



Synod Assembly Learning Lab Descriptions—OPTION A

OFFSITE Experiences and Trips (1:30-4:00pm)

1. Older Adults Living Life to the Fullest

Is the Christian Mission of Lutheran Senior Services (LSS). We invite you to join us for a tour of Laclede Groves, a Life Plan Community offering a full continuum of care from Independent Living, to Assisted Living, Short-term Rehab Care, Skilled Nursing, and Memory Care. You will hear about the challenges of aging and the options available for older adults from CEO Rev. John Kotovsky. We will also discuss ways to engage older adults in congregations and communities. Visit <https://www.lssliving.org/> to learn more about LSS, the 16th largest non-profit providing Senior Living Provider in the US. (Number: 14 — LSS Van)

2. Ministry with Young Adults

What are young adults seeking from churches and campus ministries? Through this time at Lutheran Campus Ministry in St. Louis, we'll learn about spirituality of young adulthood in 2020 and learn how congregations across the Synod can support Generation Z students as they transition to colleges and universities. (Number: 12 — Christ Lutheran Van)

3. A Look at Race in America Through the Lens of St. Louis

A bus tour and conversation led by Rev. Stephanie Doeschot (Administrator for Lutheran School of Theology) and Rev. De Marco Davidson (Community Organizer for Metropolitan Congregations United). We will be visiting three historic sites to explore and experience the effects of structural racism in St Louis to promote and inform deeper engagement around this crucial issue for all people. (Number: 35 — Bus)

4. The Bridge: Coffee, Fair Trade, and Community

Located in New Town, St. Charles, the Bridge's mission is to create bridges to life-giving relationships with God and neighbor by doing church differently. You've perhaps seen the Fair Trade display at your congregation or synod events. Now come directly to the coffeehouse and hear more about how this ministry engages its community. Coffee/Tea available for purchase! (Number: 13 — Living Lord Lutheran Van)

5. Serving with Neighbors at Humanitri: Yard Cleanup at Transitional Housing

Humanitri, as Christ's hands of mercy, helps families facing homelessness achieve stability in a safe and supportive community, providing the skills and resources they need to thrive. Humanitri was formed in 2006 through the merger of three Lutheran ministries, bringing together 130+ years of social ministry response in St. Louis. Wear work clothes for this afternoon of service. (Number: 23 — Bus)

6. Singing In Community: An Introduction to Paperless Leadership

Explore the ancient and new practice of paperless (aural/oral tradition) music leadership, sharing songs as people did before music or words were written down. Experience how this style of singing empowers singers of all ages and ability levels, nurtures spaces of learning and listening, and strengthens worship and community life. Paul Vasile is the Executive Director of Music That Makes Community and a freelance church musician, consultant, and composer based in St. Louis, Missouri. This learning lab event will be held at Unity Ev. Lutheran Church in Bel-Nor, which is 3 miles from the hotel. (Number: 35 — Bus & personal auto)



Synod Assembly Learning Lab Descriptions — OPTION B

ONSITE Experiences at the Hotel—Session I (1:45 — 2:45 pm)

1. Help the ELCA & Rick Steves Make Hunger History!

Join Pastor Ron Glusenkamp and Cindy Kraft to learn how you and your congregation can engage in a meaningful way to end hunger in our lifetime. Participants will receive a copy of the new Rick Steves documentary “Hunger and Hope—Lessons Learned from Ethiopia and Guatemala.” In this special, Rick Steves travels through Ethiopia and Guatemala to learn about extreme poverty and its solutions, including smart development aid, empowering women, child nutrition, and education. Participants will learn how to link the documentary with ELCA GOOD GIFTS- so that all may be fed!

2. Lutheran Disaster Response: Connecting you and your congregation to disaster work in the Central States Synod

This workshop will take a look at the role that Lutheran Disaster Response plays within the Central States Synod and how you and your congregation can be more involved. Ben Perrin, Director of Central States Synod Disaster Response will facilitate this conversation, helping connect you to what’s happening within Missouri and Kansas with all of the stages of disaster.

3. What Does It Mean to be a Sanctuary Denomination?

What does “sanctuary” even mean? What is current immigration policy and what is the situation in our synod’s territory? Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS) and St. Louis Inter-faith Committee on Latin America (IFCLA) will present. Information will also be available from “Once We Were Refugees” (OWWR).

4. Being Church Together: Experiencing the Church in Papua New Guinea and in Russia

In this learning lab, participants will learn about the history of our relationship with our companion churches in Papua New Guinea and Russia. But the real focus will be on how those relationships have blossomed in recent years, what participants in visitations have learned and how they have been moved and inspired by their times with the people of our partner churches, and the ambitious plans we have for engagement with our companion churches going forward.

5. Praying through the Day

How can you deepen your relationship with God? One way is through prayer. There are many ways to pray. Trying new prayer practices can lead us to deeper peace, greater awareness, and strength for our life’s journey. In this learning lab, you will learn and practice new ways to pray. These prayer practices can also be used creatively in your congregational worship.

6. Urban-Rural Dialogue: What can we learn from each other?

The urban and rural contexts are quite different, but they face some of the same joys and challenges: committed residents and tight-knit neighborhoods/communities, disinvestment and pockets of poverty. This workshop is an opportunity to explore our contexts, learn about another context, and talk together about how we are meeting the challenges of being church in our particular places. Rev. Donna Simon and Rev. Amy Truhe will co-facilitate the urban-rural dialogue. We are laying a foundation for a larger gathering in 2021 designed to provide learning which will enhance the ministries of both urban and rural congregations.



Synod Assembly Learning Lab Descriptions — OPTION B

ONSITE Experiences at the Hotel—Session II (3:00 — 4:00 pm)

1. Caring for Creation as People of Faith

Scripture, theology, and our Lutheran tradition call and equip us to care for God's good Creation. Join members of the Central States Synod Lutherans Restoring Creation Mission Table to explore ways to incorporate Creation Care into your congregation's worship life, educational programs, discipleship of members at home/work, buildings and grounds, and public ministry/advocacy. Participants are invited to share their experiences and wisdom as we continue to build a network of "green sheep" throughout our Synod.

2. "What Lutherans Can Learn from Pentecostals about Spiritual Vitality"

Missouri is home to the headquarters of two major Pentecostal denominations: the Assemblies of God (Springfield) and United Pentecostal Church International (Weldon Spring). Join Dr. Cheryl Peterson, a member of the International Lutheran-Pentecostal Dialogue representing the Lutheran World Federation, for this conversation.

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5. LDR Service Project: Assemble American Red Cross Comfort Kits for Disaster Survivors

LDR partners with other agencies across the country to make the most impact to disaster impacted households. The American Red Cross distributes Comfort Kits to survivors after disasters or home fires to ensure that in the immediate aftermath after an event they have the basic essentials for personal hygiene. We will be putting together Comfort Kits to donate to the American Red Cross of Missouri and Arkansas to use help these individuals.

6. Faithful Stewards. Lasting Impact

Your passion. Your plan. Your gift for those you love, and God's work in the world! You are invited to explore how you can make a difference in the lives of your loved ones and to ministry, both now and in the future. During this interactive session, Stephen Phelps with the ELCA Foundation will share with you information on creating your Legacy and Stewardship plans. This presentation will get you thinking about the gifts you've received throughout your lifetime, and how your family and ministry can benefit from these gifts to make a lasting and meaningful impact in this world. This session will also include information on how congregations can increase gifts to the missions that are of importance to them through planned and current giving.