

# JUNE 3--ASSEMBLY FORUMS

FORUM TITLE	10:00AM LOCATION	1:15PM LOCATION
The Jesus Gap—What Teens in the ELCA Actually Believe About Jesus	River C	River C
Cultivating a Missional Imagination in Congregations	River A	River A
Changing the Stewardship Habits of Our Congregation	Fon Du Lac D-E	Fon Du Lac D-E
Partnerships in Global Mission	Fon Du Lac A-B-C	Fon Du Lac A-B-C
LSSI: Storybook Project	Cole/Schertz	
LSSI: Bringing Healing, Justice, and Wholeness to People and Communities		Cole/Schertz
Portico: Peace in the Holy Land and Investing with Faith	River B	
Portico: I'm Living Well" Learning from ELCA Plan Members		River B
Considering a Call to Ministry?	River D	

## The Jesus Gap: What Teens in the ELCA Actually Believe About Jesus

*Ms. Jennifer Bradbury*

*Director of Youth Ministry, Faith Lutheran Church, Glen Ellyn, IL*

Jesus is the cornerstone of our faith. But what do students actually believe about Jesus? Findings from a year-long national research study exploring what high school students in the ELCA believe about Jesus will be shared along with tips for strengthening the Christologies of students (and others!) in your congregation.



## Cultivating a Missional Imagination in Congregations

*Pastor Greg Busboom, Lead Pastor, St. John's Lutheran Church, Springfield, IL*

What is God up to in our lives? What is God up to in our congregations? What is God up to in our world? These questions are crucial to cultivating a missional imagination in our congregations that moves us from maintenance to mission, from membership to discipleship, from survival to vitality. The church is the Spirit-empowered community sent to bear witness to the activity of our Triune God in the world. So, what is our Triune God up to? And, how does the answer to that question provide congregations with hope for their future?



## Changing the Stewardship Habits of Our Congregation

*Pastor James Davis, American, Gibson City, IL*

*Pastor Nikoli Falenschek, Lutheran Church of Mahomet, Mahomet, IL*

This forum will help participants: 1) become aware of their giving patterns and evaluate how they support God's mission in their congregation and community; 2) reflect on their current stewardship habits and how these habits tie into their spiritual giving; and 3) develop a positive attitude about tithing and giving as a thankful response to God's generous abundance. Participants will receive tools and resources to help make changes in their personal lives and lead change in their congregations.





### Partnerships in Global Mission

*Pastor Doug Cox, Executive Director of Global Health Ministries, Minneapolis, MN*

*Ms. Dana Dutcher Manager for Relationships, Asia Pacific and Madagascar, West and Central Africa*

Join representatives of Global Health Ministries and of the ELCA Global Mission Unit for examples and stories about how partnerships between mission agencies, international churches, and your synod and local congregations can come together to support tangible expressions of the love of Christ.



### Bringing Healing, Justice, and Wholeness to People and Communities

*Mr. David Novak, LSSI's Assistant Vice-President of Advancement and Executive Director of the*

*Cornerstone Foundation and Ms. Molly Arnoldt, Director of Development, Des Plaines, IL*

True to our 149 year history, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) is committed to continuing services across the state for children, families, seniors, individuals with developmental disabilities, and people recently released from prison. The steadfast partnership between LSSI and the faithful Lutheran community in the Central/Southern Illinois Synod is a critical component in carrying out these services. Learn about LSSI programs in the Central/Southern Illinois Synod and how you can join us in serving “the least of these” right in your community and throughout the state.



LSSI: Storybook Project — the vision for this social ministry, the logistics of congregational participation, and the plan for oversight and institutional support for the project.



### “I’m Living Well” – Learning from ELCA Plan Members and Answering the Lutheran Question, “What does this mean?”

*Pastor Jeff Thiemann, President & CEO, Portico Benefit Services, Minneapolis, MN*

By the end of the first quarter 2016, almost 600 plan members that completed the annual Health Assessment identified themselves as living well and completed a detailed survey about what that means to them, their ministry, their families, etc. Hear an overview of what we are learning about living well as ministry leaders and engage in discussions about these early results and implications for Portico and for the ELCA.

### Peace in the Holy Land and Investing with Faith

*Pastor Jeff Thiemann, President & CEO, Portico Benefit Services, Minneapolis, MN*

Faithful Christians in the Holy Land and the U.S. are frustrated with the lack of real progress towards peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Out of concern for all the people in this troubled area of the world and especially our Christian sisters and brothers in Israel and Palestine, a variety of measures are being proposed to contribute to peace, including calls for divestment in companies doing certain kinds of business with Israel, including Caterpillar. This topic will be part of the conversation at the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in August 2016. Jeff Thiemann accompanied Bishop John Roth and other ELCA leaders on a visit to Israel and Palestine in September 2015 and he participated in the recent **Pursuing Peace and Strengthening Presence: The Atlanta Summit of Churches in the USA and the Holy Land** at the Carter Peace Center in April 2016. Jeff will share what he’s heard from leaders in Palestine and how Portico is currently planning to respond. This forum will be an opportunity to engage in a conversation about the various steps that different people have proposed and voice your perspective to Portico’s leadership.



### Considering a Call to Ministry?

*Pastor Marlin Otte, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Marion, IL and Candidacy Committee Members*

Have you ever felt a call to ministry in the Church? Has anyone ever said to you, “*You should be a pastor!*”? If you’re curious at all about some of the beginning steps towards responding to such a call, a panel consisting of our synod’s Candidacy Committee will share how the candidacy process works and answer questions. Whether you’re ready to take such a plunge or just want to dip your toe into the water, this forum is for you!