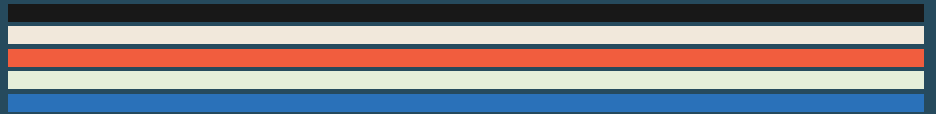




SPIRITUAL FORMATION CONFERENCE 2023



Introduction

Do you ever feel like Easter is an afterthought? Often this time of year we might either find ourselves dreading the ongoing winter or anticipating the beautiful weather of spring. Rather than reflecting on Jesus' death and resurrection, these hallmark events of Christianity can get eclipsed by our busy schedules and eyes towards the summer.

Lent -- a period of 40 days long a part of liturgical church calendars -- slows us down to engage Easter. It symbolically reflects the 40 days of Jesus in the wilderness. Many followers of Jesus from different denominations use this time to fast, pray, and reflect as a way to invite the values of the Kingdom of Heaven into our lives here on earth today.

During this season Browncroft is focusing on specific spiritual disciplines to help us as we prepare our hearts for the power of Easter. This Spiritual Formation Conference is part of that preparation. It is a dynamic experience allowing us each to invest in our spiritual growth in ways we feel like the Holy Spirit is leading us.

Our mission at Browncroft is to invite people to experience life-change in Jesus. That does not just take place on Sunday. It happens Monday to Saturday, too, and our four spiritual habits help us live out life-change in Jesus during our week. Those habits are: Spend Time With God, Spend Time With Others, Know & Use Your Gifts, and Share Your Faith.

During this one-day conference we hope you will see spiritual growth as we build these habits, and we hope it is a helpful opportunity to engage staff, leaders, and others you may not yet know at Browncroft. We look forward taking a next step together in our spiritual journeys this weekend!

Schedule

- 8:00 am – Check-In
- 8:30 am – Keynote #1 / Rule of Life
- 9:15 am – Breakout #1
- 10:00 am – Break
- 10:05 am – Breakout #2
- 10:50 am – Break
- 10:55 am – Worship Session
- 11:45 am – Lunch
- 1:00 pm – Breakout #3
- 1:45 pm – Break
- 1:50 pm – Keynote #2 / Rule of Life
- 2:30 pm – Close

Carl Binger

BIO:

Carl has been married since 2013 and has three boys. He's a huge Buffalo Bills fan. He is a mental health therapist who published a book called, "The Progressive Darkness" on depression. He offers several online resources, including a Facebook group, to help engage people with depression.

Why are you excited about this workshop?

I am excited to lead this workshop because it is very dear to my heart. I believe confession is an extremely neglected discipline and is at times evident by some very shallow and surface level discipleship we can observe in our relationships in the body of Christ. Jesus wants to heal us, and He wants us to go deep with Himself and each other. It is in these places of transparency and vulnerability that we will encounter the deepest joy of being in Christ.



**Breakout #1 -
9:15-10:00 am**

Confession

Victor Calamaro

BIO:

Victor is the husband of Emily, and the father of Evie, Eliza, and Everett. He works with college students in the Rochester area with InterVarsity. He has struggled with keeping the sabbath for about a decade.

Why are you excited about this workshop?

I have grown tremendously in my walk with Jesus through the practice of the Sabbath, but I have needed a lot of help along the way. Hopefully this workshop will help others as they try to practice the Sabbath.



**Breakout #1 -
9:15-10:00 am**

Sabbath

Amanda D'Angelo

BIO:

Since becoming a Christian at the age of 17, Amanda has faithfully served in church in various capacities. Before getting married and moving to Rochester last year, Amanda previously worked at The Chapel in Buffalo as the Volunteer Coordinator. She worked with guests over four campuses to prayerfully consider where they felt God was leading them to serve in the church. Amanda now works on staff at Browncroft as the Next Steps Director -- joyfully helping new guests to take the next step in their relationship with God and in the life of the church. It is a strong passion of hers to see and help others use their heart, gifts, and passions to glorify God..

Why are you excited about this workshop?

It is a strong passion of mine to see and help others use their heart, gifts and passions for God. The unfortunate reality is that everyone doesn't get the opportunity to use it in their career. But in the church, it is not only welcomed, but celebrated. In this workshop we'll work through the what, why, and how of serving and spiritual gifts.



**Breakout #1 -
9:15-10:00 am**

Serving

Peter Englert

BIO:

Peter Englert is Adult Ministries Director at Browncroft Community Church. He graduated from the University of Valley Forge with a B.A. in Pastoral Ministry and a M.A. in Theology. He also blogs at peterenglert.com.



Why are you excited about this workshop?

The practice of simplicity invites us to prioritize our lives through the Gospel. We learn to become human by learning to say "No" to things that don't matter, along with shedding the encumbrance of our lives. Think of this discipline as a way to scrub your calendar, diet, spending, and the things that don't help you experience life-change in Jesus.

**Breakout #1 -
9:15-10:00 am**

Simplicity

Trisha Smith

BIO:

Trisha and her husband, Donnie, live in Canandaigua and have three daughters (ages 27, 19 & 16) and one son-in-law. She is excited to meet her very first grandchild this April! She has worked in different areas of Family Ministry for almost 20 years.

Why are you excited about this workshop?

I'm passionate about helping families understand a biblical view of Family Discipleship. I want to be an encouragement to parents as they live out the responsibility of disciple-making in their homes.



**Breakout #1 -
9:15-10:00 am**

**Family
Discipleship**

Aaron McGinnis

BIO:

Aaron is interested in music, hiking, science, disc golf, and Jesus. Having grown up in a Christian home in Rochester, faith has fueled his passion to use what God has given him to bring His kingdom here on earth. Whether it be teaching, filmmaking, camp counseling, or working with students at Browncroft - he has always been excited to see what God is putting before him and calling him to walk into.

Why are you excited about this workshop?

What we do with our time and our lives, matters. "Unplugging" is an interactive workshop where we will take a critical look at where society is pushing us to plug-in, where Jesus calls us to be engaged, and practically how that is playing out in our daily rhythms, schedules, and thought-life. Whether you are an overwhelmed parent, an underwhelmed young-professional, or a student simply interested in practical approaches to "plug-in" to the things of God, this will be great for you.



**Breakout #2 -
10:05-10:50 am**

Unplugging

Fr. Peter Mottalo

BIO:

Father Peter moved to Rochester for an undergraduate program at RIT, and he found himself (quite unexpectedly) immersed in a Christian community. With the encouragement of friends who strengthened his faith by sharing their faith, he entered seminary immediately after graduation (his IT degree sits on a shelf collecting dust) and he spends his life drawing people into a deeper communion with Jesus Christ. Returning to Rochester in 2021 was a dream come true, and he is blessed to be surrounded by friends — including some of those very same friends who drew him to Jesus in college. He is a pastor of a parish of three churches with a school, Judicial Vicar of the Diocese of Rochester, and occasionally teaches graduate courses at St. Bernard's School of Theology & Ministry.

Why are you excited about this workshop?

I have been welcomed into homes when I was a stranger, and that has taught me more about the love God has for us than a thousand books. Jesus promised us the "hundredfold, now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands". St. Paul says, "all things are yours", and I experience that this promise is already mine when I gather around the table with friends and strangers.



**Breakout #2 -
10:05-10:50 am**

Hospitality
(Led with Kate Dominguez
& Ted Janiszewski)

Kate Dominguez

BIO:

Kate Dominguez loves Jesus. She and her husband Miguel have hosted an open community dinner most Fridays for about seven years, generally between 10-25 people each week, but as many as 33! All are welcome, RSVP optional, just bring yourselves. She is blessed to watch God send new friends through the door each week. Her life goal is building caring Christian community.

Why are you excited about this workshop?

I am not a chef, don't have a big house, and may be hiding the laundry basket behind the couch during Friday dinners. God doesn't want you to wait until conditions are perfect. He wants your trusting "YES" today! I hope to see you at one of my Friday dinners someday and hope you feel inspired to open your home (laundry baskets and all) to others.



**Breakout #2 -
10:05-10:50 am**

Hospitality
(Led with Fr. Peter
Mottola & Ted
Janiszewski)

Ted Janiszewski

BIO:

Ted is the director of St. Irenaeus Ministries. He teaches Bible studies and trains disciples for Christ and his Kingdom. Ted moved to Rochester in 2005 to attend RIT. He also took a Master's in Theological Studies at the University of Notre Dame in 2015.

Why are you excited about this workshop?

Hospitality is a sacred trust. It has always and everywhere been at the core of Christian praxis – with the sole exception of Christianity as practiced in modern America. We need to re-learn what the ancients knew about hospitality if we want to enjoy once more the explosive growth of the early and undivided Church.



**Breakout #2 -
10:05-10:50 am**

Hospitality
(Led with Fr. Peter Mottola
& Kate Dominguez)

Cris Kerekes

BIO:

After a first career as a high school chemistry teacher, Cris trained in spiritual direction, then went on to earn an MDiv from Northeastern Seminary and complete two units of CPE at URMH-Strong Hospital. Her current work as a spiritual director takes place primarily in nontraditional settings, including grocery stores and parking lots, waiting rooms, retreats, and online small groups. Currently, she serves as an adjunct professor in spiritual direction at NES and a small group supervisor for other training programs. Cris enjoys walking, kayaking, art museums, and a cup of tea with a good book or conversation on winter afternoons.

Why are you excited about this workshop?

The examen nurtures a deepening awareness of God in the ordinary moments of everyday life. In its simplest form, the examen quietly invites me to end my day open to gratitude, and gratitude - or even its absence - leads me to a sense of God's presence through the night and provision for the day ahead.



**Breakout #2 -
10:05-10:50 am**

Examen

Rob Cattalani

BIO:

Rob was born and raised in Rochester but had the opportunity to travel the world for a number of years as a missions pastor and missionary before becoming the pastor of Browncroft. His greatest privilege and joy as a pastor is to read, study, and teach God's Word. He continues to enjoy travel and doing most anything outdoors -- hiking, biking, skiing, and walking the beach. He also enjoys good books, good conversation, and meeting new people.

Why are you excited about this workshop?

I have always enjoyed reading the Bible but have grown in the last many years by reading for personal application and turning my learning into a prayer. The Bible is a living Word and we should approach it daily to hear God's word for us.



**Breakout #2 -
10:05-10:50 am**

Bible Study

Janet Balajthy

BIO:

Janet became a follower of Jesus as a teen. Her years of involvement with the campus ministry of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship fostered an understanding of Lordship and service, as well as a love for daily engagement with Scripture and prayer. Her life was impacted by several mission trips to Africa and Latin America. Marriage and parenting have provided additional opportunities to mature her faith. She acquired certification in spiritual direction from North Park Seminary which introduced her to a variety of spiritual practices that have deepened her walk with God and prepared her for her current ministry of walking with others in their spiritual journeys.

Why are you excited about this workshop?

It has been my experience that I encounter God through attentive writing in my journal. It is a way of honestly processing your thoughts and feelings in dialogue with God and come to a greater awareness of His presence and love in the ups and downs of your ordinary days.



**Breakout #3 -
1:00-1:45 pm**

Journaling

Jason Harris



BIO:

Jason is Browncroft's Senior Director of Worship and Production serving on staff since 2010. In addition to leading worship with his amazing team, Jason is the founder of Browncroft's internship program and is the Associate Director of the Worship Leader Institute. Within WLI, Jason curates and develops content for worship leader training, and is currently co-developing a national coaching program launching in 2023. While not at work, he and his wife, Marissa, enjoy spending time outdoors running around with their three children.

Why are you excited about this workshop?

In this workshop I'm looking forward to exploring biblical examples of effective coaching and sharing my personal experience. In today's world success is often perceived as something that is personal - a solo journey. But as we look deeper into the lives of many successful leaders, we find that they had important people in their lives that helped lead them into their calling, and people in their lives that they are intentionally raising up into greater leadership.

**Breakout #3 -
1:00-1:45 pm**

Mentoring

Melvin Cross

BIO:

Melvin is the Pastor of Glory House International located in downtown Rochester. He is married to Ashley and they are the parents of three beautiful girls and they are expecting another baby girl in late March. Melvin received his Masters of Divinity from Oral Roberts University and is currently completing his doctoral degree from Bakke Graduate University.

Why are you excited about this workshop?

I am excited about teaching a workshop on fasting because this spiritual discipline is often pushed aside. But fasting was a common occurrence in the early church that we should fully embrace today.



**Breakout #3 -
1:00-1:45 pm**

Fasting

Alyssa Matz

BIO:

Alyssa is the Family Ministry and Congregational Care Coordinator at Browncroft Community Church. A recent MSW (Master of Social Work) graduate, she is a passionate advocate for mental health, congregational care, and aiding vulnerable populations both inside and outside the walls of the church. Her husband Ben and she got married two and a half years ago, and since then have loved exploring Rochester and Upstate New York together. In her free time, she enjoys hiking, creativity, spending quality time with friends and family, and a good chai latte.

Why are you excited about this workshop?

I am excited to be leading the "Share Your Faith" Workshop because sharing our faith is one of the most rewarding parts of being a Christian. Sometimes we just need direction on how to start. "Share Your Faith" is one of our four spiritual habits at Browncroft and something we can always be practicing. The best part is - it doesn't have to look the same for everyone!



**Breakout #3 -
1:00-1:45 pm**

Share Your Faith

John Iamaio

BIO:

John currently serves as the Discipleship Pastor at Browncroft. Before that, he spent 20 years in ministry with college students. He is passionate about authentic communication about faith and developing the next generation of leaders within the church. He has been married to his wife Laura for 23 years and is the dad of Hayden (17), Hannah (15) and a three-legged dog named Delilah (3).

Why are you excited about this workshop?

I love to see people growing closer in their walk with Jesus. I want to offer people a space where they can apply what they are learning in a practical way.



**Keynote
Speaker**

Rule of Life