

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Safe Harbor

Anchored in Christ, Providing Security and Care in Lutheran Education



Key Focus: Emotional and Mental Well-Being

Sunday Keynote / 1:00-2:15 pm

Safe Space, Moral Foundations: Integrating Psychology and Biblical Truths in Education

Dr. Marie Yvette Seltz, Founder of Candescent Counseling, Consulting & Coaching

Join us for an engaging session on fostering safe learning environments. We'll explore psychological principles that support emotional safety, discuss practical strategies for integrating biblical teachings on morality into your curriculum, and address challenges in diverse classrooms. Equip yourself with tools to encourage open dialogue and nurture students' understanding of good and evil in a respectful, supportive setting.

Sectional A / 2:45-3:45 pm

Safe Spaces: Creating a Culture of Emotional Care and Mental Well-Being

Sandy Avzaradel and Kim Versluis, IECMH Consultants

This presentation will explore the concept of a safe space and discuss how we can create educational spaces where every individual is safe, valued, heard, and cared for.

Gospel Ministry, Transgender People, and Those Who Love Them

Dr. Scott Stiegemeier, Associate Professor of Theology and Bioethics, Concordia University Irvine

Few issues are as challenging in Christian schools today as transgender. We will consider ways to express the love of Jesus Christ in ways that are faithful to Biblical teaching and beneficial for all. Two theological and ministry paradigms will be considered: Law & Gospel and Christus Victor.

Resilient Minds: A Christ-Centered Mental Health Curriculum

Dr. Kara Bratton, Assistant Professor School of Education, EdD Program, Concordia University Irvine, and Dr. Belinda Karge, Professor Doctoral Programs, Concordia University Irvine

Come learn and investigate a new mental wellness curriculum for adolescents published by Concordia Publishing House. The authors of Resilient Minds will share strategies and supports for ensuring a positive strength-based approach to mental health. They will review samples of the teacher's guide, the

presentation slides, the student books, and the family letters for 5th-6th, 7th-8th, and high school curriculum. Walk away with several strategies you can share with your teachers and use immediately.

Anchored, not Adrift: Our Students, Ourselves, Our Staff

Kay Siebert, Faith Community Nurse, Christ Cares Ministry

We want to be and do the best for our students, supporting their well-being in many ways. How can we build a caring culture and let our students KNOW they are loved, heard, and safe while also recognizing the importance of our own well-being?

Opening Worship with Communion / 4:30-5:30 pm

Key Focus: Spiritual Refuge

Rev. Jim Henkell, Ministry Executive, Pacific Southwest District

Key Focus: Emerging Pathways

Monday Keynote / 8:00-9:45 am

Serving for the Future

Dr. Mychal Thom, Chief Diversity Officer Concordia University St. Paul

As populations in and around our Lutheran Schools change, it becomes increasingly important to prepare ourselves to serve for the future. In this interactive keynote, we will explore what future populations will look like, how we can best serve them, and important ways to lift up our Christ-centered Lutheran identity in the process.

Sectional B / 10:15-10:45 am

Strengthening Lutheran Schools: A Comprehensive Approach to Leadership

Dr. Alan Freeman, Director LCMS School Ministry

This presentation will delve into effective leadership's critical role in shaping Lutheran education's future. We will explore the collaborative efforts between National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) and the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod School Ministry's School Leadership Development (SLED) Program to empower school leaders and foster excellence in Lutheran schools.

Strengthen Your Leadership, Empower Your School: The Benefits of Executive Education for Christian School Leaders

Yvonne Ferwerda, Director Van Lunen Center

Discover how executive education can equip you with the skills and knowledge to inspire your team, innovate your curriculum, ignite your spiritual growth, improve your resources, and impact your community.

Multiple Pathways for Equipping Educators to Teach the Faith

Rev. Dr. Tim Ahlman, Pastor - Christ Greenfield, Gilbert, AZ

Churches and schools must focus on raising up the next generation of leaders. Once determined, how do you train them in Lutheran theology and keep them in their context? Come explore ideas for discovering, developing, and deploying leaders and educators in your context.

Principal 360, Full Circle Success

Dr. Leslie Smith, Director, Principal 360

The future of Lutheran education is directly connected to successful leadership! Principal 360 is an 11-month leadership development program powered by Chicagoland Lutheran Educational Foundation (CLEF). Culminating with a professional certification, Principal 360 develops and equips a united network of Lutheran school principals as visionary educational thought leaders skilled at crafting and implementing a customized, comprehensive School Strategic Plan.

Innovative Pathways from Concordia University, Nebraska

Dr. Lorinda Sankey, Dean, Head of Teacher Education, College of Education, Health & Human Sciences Concordia University, Nebraska

Explore accessible and attainable pathways in school advancement, innovation, trauma/resilience, early childhood administration, counseling, coaching, and school administration. Learn about a variety of CUNE offerings specifically designed for Christian educators.

Effective Servant Leadership

Dr. Kent Schlichtemeier, Director, Servant Leadership Institute, Concordia University, Irvine

There is a difference between leadership and servant leadership. This seminar will examine this difference and identify several key aspects of effective servant leadership in today's schools. It will also provide an introduction to the exciting ministry opportunities available to teachers, administrators, coaches, counselors, and high school students through innovative programs provided by Concordia's Servant Leadership Institute.

Spiritual Nurture in the Lutheran Early Childhood Classroom

Cheryl Haun, Adjunct Professor, Concordia University Nebraska

Lutheran Education Association has prepared a series of training videos that focus on the practical application of the Christian faith in the Lutheran early childhood classroom. The training modules equip Early Childhood Educators with practical strategies to promote the integration of the Christian faith into the classroom environment, the curriculum, and the home. We will have a glimpse into each of the five modules and consider ways to implement them in our early childhood programs.

Free Resources to Empower Christian Schools

Jonathan Edmondson, Administrator, Herzog Foundation

The Herzog Foundation equips Christian schools with free, essential resources to help fulfill their mission to teach the faith. A key focus is the Herzog Foundation Institute's professional development offers for administrators and teachers, offering training on topics such as Donor Development, Marketing & Enrollment, and Strategic Planning. These free programs and resources are designed to accelerate the great work being done in Christian schools across the country!

Foundations of Lutheran Teaching: Equipping Non-Lutheran Educators

Rev. Jonathan Priest, Director, Mission Training Center

Foundations of Lutheran Teaching, a collaboration across PSD, CNH, and NOW districts, equips non-Lutheran educators in LCMS schools to integrate Lutheran teaching into their pedagogy. It fosters a consistent Lutheran ethos, enhances teacher employability, and strengthens school-church unity. Through practical, application-focused asynchronous learning and live online workshops, the program prioritizes spiritual self-care and serves as a stepping stone towards colloquy.

Sectional C / 10:55-11:25 am

Repeat of Sectional B Choices

Off-Site Experience / 1:00-5:30 pm

Experience Concordia University Irvine

- Hear from campus leaders about the mission of Concordia University Irvine.
- Listen to students who will share insight into their educational journeys and how their earlier years prepared them for college.
- Learn about CUI's educational opportunities for your faculty's professional development.
- Enjoy student musical performances and experience the new music program.

Visit the new Pacific Southwest District Office at the Concordia University Irvine-Spectrum Campus

Key Focus: Physical Safety and Security

Tuesday Keynote / 8:00-9:45 am

Protecting our Youth - Online, at Home, and at School

Brock Murphy, CEO, Parent ProTech

Join us for an insightful presentation that underscores the critical need for layered safety and security in our schools while examining the profound effects of technology on Generation Alpha. We'll explore the alarming rise in screen time and its potential negative consequences, all supported by compelling research. Attendees will leave equipped with practical strategies to help their communities navigate the digital landscape safely and foster healthy relationships in an increasingly tech-driven world. Discover how to empower your students to thrive in the digital age while prioritizing their well-being.

Sectional D / 10:00-11:00 am

Navigating Cybersecurity Threats in Education: Best Practices for Mitigating These Risks.

Andrea Johnson, Founder, Chairman & Chief Operating Officer TechGuard Security

As educational institutions increasingly rely on digital platforms for teaching, learning, and administrative tasks, they face a rapidly growing array of cybersecurity threats. Schools, colleges, and universities now manage extensive digital assets and sensitive information—ranging from personal and financial data to healthcare records and intellectual property—making them prime targets for cybercriminals. This presentation will delve into the evolving landscape of cybersecurity risks specific to educational settings, highlighting the most prevalent threats, emphasizing the importance of legal and regulatory compliance, and offering practical strategies to fortify defenses. By embracing a proactive cybersecurity strategy, institutions can protect their data, maintain compliance, and ensure the continuity of their critical operations.

Practical Best Practices in Physical Safety and Security

Dr. Julian Petzold, President, Lion Safety Consulting

Physical safety and security are part of an overall school safety plan. Understanding what things are important, useful, practical, and worth your investment is important when deciding how to use limited resources for the greatest impact. Physical safety best practices related to prevention, mitigation, and response will be covered to help participants develop practical and effective safety plans.

Staying Safe at School and Beyond

Dr. David Gonzalez, H.E.R.O. Representative

Door locks, fences, and visitor check-in systems are all common physical security measures schools use to keep students and teachers safe. But what happens when someone bypasses the check-in at the office by jumping a fence and entering a classroom because the doors are left unlocked during the school day? Or what about when students and teachers aren't on campus during a field trip, sporting event, or over the weekend? While technology and systems are important, one of the most important physical safety measures schools can take is providing knowledge on how to stay safe on campus and beyond. Learn how to stay safe, regardless of the environment, using the H.E.R.O. concepts of Hide, Escape, Run, Overcome, or, for preschools, Obey. More than just a response to active shooting events, H.E.R.O. provides strategies to stay safe from multiple dangers, including strangers, trespassers, would-be kidnappers, and more. Discover how to feel safe and be safe during this interactive presentation.

Closing Worship / 11:15-Noon

Key Focus: Anchored in Faith

Rev. Dr. Tim Ahlman, Pastor - Christ Greenfield, Gilbert, AZ