ and There, and Everywhere**

Come along on a journey looking at an assortment of the progression of images of the LGBTQ+ Community in Literature, Film and Television. We will review stories and literature old and new and look at Film/TV from

Maurice to Rent to Heartstopper.

*Bill Lawser is a Retired Teaching Elder in the Presbyterian Church (USA). He has served the church from coast to coast to coast as an associate pastor, interim pastor, and presbytery staff. He spends his time attending sporting events at the University of Illinois in Champaign, Illinois and making awesome blueberry pie and Christmas cookies.*

## **PM2-66 Tabletop Evangelism**

Why do people love games? The easy answer is simple: They're fun! Nearly everyone has played a game at some point in their lives. Despite their widespread existence, games are rarely discussed with the same reverence as other media like films or books. For most, games are like chocolate: a guilty pleasure consumed secretly. So how do we tie into this common human experience and use it in the mission field? In this class we will examine the history and appeal of games throughout the centuries. We will explore why and how to create a gaming ministry in your own context. And we'll explore different types of games from social/pickup games to Tabletop RPGs. We'll even have a chance to try them out and get a feel for what each game type is like and how it can best be used for ministry. And it'll be FUN!! Class is limited to 30 participants.

*Adam Borgman grew up the son of a Presbyterian pastor in a small town close to the Canadian border in Washington state. Growing up he was convinced that he was not going to have anything to do with ministry (he knew how much pastors got paid) but God has a sense of humor. He currently provides pulpit supply and is going through the lay pastor training program. He enjoys target shooting, learning and teaching others to play new games, and planned or impromptu road trips with his wife through the Kansas countryside.*

## **PM2-67 Was It All Just an American Dream?**

This course will explore the American Dream of opportunities for all and collective thriving. We will cover the Dream's foundational ideals, its first articulation during the Depression, expanded expectations for the Dream in post-war America, the promise of its realization with the Civil Rights Movement and War on Poverty.

Importantly, we will look at the compromises that have undermined the Dream and how our growing socio-economic and racial wealth disparities threaten to extinguish it.

Finally, we will consider the Dream that remains possible for us and the course corrections that would be required to pursue it once again, as well

as the implications of America's current social and economic trends and the ramifications of their continuation.

*This course will be led by Dr. Gorden Govens and Jim Koon. Dr. Govens is Associate Professor of Criminal Justice and History at Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. He serves as Executive Director of the College's Faith-Based and Social Justice Initiatives. Jim Koon is a career banker who now serves as the Director of Financial Services for the Synod of Lakes and Prairies.*

## **PM2-68 Cooking Comfort Food from Around the World**

Every culture has comfort foods that bring feelings of home. Each day, we will make and sample comfort foods from around the world including Jollof Rice from Nigeria, Dutch Stampot from The Netherlands, Galinhada from Brazil, and Masoor Dahl from India. Class is limited to 10 participants. Class fee is \$25.

*Stacy Cavanaugh, Senior Pastor at Union Presbyterian Church in Monroe, Wisconsin and her family love to go on "Journeys of Food" one week every month trying recipes from different countries. They have tried recipes from 167 countries over the course of two years.*

## **PM2-69 Machine Sewing 101**

Have you ever wanted to learn? Do you have a machine gathering dust in the closet? Are you a creative teenager looking for a creative outlet? Have you always wanted to try but were intimidated? This class is for you!

You need to bring your own functional machine (this is not a repair class) or contact instructor if one needs to be provided for you. Topics include basic machine mechanics, set up, and operation; practice sewing straight and gentle curves; reading a sewing pattern; working on (and hopefully completing) a simple project to take home; and leave with the confidence to continue your sewing journey once you get home. Class is limited to 10 participants. Class fee is \$15.

*Linda Wycoff is the owner of Quilted Tees and Memories, creating custom T-shirt and memory quilts, teddy bears, ornaments, etc. She began her quilting journey at the age of 11, creating a quilt that is still in use today. She believes projects should be completed, even if not perfect, so they can be used as intended.*

## **PM2-70 Plarn Baskets**

Start saving those plastic grocery bags! We're going to use them to make "plarn" (yarn from plastic bags). Then we will crochet the Plarn into a basket or bowl or bag. Choose your own adventure to determine the size and shape of your creation. Basic crochet knowledge (making a chain, slip stitch, single crochet) is highly recommended but not required. Suitable for high school through adult participants. Class is limited to 16 participants.

*Sandy Maxa is a fiber artist who lives in Southwest Iowa. Rhonda Osborn cares for children by day and loves to do crafts.*

## **PM2-71 Chainmail Basics**

Learn about different chainmail styles and uses through the ages as well as how to make them. Everyone will be able to leave with at least one finished project. Rings, pliers, and jewelry findings to complete multiple projects are included in the materials cost and will be yours to take home. Class is limited to 15 participants. Class fee is \$25.00.

*Christian Lash is an avid crafter and librarian in Chicago. They have been making chainmail for about 4 years, including stitch markers which they sell at a local yarn shop.*

## **PM2-72 Improvisation**

In this class, we will explore the joyful art of making something out of nothing. We will gather together to play games, create scenes and learn the basics of comedy improvisation in a creative, safe environment. Whether you are an experienced improviser or a beginner, this class will help deepen your knowledge of the fundamentals of improvisation—agreement, active listening, playing characters and playing truthfully. Most importantly, we will have fun! Limited to 25 participants.

*Heather Anderson has spent many years exploring the art of improvisation, in classes and on stage, with such groups as Theater A Go Go, The Groundlings, LA Connection and the Frayed Knots. She currently works for the Los Angeles Unified School District.*

## **PM2-73 Heaven, Hell and the Underworld**

One of the fundamental questions of life is, what happens after we die? Are we reincarnated? Or do we spend eternity in paradise—or damnation? If so, how do we get there? Answers to these questions are found in the stories and myths of nearly all the world's people and these stories

give insight into the cultures in which they are told. From tales of heaven and hell, to the underworld of the Greeks, to Norse tales of Valhalla, to the elaborate beliefs of the ancient Egyptians, to the belief in reincarnation found in Hinduism, we will re-tell these and other stories, apply the lens of comparative mythology to compare them, and seek to understand what these stories tell us about ourselves.

*Jason Johnson is a nanotechnologist and avid researcher of folklore, comparative mythology, and popular culture from Saint Paul, MN.*

## **PM2-74 St. Francis of Assisi: Who He Was, Why He Matters for Us Today, and His Joyous, Life-affirming Spirituality**

A simple man who loved God and all of God's creation, Francis of Assisi chose a way of being in the world that has much to offer us today. This class will cover his life and the legends surrounding him, will delve into the Franciscan view of the Trinity and Incarnation, and will dare to suggest that living with more humility and poverty in your life will bring you joy beyond your wildest dreams.

*Christi Hartwell is a Ruling Elder living in mid-Minnesota, fond of bike rides with her husband and sitting in her sunroom drinking tea. For the last six years she's been working at a Franciscan convent assisting with their retreats, workshops, and courses in Franciscan theology and spirituality.*

## **PM2-75 Sunday School for Grown Ups**

Remember the cuddly conclusion of Noah's flood? Remember the curses in Eden and Babel? What about wonderfully wise old Solomon? Forget about it! Engage the Bible at an adult level by revisiting Sunday School standards. Tackling a single story each day, we will explore the Bible's compilation, God's ethics, the complexity of the human condition, and the imperative of wrestling with scripture regularly, prayerfully, and in community. Class is limited to 20 participants.

*A lifelong Bible wonk, Erica MacCreaigh grew up with Biblical literalism, then studied Christian metaphysics before landing firmly in the Presbyterian tradition. She sees doubts and uncertainty as windows to authentic relationship with God.*

## **PM2-76 Watercolor Line and Wash, Part 2**

This class is an opportunity for those with some watercolor experience to create paintings of subject matter of their own choosing, rather than following along step by step instructions. Emphasis will be on line and wash techniques involving line drawings with washes of watercolor. Participants are encouraged to bring their own photographs to work from. It is recommended that participants have taken one of the instructor's previous watercolor courses, but not required. Class is limited to 20 participants. Class fee is \$10.

*Howard Chapman is a retired Presbyterian pastor and has been working in watercolors for many years. He has attended watercolor classes and workshops in places like Tuscany, Italy, Ghost Ranch NM, and Door County WI. He has taught the "Wade into Watercolors" and "Introduction to Line and Wash" classes in previous years and was the Synod School Artist in Residence in 2014.*

## **PM2-77 Ultimate Sports 2**

Participants will engage in a variety of team sports ranging from Ultimate Frisbee to Soccer, but also including basketball, volleyball, and football. Expect to get a good workout. The youth who participate in the class play "all out." Adults and Senior Highs will be welcomed.

*Tim Maxa is Pastor, United Presbyterian Church, Lenox, IA and Sharpsburg Presbyterian Church, Sharpsburg, IA. Jazelle Group will assist in the class.*

## **PM2-78 Deep Meaningful Conversations**

Tired of conversations that are entirely of memes? Tired of people yelling past each other when they disagree and not really listening to the other point of view? In today's world of sound bites, let's learn to have meaningful conversations about serious topics while listening to and respecting each other. This class was previously offered to high school students. Colin found this class to be such an eye-opening experience that he wanted to offer it to everyone. Come prepared to have deep meaningful conversations about controversial topics in a spirit of friendship and peace.

*Colin Giles grew up at Synod School, attending every year since he was born. This will be his 19th year at Synod School. Colin will be a freshman in college this fall where he plans to major in business and marketing and play football. Joel Morien is the Christian Educator for First Presbyterian Church in Green Bay, WI.*

# Registration Form for Adults

Have you attended Synod School before?  Yes  No

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name you want on nametag \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation & Location \_\_\_\_\_

## Housing

Name of preferred roommate(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Commuter  Dorm resident  Single room

Suite resident  Double room

Check age range:  18-25  26-40  41-55  56-70  Over 70

Gender \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Information:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Special needs \_\_\_\_\_

## Course Registration

Indicate 1st and 2nd choices for each period using the course number:

Period	1st Choice	2nd Choice
<b>All Morning OR</b>		
AM1 +		
AM2		
<b>All Afternoon OR</b>		
PM1 +		
PM2		

I give permission for my information to be included in the printed roster

Yes  No

Make checks payable to: Synod of Lakes and Prairies

Mail with completed form to: Synod School, 2115 Cliff Drive, Eagan, MN 55122

Scan and E-mail form to: [gmilloy@lakesandprairies.org](mailto:gmilloy@lakesandprairies.org) with "Synod School" as the subject.



# Registration for Children and Youth

## CHILD/YOUTH REGISTRATION & HEALTH INFORMATION

- Commuter       Dorm resident       Camper  
 Suite resident       Bed

Have you attended Synod School before?  Yes  No

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Nickname \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Entering \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday \_\_\_\_\_ Age on 7/23/24 \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' names \_\_\_\_\_

Who is the responsible adult at Synod School? \_\_\_\_\_

What is that person's cell phone? \_\_\_\_\_

**Health Concerns** Food/Other Allergies: \_\_\_\_\_

Other health concerns? \_\_\_\_\_

Anything else you would like to share about your child or would like us to know?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**MS Youth Afternoon Classes** Please complete based on pages 11-13

MS PM	Mon PM1	Mon PM2	Tues PM1	Tues PM2	Wed PM1	Wed PM2
1st Choice						
2nd Choice						

**HS Youth Afternoon Classes** Please choose afternoon classes and indicate the course number of your first and second choices.

Period	Afternoon 1	Afternoon 2	OR All Afternoon Class
1st Choice			
2nd Choice			

Permissions on back side/next page

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## Permissions

Yes No

- I give permission for my child to participate in field trips away from the campus. (N/A for infant – Grade 5) For Middle Schoolers, this includes permission to go to the Water Park on Thursday afternoon.
- I give my permission for my child to have emergency medical treatment.
- I give permission for photos to be taken of my child as they participate in Synod School (may be used on website/social media but without your child's name).

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*Signature of Parent/Guardian*

*Date*



### **Administrative Staff**

Dean: Sarah Hegar

Associate Dean: Lisa Tarbell

Housing Coordinator: Sue Medsker

Synod Staff: Deb DeMeester

### **Synod School Committee**

Phil Anthony

Jeff Dickinson

Brian Entz

Sarah Hegar

Erica MacCreaigh

Meredith Sauer

Lisa Tarbell

Annie Wattles

### **Contact information while at Synod School**

Buena Vista University

Attn: Event Services/Synod School

610 W 4th St

Storm Lake, IA 50588

Synod School Office at BVU .....712-749-1571

Campus Information (8:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.) ..... 712-749-2400

Campus Security (11:00 p.m. – 8:00 a.m.) ..... 712-749-2500



# Synod *of* Lakes & Prairies

**Synod School is a leadership development ministry of:**

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

with support from the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation  
and the New Covenant Trust

2115 Cliff Drive  
Eagan, MN 55122-3327  
651.357.1140 or 800.328.1880  
[www.lakesandprairies.org](http://www.lakesandprairies.org)

Facebook Group: "Synod School: Is this heaven? No, it's Iowa!"

**Cover Art by Jan Davison**