

Thursday: Session 1 options

Called Forward Together in Christ – Conversation about Future Directions for the ELCA

Presenter: Lyla Rogan

Thursday 4:30-5:30 p.m., Room 252

Called Forward Together in Christ is a process that will help the leaders of this church make decisions about the future identity, direction and priorities of the ELCA. This workshop provides an opportunity to learn about some of the key messages that have emerged from conversations to do and to contribute to the ongoing deliberation that will lead to recommendations presented to the ELCA Church Council in November.

The Heart of the Lutheran Witness to the Faith

Presenter: Kathryn “Kit” Kleinhans

Thursday 4:30-5:30 p.m., Room 257 and Friday 4:45–5:45 p.m., Room 255

Martin Luther’s Small Catechism is famous for the question “What does this mean?” For Luther, this question wasn’t just a formula to memorize. Luther wanted to provide real and meaningful answers for the deep questions of people’s lives. What was the core of Luther’s understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ? Why was Luther convinced that “faith alone” was at the heart of a saving relationship with God in Christ? What made this gospel “good news” for Luther – and for us? Five hundred years later, how can we Lutherans share the gospel in a way that speaks good news in response to the deep questions, to the hopes, longings and even sufferings of others?

The Modern-Day Pilgrimage: Reformation 500

Presenter: Robert Moore

Thursday 4:30-5:30 p.m., Room 237 and Friday 9:30-10:30 a.m., Room 235

Take time to plan your travel for the near future as Germany prepares for the 500th anniversary observance of the Reformation. Such travel becomes a pilgrimage when faith is deepened and historical understanding is illuminated. A visit to the Luther sites is not so much a step into the past as a step into the present as one experiences how Lutheran theology has affected the events of history. The cultural legacy of Lutheranism is alive and well in the land of Bach, Handel, Telemann and Cranach. Join the Rev. Robert Moore, ELCA Reformation 500 representative to Wittenberg and Leipzig, for a helpful approach to a modern-day pilgrimage.

Lutheranism in Asia: Its Relevance and Importance

Presenter: Chandran Paul Martin

Thursday 4:30-5:30 p.m., Room 255 and Friday 3:30-4:30 p.m., Room 255

The workshop will be a unique space to seek information while exploring the theological and ecclesial life, witness and service of the Lutheran churches in Asia. The vision is for workshop participants to receive and discuss important developments in the Lutheran churches in Asia. Currently, Lutheranism in Asia has become stronger and creative in its mission efforts by learning and sharing together. A common search for an Asian Lutheran identity is emerging, and the ELCA is a strong companion that facilitates mutual accompaniment in the minority Lutheran context in Asia. The ELCA engages 19 countries of this region accompanying some of the oldest Lutheran missions, the newest Lutheran churches, and some of the world’s largest Lutheran churches.

Friday: Session 2 options

Lutheran-Jewish Relations

Presenters: Peg Shultz-Akerson, Darrel Jodock and David Sandmel

Friday 8:15-9:15 a.m., Room 252 and Friday 9:30-10:30 a.m., Room 252

Martin Luther's anti-Judaic legacy is among the most troubling aspects of our heritage. In a 1994 declaration, the ELCA repudiated Luther's anti-Judaic writings and reached out in relationship to our Jewish sisters and brothers. This workshop will 1) explore the history of ELCA's Lutheran-Jewish relations; 2) lift up the resources available to help ELCA congregations and members understand Judaism and actively engage with our Jewish neighbors; and 3) offer a perspective from one of our Jewish partners on the importance of this work for our shared life together in a multi-religious society.

The "Noble Art" of Music

Presenter: Chad Fothergill

Friday 8:15-9:15 a.m., Room 257

An able musician in his own right, Martin Luther understood the power of music to nourish and teach God's children of all ages and abilities. Pastors and musicians in his circle and throughout the following generations penned texts and tunes that were rooted in Scripture, yet spoke to the diverse experiences of people who sang them at home, school and worship. This workshop takes a closer look at how music – from Luther's hymns to global song – can be incorporated into different congregational contexts in both 2017 and beyond. Using suggestions in the Reformation 500 Sourcebook as a starting place, additional ideas will be offered for seasons and festivals of the church year, home devotions and special services, such as "The Church's Journey in Art and Song" that premiered at the 2015 Worship Jubilee. Finally, participants will have an opportunity to share their planning ideas and questions for the 2017 anniversary year.

Women and the Reformation: Mothers of Faith

Presenter: Kirsi Stjerna

Friday 8:15-9:15 a.m., Room 237 and Friday 9:30-10:30 a.m., Room 254

Women have been instrumental in fostering the Lutheran faith. From the earliest days of the Lutheran movement, women have contributed by their own examples of confessing and in their varied vocations and locations. Embracing the "Scripture Alone" principle and concerned for justice and freedom, Reformation women expressed a theology of compassion and emerged as mothers of faith. Since then, women have creatively defined their own place within the tradition and exercised leadership, even from the margins. As we will get to know several of the Reformation mothers of faith, we will reflect on the ongoing leadership and needs of women in the Lutheran faith and spirituality. We will start threads for new narratives of the Lutheran story, ones that include women from the beginning and honor women's experience of faith and theological orientation for the sake of the future.

Connecting the Reformation with Children, Families and the Home

Presenters: Debbie Streicher and Janelle Hooper

Friday 8:15-9:15 a.m., Room 255

The power of the word of God to save and transform lives is as important today as in Martin Luther's time. As the church observes 500 years of the Reformation next year, what resources are available to equip and empower young families for use in the congregation and the home to

help them observe and participate in the ongoing reformation of the church today? This workshop will introduce a variety of resources for all sizes of congregations and for members of all ages, with a focus on young families and the home.

De-Ciphering the 95 Theses for Reformation Today

Presenter: Tim Wengert

Friday 8:15-9:15 a.m., Room 235 and Friday 4:45-5:45 p.m., Room 240

Most people associate the beginning of the Reformation with Martin Luther's 95 theses, but few know what they said or why they created such an uproar in the church of his day. By closely examining this document and other early writings of Luther (including "Freedom of a Christian") participants will discover how 500-year-old documents can still reform congregations and lives today.

Having Helpful Conversations about Race: But Our Congregation Is All White

Presenters: Angela Shannon and Cynthia Ishler

Friday 8:15-9:15 a.m., Room 254

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton has made talking about racism a priority this year, including launching the first webcast titled "Confronting Racism." How can the Lutheran witness frame the way we think about racism in our society and equip us to work against it? Whether or not there are people of color in your congregation, racial issues are still a concern for those dedicated to God's justice in our nation. This workshop will give you resources to begin these discussions in whatever congregation you attend.

Telling our History Together, Praying Together, Moving "From Conflict to Communion"

Presenters: Don McCoid, Dirk Lange and Susan Wood

Friday 8:15-9:15 a.m., Room 241

In 2017, Lutherans and Catholics look back at 500 years of separation – but they also see new paths toward deepened mutual understanding and closer relations. Two complementary sessions will explore how the observances of 2017 can claim the fruits of recent ecumenical engagement and take further steps forward. On Oct. 31, 2016, Pope Francis will join world Lutheran leaders in a service of Common Prayer in Sweden's Lund Cathedral that will inaugurate commemoration of the Reformation anniversary. Drawing on liturgy for this Common Prayer and From Conflict to Communion, the resource prepared by the international Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity (as well as on the study guide especially for the U.S. context), this workshop will 1) explore the fruits of developing shared narratives of our history, of emphasizing and strengthening "what is held in common," and of praying together; and 2) look at ways that these commitments can be carried out at all levels, including in local communities and in relations also with other Christian traditions.

Luther, Lutherans, and A Stand Against Poverty

Presenter: Tiffany Chaney

Friday 8:15-9:15 a.m., Room 239

Drawing on content about Martin Luther's writings on poverty, the workshop will connect participants to how anti-poverty work is a part of Lutheran history and theology. Through stories of anti-poverty ministry happening in Lutheran congregations and in ecumenical ministries, the workshop will share modern examples, giving participants tools, including ideas for funding, to explore how they can engage in anti-poverty ministry in their own contexts. The Rev. Tiffany Chaney will draw from her training in community organizing and experience serving at The Intersection, where the community developed initiatives to help low-income neighbors stay

healthy, including hosting cooking classes that taught participants how to prepare affordable, tasty, healthy meals.

More than a Party – a Reformation Anniversary that Serves the Gospel Today

Presenter: Marcus Kunz

Friday 8:15-9:15 a.m., Room 240

In the coming year, congregations have a timely opportunity to serve the gospel by growing in their faith, strengthening their relationships with other Christians, renewing their service in the community, and making a fresh witness of Jesus Christ in the world. This workshop will explore the ways congregations and other interested groups can engage this opportunity. Come prepared to take some first steps with resources and planning!

Friday: Session 3 options

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Worship that Includes Diverse Voices

Presenters: Glocal musicians

Friday 9:30-10:30 a.m., Room 257

Martin Luther said that "Beautiful music is the art of the prophets that can calm the agitations of the soul; it is one of the most magnificent and delightful presents God has given us." What better way to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation than to join together to learn songs and stories from around the world? During this workshop, we will story our songs, ignite our imagination, delight God and sing our way to be co-creators of justice in our global and local contexts.

With New Voices – The Small Catechism in the 21st Century

Presenter: Marcus Kunz

Friday 9:30-10:30 a.m., Room 237

The Small Catechism is a treasure for believers of all ages and circumstances. It's too good to ignore or abandon to the past. And now Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton is inviting all ELCA congregations and members to engage the Small Catechism anew with an ear to voices we may not have heard before and with an openness to a renewal of our own voices in service of the gospel. Come and find out about new resources and opportunities for rediscovering this treasure. Be ready to share thoughts and even begin some planning.

What's Lutheran Social Ministry Got to Do with the Reformation?

Presenters: David deFreese, James Bosse and Charlotte Haberacker

Friday 9:30-10:30 a.m., Room 255

Learn how Lutheran social ministry evolved from the Reformation, how it continues to respond to God's grace, and share the excitement about its future direction. A panel of leaders within the movement will frame the past, the present and the future of the church's on-going service to the world.

The Modern-Day Pilgrimage: Reformation 500

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Claiming How Far We Have Come; Looking Toward Next Steps "On the Way"

Presenters: Don McCoid, Joy Schroeder, Kathryn Johnson, John Crossin and Susan Wood

Friday 9:30-10:30 a.m., Room 241

In 2017, Lutherans and Catholics look back at 500 years of separation – but they also see new paths toward deepened mutual understanding and closer relations. Two complementary sessions will explore how the observances of 2017 can claim the fruits of recent ecumenical engagement and take further steps forward. This workshop will be shaped by the 2015 ecumenical text, "Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist," whose "Statement of Agreements," 32 common affirmations already made by Lutherans and Catholics in dialogue, will be considered by the Churchwide Assembly. The session will explore 1) how far Lutherans and Catholics already have come together; 2) how these agreements can be taken more fully into the lives of our churches; and 3) what local communities can do to claim progress made "on the way" to visible unity. Copies of the text will be available for participants in the workshop. Leaders of the workshop were participants in the task force producing the "Declaration on the Way."

What is an Eco-Reformation and why are many asking for one?

Presenters: Nancy Wright and Richard Perry

Friday 9:30-10:30 a.m., Room 239 and Friday 3:30-4:30 p.m., Room 257

For 2,000 years we have read the Bible with blinders. Even when we have rightly focused on God and social justice, we have not embraced God's relationship with all creation. The Eco-Reformation movement within the ELCA reminds us that the ecosystem of the planet is in trouble. As we look toward the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and acknowledge that for Martin Luther God is in all aspects of creation, we confess that God's life is being diminished by disregard of the health of the planet and that care for the most vulnerable, central to Jesus' gospel, depends on a healthy earth. It is high time that the Christian community and all religions embrace the larger creation as the realm of God's activity and saving grace. The workshop will cover the theological and ecological background to Eco-Reformation, as well as its progress within synods across the country and parallel movements world-wide. (Another workshop will cover the how of Eco-Reformation. Grace Gathering participants are invited to attend both workshops.)

Connect, Reflect, Discover: Moving from the 45th to the 50th Anniversary of the Ordination of Women

Presenters: Gwendolyn King and Elise Brown

Friday 9:30-10:30 a.m., Room 240

To mark the 45th anniversary of the ordination of women last year, a survey was developed by ELCA Research and Evaluation and sent out to approximately 2,000 people. Compensation, wait time and retention rates were among the topics explored. Come hear some results from that survey. Personal stories of women in ordained ministry will be shared. After 45 years of ordaining women, come talk with others about how you think women's ordained ministry is viewed within your synod? Within your congregation? Within yourself? Share and discover ways to lift up and strengthen the ministry of ordained women!

Friday: Session 4 options

Lutheran-Muslim Relations

Presenters: Mark Swanson, Sayyid Syeed and Carol Lahurd

Friday 3:30-4:30 p.m., Room 252

Though Martin Luther in his day had a mixed response to "the Turks," the ELCA and its predecessors have had a rich and evolving relationship with our Muslim brothers and sisters. This workshop will 1) explore the history of ELCA's Lutheran-Muslim relations; 2) lift up the resources available to help ELCA congregations and members understand Islam and actively engage with our Muslim neighbors; and 3) offer a perspective from one of our Muslim partners on the importance of this work for our shared life together in a multi-religious society.

The Why of Eco-Reformation

Presenters: Nancy Wright and Richard Perry

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ELCA Responses to Gender-Based Violence

Presenters: Antonia Clemente, Karri Whipple

Friday 3:30-4:30 p.m., Room 237

As a nation, we're becoming increasingly aware of how gender-based violence is pervasive in our communities. The new ELCA social message on gender-based violence can help us think through how Lutheran theology addresses this embedded sin and how we can work against it. Come hear about the message and best practices from two specialists from the ELCA Metropolitan New York Synod.

Lutheranism in Asia: Its Relevance and Importance

Presenter: Chandran Paul Martin

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When Lutherans Open the Scriptures

Presenters: Kit Kleinhans and Tim Wengert

Friday 3:30-4:30 p.m., Room 235

When modern Lutherans and other Christians open the Scriptures following the lead of Martin Luther, they bring convictions and approaches that attune their ears to a Christ-centered witness of God's mercy. This workshop provides an opportunity to explore these distinctive Lutheran principles in conversation with two contemporary Luther scholars.

Introducing Queer Theology and Its Intersections with Lutheran Theology

Presenter: Mary Lowe

Friday 3:30-4:30 p.m., Room 254

Queer theology emerged as a unique form of Christian theology in the 1990s. Queer theologians have developed transformative, challenging and more inclusive ways of understanding God, Jesus Christ and the human person and have helped redefine family and church. In this workshop we will explore what queer theologians are teaching and writing about these doctrines and how some key claims of queer theology surprisingly align with Lutheran teachings.

The Lutherans on and the Lutherans of Turtle Island

Presenter: Vance Blackfox

Friday 3:30-4:30 p.m., Room 241

We will take a brief look at the history of Lutheranism and Lutheran people as they began arriving on the American Indian lands of the North American continent, in particular the lands that would become the United States. How did they affect the cultures of native peoples, what did the Lutheran mission look like then and what might it look like now? We will also learn about the relationships that existed between the Lutheran church bodies in the 20th century and native peoples during the era of the American Indian Movement – the characters, the movement, the forged relationship, the result. This will include information about the former National Indian Lutheran Board and the current relationship status.

The Medium is the Message: Teaching the Catechism in the Digital Age

Presenter: Keith Anderson

Friday 3:30-4:30 p.m., Room 239

When it was created, the Small Catechism took advantage of the great technological breakthrough of the day: the printing press. By leveraging this new technology, Martin Luther was able to create an innovative, ubiquitous and portable resource that included images, a conversational style, and short – today we might even say tweetable – explanations to the foundational elements of faith. It was the 16th century equivalent of putting a smartphone in every person's hand. In this sense, the Small Catechism is a perfect fit for forming faith in our digital age. In this workshop the Rev. Keith Anderson will present on the groundbreaking technology of the Small Catechism and offer practical examples of how to teach the catechism with youth and adults using today's digital technologies.

Art and the Reformation: Connecting to Hearts and Minds

Presenter: Mary Button

Friday 3:30-4:30 p.m., Room 240 and Friday 4:45-5:45 p.m., Room 252

While initially hostile to art, Martin Luther eventually embraced the power of artwork to convey complex theological issues. Among a largely illiterate populace, the work of artists like Lucas Cranach and Hans Holbein transcended the tightly knit boundaries of the Reformation era and connected to an audience well beyond those reached by the written word. In this workshop, artist and theologian Mary Button will ground participants in the rich history of Lutheran art and share with them devotional art practices for individual and community devotion. Workshop participants will also work together to produce art projects in celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

Friday: Session 5 options

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How can an Eco-Reformation help bring Hope and Healing to God's Earth and People?

Presenters: Phoebe Morad and Louis Tillman

Friday 4:45-5:45 p.m., Room 257

Utilizing the integrity of theological articles and social statements: What can we do every day and in all communities to live out the promise of resurrection through ecological restoration? We will explore ways to customize the ministry of caring for creation to respond to the needs of the land and people you serve and commune with. How do you find local groups already working toward the hope and healing that your congregation can support? How can your community cooperate, raise up and serve the efforts of existing groups or populations that need an amplifier? Talk with GreenFaith Fellow Vicar Louis Tillman and National Program Coordinator of Lutherans Restoring Creation Phoebe Morad as we take the next step of Eco-Reformation from words to action.

Rostered Women of Color

Presenter: Cheryl Pero

Friday 4:45-5:45 p.m., Room 237

Did you know that there are more than 150 rostered (pastors, associates in ministry, deacons) women of color in the ELCA? These sisters have come together to pool their ministry wisdom and experiences, and we are collecting it. We will share these experiences with The Lutheran World Federation as we observe the 500th anniversary of Lutheranism. In this workshop, we will share information about this project and introduce those participants who are present at the Grace Gathering event. Come and experience us!

The Heart of the Lutheran Witness to the Faith

Presenter: Kathryn "Kit" Kleinhans

Thursday 4:30-5:30 p.m., Room 257 and Friday 4:45-5:45 p.m., Room 255

Martin Luther's Small Catechism is famous for the question "What does this mean?" For Luther, this question wasn't just a formula to memorize. Luther wanted to provide real and meaningful answers for the deep questions of people's lives. What was the core of Luther's understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ? Why was Luther convinced that "faith alone" was at the heart of a saving relationship with God in Christ? What made this gospel "good news" for Luther – and for us? Five hundred years later, how can we Lutherans share the gospel in a way that speaks good news in response to the deep questions, to the hopes, longings and even sufferings of others?

The Pulpit and the Catechism

Presenter: Shauna Hannan

Friday 4:45-5:45 p.m., Room 254

The 500th anniversary of the Reformation is a great opportunity to re-connect with Luther's catechisms. This workshop will offer a variety of ways the Small and Large Catechisms might be engaged by congregations in their preaching ministries.

Lutheran World Federation Young Reformers Network

Presenters: Christine Shander and Nicole Newman

Friday 4:45-5:45 p.m., Room 241

What is the Lutheran World Federation Young Reformers Network, and how is it taking shape in North America? Join this session to talk about the intersections of faith, justice and reformation. Hear from two young adults about how they are translating a learning journey to Germany into a cohort of people who support and walk with each other as we figure out where God is calling us as a church and as individuals.

What Does It Mean to Be Lutheran in a Multi-Religious World?

Presenters: Carol Schersten Lahurd, J. Paul Rajashekar, Joseph Kempf, Darrell Jodock, David Sandmel and Sayyid Syeed

Friday 4:45-5:45 p.m., Room 239

How do we understand and live out our inter-religious calling and commitments as Lutherans living in a rapidly changing, religiously diverse world? This workshop will equip participants with knowledge of the history of ELCA inter-religious relations and the various resources available for study, dialogue and engagement. Using a case-study approach, this workshop will also explore examples of ELCA inter-religious relations in a variety of ministry contexts in order to inspire new ideas and activities.

De-Ciphering the 95 Theses for Reformation Today

Presenter: Tim Wengert

Friday 8:15-9:15 a.m., Room 235 and Friday 4:45-5:45 p.m., Room 240

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Lutheran Vocation: Vocation and Discernment in the Real World

Presenter: Martin Lohrmann

Friday 4:45-5:45 p.m., Room 235

With so many voices competing for our attention, how do we learn to listen to the voice of God? In this workshop, we will cover key ideas from the Lutheran Reformers about vocation and we will sort through some of the leading voices competing for our attention in today's world: voices that stake a claim on who we should be, what we should value, and what makes us happy. The workshop will also invite participants to reflect on who they are as beloved children of God and how their daily work matters to the people around them.