

[The Center of Addiction & Faith](#)

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New York Times bestseller Johann Hari to join medical experts, government officials and spiritual leaders at Addiction & Faith Conference this fall

(**St. Bonifacius, Minn., July 1, 2022**) What does a record 107,000 deaths from substance misuse over the last year have in common with increasing crime, homelessness and incarceration? Our faith communities may hold the key to much needed change and healing.

To share experience, strength and hope, [The Center of Addiction & Faith](#) will hold its 2022 [Addiction & Faith Conference](#) October 6-8, at the Airport Hilton in Bloomington, Minnesota. Hundreds of faith leaders from across the country are expected to join mental-health and addiction experts, legislators and members of the recovery community to learn about addiction science and hear new solutions for healing.

“Punishing people with addiction doesn’t give them a reason to stop,” says British-Swiss journalist Johann Hari, who will be the conference keynote speaker. Hari is the author of one of the top-rated TED talks of all time, “Everything you think you know about addiction is wrong.” He is also author of *Chasing the Scream: The first and last days of the War on Drugs*.

“Transformative faith is a positive factor in addiction prevention and recovery,” said the Rev. Dr. Ed Treat, executive director of the Center of Addiction & Faith. “Faith communities are in an ideal position to make a difference in healing addiction, but they don’t know how. We want to change that.”

Other keynote speakers include:

- **The Rev. Dr. Monteic A, Sizer**, is director of the Northeast Delta Human Services Authority in Louisiana and author of *In Kingdom Leadership: Leading God's Way To Fulfill Purpose*.
- **The Rev. Dr. Que English**, director of The Partnership Center of U.S. Health & Human Services
- **Timothy McMahan King**, Center of Addiction & Faith board member, journalist and author of *Addiction Nation: What the Opioid Crisis Says About Us*

In addition to keynote speakers, breakout sessions will cover subjects such as addiction and the family, addiction science, addiction and justice, equipping faith communities for addiction ministry, and best practices.

In his TED Talk, Hari says, “When we’re happy and healthy, we bond and connect with each other. If we can’t do that, because we’re traumatized, isolated or beaten down ... we bond and connect with something else.”

According to the Center for Disease Control, more than 107,000 preventable deaths occurred in 2021 from substance misuse. Women have increased their heavy drinking days by 41 percent, compared to before the pandemic. Hotline calls to the National Eating Disorders Association are up 70-80 percent. Increased patterns in gambling, pornography and suicide follow suit.

Treat said that the Center of Addiction & Faith Conference is open to anyone who wants to be part of the solution to our addiction crisis. Registration is open and more information is available at www.addictionandfaithconference.com. Through August 31, the in-person cost is \$325. It will increase by \$50 in September. A virtual option is also available.

The Center of Addiction & Faith grew out of the Fellowship of Recovering Lutheran Clergy, formed in 1990 to provide help and give encouragement to pastors recovering from alcoholism and addiction. Treat was an active Lutheran pastor in 2018 when he held the first Addiction & Faith Conference. The success encouraged him to dedicate himself full-time to The Center of Addiction & Faith, which became a 501©(3) nonprofit organization in 2020.

Treat said, "We want to show faith leaders how to offer hope and healing in their communities, not only to persons with addiction but also their families, especially children. Too many people are suffering. Together we have the potential to transform our world."

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