

2019 SUNDAY FORUM (JAN-FEB)

Sunday Forum (weekly lecture series on wide-ranging topics held between services) is open to all and requires no advance preparation or homework! Some topics, in fact, are so timely, important, and interesting that, over the past few years, various members have invited friends to attend them. (*Such “community interest” forums will usually be noted as such on the schedule, but guests are certainly welcome any time!*)

The Forum Schedule is posted 24/7 on the brightly colored easel in the narthex. Each Sunday’s topic will also appear on our website, in the Sunday bulletin, and in the weekly listserve announcements.

Whether you normally attend first or second service, be sure to mark your calendar to include a truly wonderful 50 minutes spent immediately after or before your time of worship.

- **Sunday Forum: 9:40 am – 10:30 am in the Fireplace Room off the Narthex**
- **All are welcome!**

January and February 2019 feature a fabulous spectrum of faith at work across different religions and cultures. These are two months when you will want to urge your friends to come attend the Sunday Forum!

Jan 6 **Zerit Yohannes, Associate Pastor at St. Luke Lutheran-Christ Campus in Lansing.** Born of a third generation African Lutheran family by way of an Eritrean and Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Pastor Yohannes will fascinate you with his amazing background and interesting faith journey!

Jan 13 **MSU Professor, Amy Simon, the William and Audrey Farber Family Chair in Holocaust Studies and European Jewish History,** has devoted her career to the study of first-person accounts of Holocaust victims, and the way their accounts—diaries, letters, memoirs, and postwar testimonials—depict Holocaust perpetrators and the interactions between the two. Invite your friends to come hear her talk to us about both her research and her course work at MSU!

Jan 20-Feb 17 The Jesus Fatwah: A 5 part dvd-based series led by Pastor Gary and Imam Sohail Chaudhry [The following descriptions are taken directly from the series’ website.]

Much of what passes as information about Islam is weed-like disinformation rooted in stereotype and watered by fear. In The Jesus Fatwah, Islamic and Christian scholars offer reliable information about what Muslims believe, how they live out their faith, and how we all can be about building relationships across the lines of faith. [Note: Do consider inviting your friends to attend this terrific series!]

Jan 20 **The Jesus Fatwah Session 1: “Islam 101: In Which We Tell You Some of What You Need to Know About Islam.”** See note above.

In this episode we look the basic tenants of Islam. We live in an era in which much of what passes as information about Islam is weed-like disinformation rooted in stereotype and watered by fear. We decided to weed out the tares of ignorance by doing what, for Christians, apparently is radical: we spoke to some actual Muslims and to Christian scholars whose intellectual garden-sheds are filled with the tools of fact-based knowledge. The product of these conversations is a harvest of reliable information about what your Muslim neighbors and coworkers believe and about how they live out their faith.

- Jan 27 **The Jesus Fatwah Session 2 “Misconceptions about Islam: In Which We Help You Adjust Your Malarky Filter.”** See note above.
Again, we took the radical step of getting to know actual Muslims, and in our conversations we asked them to tell us about how American public discourse tends to misrepresent Islam. We are confident that you will like the people you meet as you join in this conversation.
- Feb 3 **The Jesus Fatwah Session 3: “Islam in America: In Which We Introduce You to People Who Love America and Pray Towards Mecca.”** See note above.
Chief among the popular anti-Muslim stereotypes is the idea that Muslims are plotting to overthrow American society. In fact, most Muslims love the United States. This is true of Muslims living in countries where Islam is the predominate religion, and it is especially true in the United States, where Muslims, as a demographic, are among the most patriotic American citizens.
- Feb 10 **The Jesus Fatwah Session 4: “Making Connections, Part 1: In Which Non-Muslims Make A Case.”**
See note above.
We asked Non-Muslims and Muslims to talk to us about building relationships across the lines of faith, and while the answers were compatible—and even complimentary—it was interesting to observe the ways in which Muslims and Christians spoke differently about interfaith cooperation. Christians tended take an intellectual approach starting with the mind; Muslims were more likely to approach the issue relationally, starting with the heart.
- Feb 17 **The Jesus Fatwah Session 5: “Making Connections, Part 2: In Which Muslims Have Their Say.”**
[See session 4 above]
- Feb 24 **Pastor Nik Schillack is Director of Congregational Engagement for Samaritas.** He will be with us to talk about what's happening in Samaritas and especially what is happening in terms of refugee resettlement and the refugee crisis we are experiencing.