

Great Lakes Theology & Preaching Conference

Paper and Abstract Submission Guidelines

Western Theological Seminary invites current undergraduate students as well as others considering seminary to submit presentation proposals for the third annual Great Lakes Theology & Preaching Conference on **November 6–7, 2025**.

The general theme for the conference is **“God the Creator.”** Other possible topics related to the theme include, but are not limited to:

- Creation care
- Imago Dei
- Reading Genesis
- Creation stories in the Psalms
- Creation and new creation

In addition to our theme, we welcome proposals that explore any aspect of Christian theology, biblical studies, preaching, or ministry.

Submissions may take one of two forms:

1. **Academic Papers**
2. **Sermons (based on biblical texts, ideally engaging the conference theme)**

For both types of submissions:

Proposals should state a title, demonstrate a clear focus, outline the questions or themes addressed, and preview the sources or texts engaged. Proposals should be between **200 and 350 words** and must be submitted via the linked form by **October 24, 2025**.

Presentations at the conference will follow these formats:

- **Paper presentations:** 10-minute delivery with 10 minutes for discussion
- **Sermon presentations:** 12–15-minute sermon with 5–8 minutes for feedback/discussion

All who present are encouraged to submit their work for further consideration for one of two **Great Lakes Theology & Preaching Prizes** (see below), each of which includes an award of **\$500**.

Those proposing papers or sermons must be registered by **October 24** for consideration.



Submit here.

Great Lakes Theology & Preaching Conference Prizes

Paper Prize

The Paper Prize seeks to inspire and support the next generation of theological thinkers. This award is given to an individual beginning theological study—someone without graduate-level training—who exhibits promise in the form of creativity, clarity, and depth of engagement.

Guidelines for Submission:

- Final papers must be submitted to gltpc@westernsem.edu by **October 24**.
- Submitted papers must be delivered at the conference for consideration.
- Papers should be written in a formal academic tone, with references to Scripture and secondary literature. Adaptations for oral delivery are welcome.
- Papers should not exceed **2,000 words** (including footnotes but excluding bibliography).
- Any standard citation format is acceptable; **Chicago Manual of Style** is recommended.
- The winning paper will be selected by a panel of WTS faculty and announced on the final day of the conference.

Sermon Prize

The Sermon Prize honors excellence in undergraduate preaching. This award recognizes a student who demonstrates theological depth, scriptural insight, and skill in the art of proclamation.

Guidelines for Submission:

- Students must preach their sermon live at the conference.
- A written **manuscript** must be submitted to gltpc@westernsem.edu by **October 24**.
- Sermons should be rooted in one or more biblical texts and ideally reflect the conference theme.
- Sermons must fall within the **12-15 minute** range when delivered.

The winning sermon will be selected by a panel of faculty and local pastors with expertise in preaching and worship and announced on the final day of the conference.