

## **September 19: *Discernment: What Is God Calling Me to Do?***

### **Pastor Anjanette Bandel**

Pastors are often asked about their “call” story or simply how they decided to become a pastor. Explaining a “call” is more about the process of discernment vs making a decision. And, one does not have to be a pastor to be “called” by God. Discernment isn’t just about what you’re going to do with your life, which school you’ll attend, or what job you’ll have. It is about being open, curious, and attuned to what God is up to—with you and with your community. And it’s being confident that you have a part to play in the story of God’s love for the world. This forum will share some “call” stories and helpful ways to discern your “call”—no matter your age or life stage.

## **September 26: *Theologians You Should Know—Part 1***

### **Sarah Ruble**

Have you ever wondered why Christians believe in the Trinity? Why sinful patterns can be so hard to break? How to think about evil in a world made by God? You are not alone. Theologians have been thinking about these questions for centuries. This class will introduce you to four theologians—Augustine, Athanasius, Thomas Aquinas, and Julian of Norwich—whose questions and ideas can help us navigate the questions, concerns, and challenges of our own time.

## **October 3: *No Struggle, No Faith—Part 1***

### **Mark Tranvik**

Faith is not easy. It is not easy to trust God. It is not easy to live out a Christian life. Using examples from the Bible and the history of the church, we will look at the deep and necessary connection between struggle and faith.

## **October 10: *Theologians You Should Know—Part 2***

### **Sarah Ruble (See September 26 description)**

## **October 17: *Latin American Lutheran Mission (LALM)***

### **Dave Turner**

LALM is an independent Lutheran faith mission that depends entirely on God to supply its needs through prayer and freewill offerings. Board member David Turner speaks about LALM’s current and future mission activities in the US and Latin America. He will also address how the COVID-19 pandemic has led to enormous job losses and an increased demand for food distribution in the US/Mexican border region.

## **October 24: MEA Weekend—No Forum**

## **October 31: *Lutherans Learn to Educate their Pastors: The History of Luther Seminary—Part 1***

### **Mark Granquist**

When Lutherans came to America, they had to educate their own pastors, as the few pastors that came here could not meet the demands. American Lutherans eventually founded their own seminaries to educate pastors, but it was an ongoing experiment, constantly reacting to changing circumstances. Through photos and stories, we will look at the history of Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota, to learn the real, ongoing story of how American Lutherans have educated their pastors.

## **November 7: *Lutherans Learn to Educate their Pastors: The History of Luther Seminary—Part 2***

### **Mark Granquist (See October 31 description)**

## **November 14: *Christian Nationalism***

### **Darrel Jodock**

Christian nationalism is the claim that the United States was founded as a Christian nation, that it needs to remain Christian for God’s special blessings to continue, and that Christians should have a privileged status in matters of law and policy. In April, 2021, the National Council of Churches (of which the ELCA is a member) adopted a policy statement on “The Dangers of Christian Nationalism in the United States.” What dangers does it identify, and what is a better way to understand our nation and our vocation as Christians who are also citizens?

## **November 21: *Church Life (DVD)***

### **Bill Bakken & Jim Deuschle**

Four topics of church life are discussed from Martin Luther’s point of view: (1)What is the Church? (2) Education and Role of a Preacher, (3) Changes in Worship, and (4)Who Makes the Decisions?

## **November 28: Thanksgiving—No Forum**

## **December 5: *No Struggle, No Faith—Part 2 (See October 3 description)***

### **Mark Tranvik**

## **December 12: *Christians and Jews: A Look at Romans 9–11***

### **Darrel Jodock**

In Romans 9–11, Paul wrestles with the question of God’s relation to the Jews who had not affirmed Jesus as the Messiah. He emphatically rejects the suggestion that God has rejected his people and asserts that the gifts and promises of God are irrevocable but winds up without answers to some of his questions. What does Paul say, what does he not say, and how is this important for us today?

## **December 19: *Roman Palestine 161 BC to AD 135***

### **Bill Bakken**

The Roman influence in Palestine progressed from a treaty against a common enemy to a cooperative governance of the Jewish population to complete Roman domination in which Jews were forbidden to live in the vicinity of Jerusalem. Knowledge of these changes is assumed but not explained in the biblical narrative. This class will explain the many changes and why they were made.

## **December 26 & January 2: No Forums**

## **January 9: *Finding Meaning, The Sixth State of Grief***

### **Pastor Linda Helberg**

Many who grieve will recognize the five stages of grief identified by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross. David Kessler has identified an important sixth stage, “finding meaning.” This sixth stage is important to our physical, emotional, and spiritual health and a goal for everyone who grieves.

## **January 16: *Growing a Poverty-Free Haiti***

### **Brie LaPlante**

As CEO of Vetiver Solutions, Brie will update attendees on the progress their company is making in rural Haiti to implement sustainable and equitable agriculture practices. She will discuss how the concepts of food sovereignty and biodiversity relate to Vetiver Solutions’ agricultural initiatives, and how soil erosion and deforestation are root causes of poverty and malnutrition.

**January 23: *The Landing***  
**Dan Fifield, RN, Founder, CEO**

From an initial dream (honestly a dream) to God's not so gentle "shove," The Landing is an organization walking side by side with our friends that are experiencing homelessness. The Landing aims to navigate a sometimes very confusing and difficult system to enable people to live a more stable life.

**January 30: *Stepping Into Our Global Relationships***  
**Kathy Chatelaine**

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod lives in deep accompaniment relationships with Lutheran organizations and people in Colombia, Tanzania, South Sudan, US/Mexico borderlands, and marginalized neighborhoods in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Kathy will provide an overview on each partners' ministry initiatives and provide updates on the impact of COVID-19 in each of the global contexts. We will hear how the Spirit is blowing mightily throughout our global/local communities!

**February 6: *Stepping into the Borderlands***  
**Kathy Chatelaine**

The global/local conversation continues as Kathy brings us into the US/Mexico borderlands. Based on her January 2019 visit to and continued relationship with ELCA ministries in New Mexico and Texas, Kathy will take us on a narrative visit into the changing realities of life in the US/Mexico borderlands for asylum seekers, migrants, and generational residents. Kathy will also unpack the August 2019 vote that designated the ELCA as a Sanctuary denomination.

**February 13: *History of the Afterlife***  
**Chad Israelson**

Western Culture has not always possessed a consistent view of the afterlife. This class will discuss concepts of the afterlife within western cultures (Ancient Mediterranean, Judeo-Christian, Islamic, etc.), explore commonalities, describe differences, and investigate the transformations found among them.

**February 20: *Confessing the Faith (DVD)***  
**Jim Deutschle**

Four brief DVD presentations from Luther House of Study will focus on keys to the Lutheran faith including the "Heidelberg Disputation," "Diet

of worms," "Augsburg Confession," and "Royal Priesthood." This will be followed by a short review of the historical context and significance of each.

**February 27: *The Story of David and Goliath (DVD)***  
**Bill Bakken**

The story of David and Goliath has transcended its biblical origins to become a common shorthand for an unlikely victory in the face of expected defeat. We will discuss the story as it is presented in the bible and then view a video that gives a different explanation to see if our view of the story has changed.

**March 6: *Christian Church in Liberia***  
**Jerry Locula**

With an 85.6% Christian population, Liberians see God in every aspect of life. The rain and the sun, tough times and good times, war and peace never deter the faith of the common Liberian. Jerry Locula will share how Liberians yearn for God and how they are renewed for salvation each day.

**March 13: *Planning for Long Term Care Needs***  
**Julie Assef & Holly Brown**

Julie is a Licensed Social Worker and Holly has a Bachelor of Social Work degree and has spent 13 years working with Elder Network. They will discuss the importance of self-care, how to hold a family meeting, self-empowerment, and how to hold difficult conversations with those you trust. Handouts will be provided.

**March 20: *The Lutheran Confessions***  
**Pastor Jason Burggraff**

Are the Lutheran Confessions just for Pastors? By no means! All Lutherans should at least know of the Confessions, and even better, know the book itself! Luther understood that while congregations benefitted by calling pastors who had trained specifically for their work, they had to be good judges of sound doctrine, and good preaching. This means above all, knowing scripture. But after that, it means studying how Lutherans have come to their conclusions of why Jesus Christ is at the center, and what that means for every other issue at stake. Come explore the Lutheran Confessions with Pastor Jason!

# SUNDAY MORNING EDUCATION FORUMS



**SEPTEMBER 19, 2021–  
MARCH 20, 2022  
10:30 AM IN ROOM 115**

