

# Adult Forums – Winter/Spring 2018

Sundays, 9:30 a.m., Chapel Lounge

## January 7

### **Climate Justice and Environmental Hope: What Are We Called to Do?**

**Senator John Marty**

Many people and organizations, including this congregation, are making personal and community commitments and recognizing the need for societal change to address the health and ongoing life of the whole of creation. How can we address this crisis? How can we be a prophetic voice in our society?

- **John Marty** represents District 66 in the Minnesota State Senate and is the ranking Minority Member on the Energy and Utilities Finance and Policy Committee.

## January 14

### **Understanding Implicit Bias: Breaking the Cycle**

**Fred Reuning and Dr. Raj Setharaju**

Ever since Ferguson, racial justice has been thrust into the forefront of our public consciousness. We have been forced to ask ourselves why racism is still rampant and why we haven't "fixed" it yet. Join Dr. Raj and Fred Reuning as they explore implicit biases from personal and systemic lenses.

- **Fred Reuning** is a med tech marketing professional who escaped from corporate life in 2015. Since then he's been working with Restorative Justice Community Action (RJCA) and a member of Sunday March 11, Minnetonka United Methodist Church, and the Minnesota United Methodist Annual Conference's Commission on Race and Religion.
- **Raj Setharaju** is an assistant professor in the School of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice at Metropolitan State University. He teaches undergraduate and graduate students in the areas of victimology, restorative justice, and diversity matters relating to law enforcement and civic leadership. Raj has more than twenty years' experience in implementing diversity initiatives in universities and the communities surrounding them, providing exclusive growth within the communities he serves.

## January 21

### **Community and Trinity in Africa**

**Dr. Ibrahim Bitrus**

The Trinity is not a mathematical mystery nor is it a model community. Ibrahim Bitrus will present his position that the Trinity is a gift of God's trinitarian communion with us and our world. This gift correlates with and recasts the African understanding of community.

- **Ibrahim Bitrus** was born and raised in northeast Nigeria. He received his bachelors degree and masters of theology from the Theological College of Northern Nigeria, followed by his PhD in systematic theology from Luther Seminary. Previously he was a lecturer at the Bronnum Lutheran Seminary—Yola, Nigeria.

## January 28

### **Etty Hillesum: An Introduction**

**Nancy JP Anderson**

Elie Wiesel, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Anne Frank are familiar authors from the holocaust. Let's meet another, lesser known author: Etty Hillesum. In her late twenties during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands, she began keeping daily journals in 1941. By the time she was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau in September 1943, she had filled eleven journals with the mundane, as well as the mystery surrounding her developing relationship with "her God." Enlivening, enlightening, and hopeful, she treats her readers to undeniable internal positivity while her external world shrinks into negativity and despair.

- **Nancy JP Anderson** just completed her master's degree in theology at St. Catherine's University, St. Paul. Her thesis is titled "The Undercurrent of Music in the Burgeoning Spirituality of Etty Hillesum."

## February 4

### **The Mapping Prejudice Project**

**Kirsten Delegard**

A project of Augsburg University and the University of Minnesota, the Mapping Prejudice Project is working to identify and map racial restrictions buried in historic Minneapolis property deeds. Minneapolis was not always segregated. The maps show how discriminatory deeds helped remake the racial landscape of the city.

- **Kirsten Delegard** is a Scholar-in-Residence at Augsburg University and the director of the Historyopolis Project, which seeks to understand the city's history in order to make wise decisions for its future.

## February 11

### **A Taste of India**

In October we celebrated our thirty-year history and partnership with Bethania Kids. On February 11 we look forward to learning about Bethania's plans and the possibility of a Mount Olive partnership trip to India in 2019.

- **Kate Hennig Teece**, Gene Hennig's oldest daughter, will join us during the education hour as we learn about goals and dreams for Bethania Kids ministries in southern India. After the second liturgy we'll move downstairs for an Indian feast and talk together about how we can more effectively partner with Bethania in ministry.

## **February 18**

### **The Great Commission, Revisited**

**Pastor Joseph Crippen and members of the Evangelism Committee**

The Great Commission (“Go and make disciples of all nations . . .,” Matthew 28:16–20) has inspired and confused Christians since given by Jesus. What does it mean for us? Proselytizing on street corners? Asking people if they’ve been saved? Or does it mean something deeper, more inspiring, and perhaps even more challenging? Come hear a fresh perspective on these compelling words.

## **February 25 – March 11: Scholars-in-Residence**

**Prof. Earl Schwartz, Hamline University**

**Fr. Jan Michael Joncas, University of St. Thomas**

## **February 25**

### **What Can a Table Tell Us About Jesus’ World? (Part 1)**

**Prof. Earl Schwartz**

In these two sessions, we explore nine references in the Synoptic Gospels to Jesus being hungry or participating in a meal, references that draw us both *in* around tables and *out* into the larger social, cultural, political, and physical environment in which Jesus lived.

- **Earl Schwartz** is assistant professor of social, religion, and Middle Eastern studies at Hamline University and has directed the College of Liberal Arts interdisciplinary program in social justice since its inception in 1999.

## **March 4**

### **What Can a Table Tell Us? (Part 2)**

**Prof. Earl Schwartz**

## **March 11**

### **To Hear with the Ears of the Heart: Celebrating the Liturgy of God’s Word**

**Fr. Jan Michael Joncas**

- **Jan Michael Joncas** is University Artist-in-Residence in the Center for Catholic Studies at University of St. Thomas, St. Paul. He has graduate degrees from the Pontifical Liturgical Institute in Rome and from Notre Dame. He writes and lectures on the conciliar documents of Vatican II, including on the [Pray Tell](#) blog, and has written many fine hymns used across the church in the United States and Canada.

## **March 18**

### **To Taste the Kingdom: Celebrating the Liturgy of God’s Table**

**Fr. Jan Michael Joncas**

**March 25, Passion Sunday — No forum**

**April 1, Easter Sunday — No forum**

**April 8**

**The Mystics Teach Us about Prayer**

**Dr. Brad Holt**

- **Bradley P. Holt** is professor emeritus of religion at Augsburg University, Minneapolis, and the author of *Thirsty For God: A Brief History of Christian Spirituality* (Fortress Press).

**April 15**

**God Is King: Wrestling with a Metaphor in the Psalms**

**Vicar Jessica Christy**

The language of God's kingship is central to scripture, but it can be a fraught metaphor for the modern church. These two sessions will examine the metaphor's range of meaning within the psalms and its implications for our worship life together.

- **Jessica Christy** currently serves as vicar at Mount Olive Lutheran Church. She has a master of divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary, New York, and is completing a master's degree in theology through Luther Seminary.

**April 22**

**God Is King, Part II**

**Vicar Jessica Christy**

**April 29**

**Authority**

**Paul C. Stone**

How can free people experience, let alone understand it? How may we contemplate individuals striving for liberty without committees?

- **Paul Stone** is lecturer in American political and institutional history at the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. He has degrees from Harvard and Duke Divinity School and is a licensed lay reader in the Episcopal Church.

**May 6**

**The Feast of the Ascension**

**Dwight Penas**

The Feast of the Ascension is the de facto feast day of Mount Olive Lutheran Church, because it was from the Mount of Olives that Jesus “ascended into heaven.” Mount Olive is one of the few Protestant churches to continue to observe the feast, which is considered one of the “ecumenical” feasts of the Christian calendar. But what are to make of this celebration? To where did Jesus “ascend”? How are we to balance that affirmation with our knowledge that the Hubble telescope has seen 10 to 15 billion light years out into space without finding his throne? We will consider the meaning of the Ascension in the church’s history and liturgy.

- **Dwight Penas** is co-convener of the adult forums at Mount Olive and serves on the board of the Center for Catholic and Evangelical Theology.

**May 13, Young People’s Recital**

**May 20, Pentecost Sunday, no forum**