

**September 14: Building a Multiracial Movement of Thousands with ISAIAH**

*Olivia Bergen*

This moment in our history calls for a movement of people across race, class, religion, and geography. It calls for a bold, people-centered agenda written by those people and for a plan and a seriousness about the power required to realize that agenda in 2025-2027. That's what we're doing at ISAIAH. Come learn how people in churches, mosques, barbershops, childcare centers, and manufactured home parks are all organizing together in a movement that isn't about politicians or parties: it's about us, what we deserve, and how we can shape our whole political system to make that real.

**September 21: What's happening in the ELCA?**

*Lisa Dierks* Southeastern Minnesota Synod Vice President

This program will present an update and overview from the 2025 Churchwide Assembly. We'll discuss what it means to be a church in three expressions and consider the ways we are part of a global, national and local expression of the body of Christ. Come to hear updates, ask questions, and participate in the life of the church!

**September 28: From the 1500s to today: Two perspectives on faith that have shaped Lutherans**

*Dr. Darrell Jodock*

1) Lutheran Orthodoxy. Beginning in about 1580, teachers in German universities worked out a system of teachings that emphasized and tried to defend the distinctiveness of Lutheran thinking (over against Catholics and Calvinists). It influenced many German and Scandinavian Lutherans, and it continues to influence the Missouri Synod and the Wisconsin Synod.

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2) Pietism. In 1675, in the aftermath of the 30 Years War, Philip Spener shifted the emphasis from “correct teaching” to the development of each person’s faith. He recommended prayer groups, Bible study, and more “pastoral” preaching. Pietism spread. It influenced missions, social service, and education in Germany and among Lutherans in America. A little later, Hans Nielsen Hauge carried its influence across Norway, and from there many immigrants carried it to the U.S.

**October 12: Stories From the Parson**

*Pastor Norman Wahl*

Every pastor has stories that amuse and amaze. Pastor Emeritus Norman Wahl will call upon 41 years of working with people. (Weddings, especially, are fertile grounds for great stories!)

**October 19: Observations about Israel-Palestine by a Non-Expert**

*Dr. Darrell Jodock*

What are some sources of the Conflict in the Holy Land? In the current struggle, what is at stake for each side? If there is a recipe for peace, what are some possible ingredients? What is the role of religious communities?

**October 26: Katharina von Bora**

*Jim Deutchle*

2025 is the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of an event that shook the Roman Catholic Church. A former priest, Martin Luther, married a former nun, Katharine von Bora. Who was this woman who was sent to a convent at age 5, escaped in a fish barrel, and was called by Martin Luther "Meine Kathe"? Learn about her amazing life and contributions to the Reformation.

**November 2: The Old Testament for a Complex World**

*Cameron Howard*

In today's era of cultural upheaval, studying the Old Testament may seem irrelevant. But what if the Bible is just the resource needed to speak to the challenges of living as Christians in a complex world--not only because of what the Bible says, but also because of the way it came together? This class will work toward reclaiming the Old Testament as a vital resource for our church, exploring how study of these texts might help us understand the Bible as dynamic testimony for our changing future.

**November 9: High School Youth Mission Trip Reflections**

*Krista Lutzi*

This summer, our high school youth partnered with YouthWorks on a mission trip to Denver, Colorado. Through service, worship, and connection, they worked alongside local communities and grew in faith. Come hear their inspiring stories of how God moved in and through them during this unforgettable experience.

**November 16: International Health Partners Update**

*Paula Loftstrom and David West*

IHP has turned over their facility at Zinga to Tanzanian staff and is now working to plan a facility to serve the people in Chihoni who lack a readily available medical facility. Paula and her son David West will talk about the needs of the Tanzanian people and their own spiritual, mental, professional and geographic journey which has sustained them and brought them to Chihoni.

**November 23: Behind the Sermon: How the Message Comes To Life**

*Pastor Lisa Hawe*

How does a sermon develop each week? Join us for an adult education session to examine the prayerful, creative, and sometimes surprising process of sermon preparation. Pastor Lisa describes a week in the life of a preacher—from discerning what to say, to weaving scripture, current events, and pastoral care into one message of hope. You'll learn about trusted sources, the role of the Holy Spirit in shaping the message, and how experiences like the Festival of Homiletics and a new preaching cohort called Prairie Fire continue to inspire and sharpen the craft. Come curious and leave with a deeper appreciation for the weekly Word we share together

**November 30: No Sunday Morning Forum**

**December 7: Stewarding Life**

*Emily Carson*

What does it mean to be stewards of our whole lives? What does it look like to take excellent care of the relationships, resources and time with which God has entrusted us? We'll use gardening as our metaphorical playground. This forum is intended to be a collaborative, enriching experience that will leave you feeling curious and connected.

**December 14: Lutheran Work in Madagascar**

*Phil Quanbeck*

As early as 1885 Scandinavian Lutherans in America became interested in mission work in Madagascar, thanks in part, to Augsburg Seminary president Georg Sverdrup. In August 2024 my wife Ruth Johnson M.D. and I traveled to visit the hospitals and clinics of SALFA the Lutheran medical system of central and southern Madagascar. We traveled with my cousin Dr. Stanley Quanbeck longtime medical missionary to Madagascar and Rev. Doug Cox president of Global Health Ministries. The work of SALFA continues a strong outreach serving the people of Madagascar. The motto of SALFA is “We treat, Jesus heals.”

**January 11 and 18: The Book of Revelations**

*Travis Beck*

666; The four horsemen of the apocalypse; The mark of the beast. These are phrases and images from the book of Revelation, and we are familiar with them largely through popular media. But what is Revelation even about? The visions it describes are frightening and confusing. Is Revelation a coded message for prediction the end of the world? Or is it something else entirely? Travis will explore these questions and more in the two-part forum on this fascinating and misunderstood book

**January 25: AmeriCorps Seniors: Enrich your Life by Helping Others**

*Joyce Lehman*

Lutheran Social Service of MN offers two AmeriCorps Seniors programs for Americans aged 55 and older. Volunteers choose to serve anywhere from 5 to 40 hours a week in either of 2 programs

1. Foster Grandparent Program Volunteers mentor and guide students to higher academic achievement and grow life skills..
2. Senior Companion Program Volunteers serve as friends and companions to seniors with a difficulty with daily living tasks.

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**February 1: Bringing Lent Home**

*Pastor Michael Mandsager*

The season of Lent is one of the oldest traditions in the Christian church, dating back to the fourth century A.D. What role does Lent play in your faith life? Do you give something up for Lent? Do you add something, like additional worship services, devotions, or giving to charities? Come learn about the history and origins of Lenten practices and explore ways of making Lent more meaningful for you at church and at home.

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**February 8: Samaritan Bethany ...104 Years of Caring**

*Wayne Stenberg Foundation Development Leader*

Samaritan Bethany is a Rochester nonprofit with a rich history of offering compassionate high-quality care for older adults. The organization began as a church-based initiative in 1922, to provide care for people recovering from surgery. Take a historical journey as we explore the transformation of Samaritan Bethany from its beginnings to the present day. With the support of seven sponsoring churches, including Bethel, Samaritan Bethany has grown into a vibrant, supportive community where residents can live fulfilling lives and experience a strong sense of belonging.

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**February 15: Compassion and Comfort: Understanding Hospice Care**

*Maureen Bigelow RN and Martha Siska RN*

This presentation will discuss the basics of hospice care dispelling myths and identifying truths. It will include various hospice services available to hospice patients and their families. It will walk through how hospice can support patients and their families as they navigate their sacred journey.

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**February 22: Decline of Mainline?**

*Dr. Sarah Ruble*

Since the late 1960s, mainline Protestant denominations have been in a numeric decline. In this session, we will investigate some hypotheses as to why the mainline is declining, consider what the "decline" means for both church and culture, and think about what living faithfully in the face of decline might look like.

**March 1: Finding the Boundaries of Faith; Orthodoxy and Heresy in the Early Christian Church**

*Bill Bakken*

In its first 200 plus years the Christian church created the scriptural and credal documents that defined the faith. During and shortly after that period the church was faced with the challenge of ideas that confronted the limits of these documents. This class will discuss how these challenges were met and how it affected the church understanding of God and itself.

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**March 8: Martin Luther on Prayer**

*Dr. Mark Tranvik*

In this class we will learn how Martin Luther changed the understanding and purpose of prayer in his time. We will also talk about how his insights can influence how we pray today.

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**March 15: How to Plan Your Funeral**

*Pastor Anjanette Bandel*

While death is not a comfortable topic for many, we have the gift of faith that promises that death does not have the last word. Planning your funeral is a gift you can leave for your family when they are overwhelmed with grief. This class will discuss the funeral service and its elements and how a funeral or memorial service that is thoughtfully planned can bring comfort and hope. There will also be conversation about cremation, legacy gift planning, and graveside services. Handouts will be offered to help you leave the class with opportunities to put into action the next steps to plan your funeral.

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**March 22: Social Media Impacts**

*Jennifer Soland*

Learn more about the adverse effects of social media use in youth and adults. Information will be presented about the impacts social media can have on mental health as well as practical tips and strategies for informed monitoring and controlling use of social media.

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Contact any member of the Adult Education Team if you have a topic suggestion for Adult Education, or if you'd like to help with the team.

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# SUNDAY MORNING EDUCATION FORUMS



**September 14, 2025 – March 22, 2026**

**Forums are held on Sundays  
at 10:30 a.m. in Room 115**

***Everyone is invited to participate!***

