From the Bishop

EASTER JOY

From Seven Stanzas at Easter by John Updike, 1960.

The same hinged thumbs and toes,
the same valved heart
that—pierced—died, withered, paused, and then
regathered out of enduring Might
new strength to enclose.

Let us not mock God with metaphor,
analogy, sidestepping, transcendence;
making of the event a parable, a sign painted in the
faded credulity of earlier ages:
let us walk through the door.

The stone is rolled back, not papier-mâché,
not a stone in a story,
but the vast rock of materiality that in the slow
grinding of time will eclipse for each of us
the wide light of day.

Let us not seek to make it less monstrous,
for our own convenience, our own sense of beauty,
lest, awakened in one unthinkable hour, we are
embarrassed by the miracle,
and crushed by remonstrance.

CALLED FORWARD TOGETHER IN CHRIST

The Presiding Bishop of the ELCA Elizabeth Eaton has initiated a year-long process that will help the leaders of this church make decisions about the future identity, direction and priorities of the ELCA. This will involve three main stages:

+ Having a conversation across this church about the future
+ Consulting on directions and priorities that emerge
+ Reaching decisions as a church about where we are headed

Bishop Eaton wants to include as many parts of the ELCA as possible while building a sense of togetherness in looking forward to our future and direction. We in this church want to assess whether the structures...
that were set up for this church are right for the future, and as part of this consider how we use our resources in the best possible way.

The BIG questions

Called Forward Together in Christ aims to explore and find answers to some big questions. It is not about reinventing the ELCA – but rather looking to the future and asking whether we are clear about who we are and what is most important as we journey together as a church in today’s world.

1. What is distinctive about our identity as a Lutheran church?
2. What kind of church do we believe God is calling us to become?
3. How do we become an inclusive, diverse church that is inspiring and relevant in different communities?
4. What is God calling us to do in a world that is facing unprecedented levels of poverty, conflict and violence, inter-religious tension and massive displacement of people.
5. What do we expect from our church leaders? How do we recruit, invest in and support them to lead this church into the future?
6. Will our current structures serve the church well into the future? How can we maintain strong local participation and ownership and, at the same time, achieve a connection to ELCA as one church?

How can you be involved?

There are many different ways to be involved. More detailed information can be found on the ELCA.org/future and there is an email address dedicated to the “Called Forward Together in Christ” process.

- Pastors are asked to hold conversations in their congregations so we can tap into the hopes and concerns of church members and people connected with this church. The Churchwide organization will undertake a broad survey with rostered church leaders in ELCA congregations and communities of worship. We will reach out to leaders in our social service ministries and our colleges, universities and seminaries. We will have a targeted approach to other ministries and groups within the church so we hear a wide range of voices that are important for ELCA’s future.
- We are committed to hearing from young adults as members and future leaders in the ELCA. We plan to engage younger adults via social media, a survey and on-line chat rooms.

JUBILEE YEAR
25 Years
Our Tanzania Relationship

For 25 years, the people of our Northern Great Lakes Synod and the people of the Eastern and Coastal Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania have had a special relationship. There has been a growing friendship and affection between our churches and our people. It continues to be a joy to work with these sisters and brothers in Christ. In 2016-2017 we will celebrate the “25th Jubilee” of our ministry together. There will be visits both from Tanzanians to our synod and Americans from this synod to the Eastern and Coastal Diocese. We will publish a booklet of reflections this spring on our ministry together and its impact. We will share the story of God’s work. We will hear the stories of faithfulness! It will be a great celebration year!

ELCA CHURCH COUNCIL --- WE NEED NOMINATIONS

Our 2016 Synod Assembly will be nominating two lay males from our synod to be voted upon at the Churchwide Assembly this summer for the ELCA Church Council. The ELCA Church Council is the legislative arm of the national church and is responsible for the ministry of our denomination.

We need to find four excellent lay men who are willing to commit themselves to six years of service on the ELCA Church Council. Our synod has been assigned a “lay male position.” The May Synod Assembly will choose two men to be voted upon this summer in New Orleans in August. The one elected by the Churchwide Assembly from the Northern Great Lakes Synod will then serve. Who is willing to do this work? Who has the maturity, the churchmanship and the ability to be entrusted with this responsibility? If you would like to nominate a person, please contact Pastor Doug Johnson, our Synod Secretary, or the Bishop. We need excellent candidates!

YOUR SYNOD COUNCIL LEADERS

Four times a year, elected leaders from throughout

TRANSITION

+God keep Pastor Soren Schmidt as he was ordained into the ministry of Word and Sacrament on Sunday, March 20, 2016. Pastor Schmidt is a son of this synod, raised at Christ the King in Escanaba where he was ordained. In March, the Synod Council called him on behalf of Finlandia University to serve as Chaplain. He will be installed at Finlandia in the fall. Congratulations to Pastor Soren, his wife Rebekah and their children Olive and Jude.

+On Easter Sunday morning, March 27th, Pastor Rudolph Kemppainen died. Pastor Kemppainen is survived by Darley, his wife of nearly 62 years. They have four daughters and one son, six granddaughters, and two great grandsons. We celebrated the Easter victory of life over death for Pastor Kemppainen on Sunday, April 3rd at Bethel Lutheran Church in Ishpeming, Michigan. Cards may be sent to the family at 416 S. Lake Street, Ishpeming, MI 49849. May God bless this family and the memory of Pastor Rudolph Kemppainen.
the synod gather to do the work of the church! They are the “Synod Council.” Each of our eight geographic conferences selects two persons to serve and along with the four officers, this 20 person council gathers on your behalf to do the work of the synod. They are responsible for the ministries and programs of the synod. They pray and worship God together. They hear the reports of the Bishop and the Assistant to the Bishop. The Council is responsible for the maintenance of the clergy roster, recommending budgets and other resolutions to the synod assembly. They also reflect honestly on concerns that they hear being surfaced in the congregations. They are faithful and committed laity and pastors. Along with the officers, Pastor Chris Johnson and Dr. Rick Pink serve on the Synod Council Executive Committee with the Assistant to the Bishop Pastor Katherine Finegan.

2016 Synod Council
Bishop Thomas A. Skrenes
Vice President Pamela Long
Secretary Pastor Douglas Johnson
Treasurer Dr. Larry Pagel

Conference One: Iron-Gogebic-Ontonagon
Pastor Francis Strong
Philip Wirtanen

Conference Two: Copper Country
Pastor Julie Belew
Jacob Heikkinen

Conference Three: Headwaters
Pastor Devon Barrix
Barbara Maines

Conference Four: Four Rivers
Pastor Micheal Laakko
William Weiss

Conference Five: Menominee Valley
Eric Larson
Judy Peterson

Conference Six: Delta
Pamela Durbin
Pastor Christopher Johnson

Conference Seven: Three Lakes
Rosemary McPherson
Rick Pink

Conference Eight: Superior Central
Pastor Douglas Norquist
Haley Smith

Synod Council meetings are also attended by the Assistant to the Bishop and the President of the Synod Women’s Organization. They are open to the public. You are welcome to attend.

I give thanks for these excellent leaders who give of their time to serve on the synod council. When you see these people around the synod thank them for their leadership.

+Thomas A. Skrenes
Bishop
In anticipation of our Synod Assembly in May, I share with you the beginning portion of my Report as the Assistant to the Bishop. The report in its entirety will be posted on the Synod’s website, www.nglsynod.org, along with all the other reports, for your reading pleasure.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Have you ever tried a new restaurant and been so impressed that you told your friends all about it, including a detailed description of your meal, the service, the atmosphere, the price?

Have you ever found a really good bargain? A blouse on sale? A flea market find? An incredible deal in the paper? Maybe you had a Kohl’s 30% off coupon along with Kohl’s cash and a gift card besides and were able to buy a sweater for less than $5.00! Or you found Iitola glass at the Goodwill, name brand jeans at St. Vinny’s, a decent set of dishes on Trash to Treasure day. I have a pair of hiking boots that I bought for 50 cents, and I bought a second-hand bag that had money in it!! Quite the bargain!

The thing is, we have no trouble sharing this kind of news. We feel lucky, blessed, almost like we’ve gotten away with something, or we want people to share in our appreciation of an experience. I’ve heard people describe a meal like it was their last. They have warmed to their topic of the most outstanding, succulent, and delicious pork chop ever, the tenderness, the seasoning, and even how well it reheated for the following day’s lunch, since they couldn’t finish it all.

So what can we learn from this?

We can witness to a good meal. We can witness to our latest bargain find. What is it that fills us with that desire? What is it that compels us to share the good news of a new restaurant or the good luck of saving a little money? What makes it so easy? And doing the same for our faith, so difficult?

While I think sharing our faith is far more complicated, there is one thing I would like you to consider. That perhaps we are not excited enough about our congregations, that we take them for granted, and that we consider our efforts in ministry to be the order of the day, rather than something extraordinary, a blessing, a joy, and something to get excited about.

As you may have heard, the WWW Task Force has been working with Channel 6, WLUC TV to create an ad campaign. And the people who have gone to our different churches to film different things have been impressed with us. I suggested, more than once, that they get some footage of a quilting group. They could choose from an array of quilting operations throughout our synod. They were able to film the quilting group at First Lutheran in Gladstone. And the Marketing director came to me afterwards and said, “When you said we should film a quilting group, I imagined five little old ladies sitting around, sewing on the same quilt, and talking about Jesus. I had no idea…” Her voice trailed off as words failed her.

I replied with a smile, “Oh…no, no, no. Our quilters, they are a well-oiled machine! There are the tufters and the cutters and the sewers and the rippers, and the ones who lay it out, and measure, and I don’t even know what else. Everyone has a job. You don’t want to get in a quilter’s way. They are people on a mission!”

She was in awe that so many of our churches have quilting groups. And she marveled that she had never...
er heard this about the Lutheran church before, and why hadn’t she? “Why don’t you tell people about this?” she exclaimed.

Well, now we are trying that, with the campaign. But of course, word of mouth is even more effective.

Look around your congregation, and see it through a visitor’s eyes. Be joyful, and excited by what the Spirit accomplishes through you, as a congregation, and as people partnered together in ministry with other churches in the Synod, and in the ELCA. We are a church that is on a mission to make a difference in the world in Jesus’ name. Let’s not take this for granted. This is good news worth sharing. This is news to get excited about. We are lucky, and blessed, and honored to be a part of this work. It’s time we stopped keeping this good news to ourselves.

As I begin my fifth year as the Assistant to the Bishop, I thank God for the partnership in ministry that I see and experience in and among our many congregations, the whole ELCA, and our ecumenical partners. Church is good!! For there we can easily find and experience the presence of God in Christ Jesus, in each other, in the word and sacraments, in how we embody God’s work with our hands, in worship, offering welcome, giving voice to our witness.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Katherine Finegan

Northern Great Lakes Synod Assembly
May 13-14, 2016
at Messiah Lutheran Church and Northern Michigan University
Marquette, Michigan

Theme: Witness

Pre-Assembly Workshops
Friday afternoon, May 13th, at Messiah!

ELCA Representative:
Rev. Chris Boerger, ELCA Secretary

Assembly Voters and Visitors:
Are you registered yet?

For more information about assembly and to register, check out the Synod’s website at www.nglsynod.org/assembly!
Pastoral Vacancies and Interims

**Full-time**

Porterfield, Porterfield; Beaver American, Pound—Rev. Ken Michaelis

United, L’Anse—Pastor John Autio

Faith, Sault Ste. Marie—Pastor Matthew Lamb

Our Redeemer, Newberry—Pastor David Hueter

Bethany, Norway; Calvary, Quinnesec—Pastor Doug Johnson

“Only in doing, can we give example. Christians practice stewardship by sharing their God-given time, talents and treasures, as an act of thanks to God for all God’s gifts to them.”

How generously our congregations have shared their God-given gifts with the Synod and the wider Church in 2016! Though pledges for the year are flat, mission support giving is up 20% over February, 2015, with designated gifts more than 152% higher! Thanks be to God for your gifts! As together we work to share the Gospel throughout our Synod, may we continue to show by our example of generous, consistent giving our trust in God’s promises to provide all we need.

- Betsy Koski, Bookkeeper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As of 2/29</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>$ Change</th>
<th>% Change</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pledged Amount</td>
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<td>Amount Received</td>
<td>97,005</td>
<td>116,546</td>
<td>+129,541</td>
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<td>Designated Gifts</td>
<td>12,600</td>
<td>31,749</td>
<td>+19,149</td>
<td>+152%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Northern Great Lakes Synod
1029 N. Third Street, Suite A
Marquette, MI 49855

Phone: 906-228-2300
Fax: 905-228-2527
E-mail: ngl@nglsynod.org

### We’re on the web
www.nglsynod.org
Find us on Facebook

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### Pray Faithfully

#### Devotion Schedule

For April & May

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 3-9</td>
<td>Susan Boback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 10-16</td>
<td>Pastor Kevin Kaiser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 17-23</td>
<td>Pastor Ann Gonyea-Alexander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 24-30</td>
<td>Pamela Long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1-7</td>
<td>Pastor Micheal Laakko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 8-14</td>
<td>Pauline Kiltinen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 15-21</td>
<td>Pastor Devon Barrix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 22-28</td>
<td>Phil Wirtanen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 28-June 3</td>
<td>Pastor Douglas Norquist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## SYNOD CALENDAR

### April 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>World Hunger Committee Meeting at the Synod Office, 1 p.m. ET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Conference 8 Text Study (Pericope) at the Synod Office, 10:30 a.m. ET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>NGLS Staff Meeting at the Synod Office, 11 a.m. ET</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mission Outreach Committee Meeting at the Synod Office, 11 a.m. ET</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Conference 6 Meeting at Bethany, Escanaba, 11 a.m. ET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>DEM All Staff Gathering in Chicago (Pastor Katherine Finegan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-17</td>
<td>Lutheran Men in Mission in Minneapolis (Bishop Thomas Skrenes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp Annual Meeting at FLLC, 3 p.m. CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-19</td>
<td>Clergy Stewardship Retreat at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>NGLS Staff Meeting at the Synod Office, 11 a.m. ET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Companion Synod Committee Meeting at the Synod Office, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. ET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-23</td>
<td>Bi-Synodical Candidacy Meeting at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Pastor Kay Richter Installation in the New Evangelical Lutheran Parish, 3 p.m. ET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Youth Committee Meeting at the Synod Office, 10 a.m. ET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Spirituality Retreat for Clergy, LLMs &amp; AIMs at St. Mark’s, Marquette, 10 a.m. ET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-30</td>
<td>Clergy Spouse Sleepover at the Skogmans’ home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### May 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Stewardship Committee Meeting at the Synod Office, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. ET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>NGLS Staff Meeting at the Synod Office, 11 a.m. ET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lay School for Mission/LLM Advisory Board Meeting at the Synod Office, 11 a.m. ET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Synod Endowment Committee Meeting at the Synod Office, 11 a.m. ET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>“Answer the Call” Sunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Synod Council Meeting at Messiah, Marquette, 3 p.m. ET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-14</td>
<td>Synod Assembly at Messiah and Northern Michigan University, Marquette</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AGENDA
All times are Eastern Time

Thursday - April 28, 2016

10:00 a.m. Refreshments
Noon Lunch
3:00 p.m. Closing

$10 fee covers refreshments and lunch.

Registration Deadline:
April 15, 2016

Workshop Description:
Using texts from Romans 7 and 8, we call the clergy into times of prayer, meditation, journaling, small group discussion, witnessing with stories from our lives, and celebration of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Our Presenters:

Pastor Terry Cathcart is a spiritual director and leader of contemplative retreats. In 2010, he retired from thirty-two years in pastoral ministry with the Evangelical Covenant Church. He is a graduate of The University of Chicago and North Park Theological Seminary in Chicago. In 2005, North Park opened the C. John Weborg Center for Spiritual Direction. Terry was a member of the first class, receiving his certificate as a spiritual director in 2007. Terry and his wife, Sue, have lived in Ishpeming since 1992. He enjoys reading, writing, running, and gardening.

Dr. Robert Engelhart is a professor of music at Northern Michigan University, where he also serves as Head of the Music Department. He teaches studio voice, diction, and opera workshops. He and his wife, Roberta, met while they were students at Capital University in Columbus, Ohio. They moved to Marquette in 1986 and raised two amazing sons. Combining classical training with a wide experience in historical musical styles, liturgy, and contemporary music, Rob seeks to provide a meditative, open environment for the retreat participants that enhances their silence and helps them focus on hearing the Lord’s voice.

Registration Form
A Day for Reflecting
April 28, 2016
St. Mark’s Lutheran Church
Marquette, MI 49855

Name ___________________________________
Congregation_________________________________
Town/State___________________________________
Phone _______________________________________
Email _______________________________________

Please send registration form and $10 to:
Northern Great Lakes Synod
1029 North Third Street, Suite A
Marquette, MI 49855

All registrations need to be made through the Northern Great Lakes Synod Office. Checks should be made out to the “Northern Great Lakes Synod.”
What religious issues will be in the courts in the years ahead? How will future court cases impact religious institutions and the organized church itself? Will the federal courts eliminate the church tax exempt status for property or income taxes? Will the "parsonage or housing allowance" for clergy continue its preferred tax status in the law? Will tax exemptions (income and property) continue for churches or church colleges that do not allow gay marriage services? Will religious chaplaincy continue to be allowed in the military or in our prisons? How can religious Americans and non-religious Americans coexist in the public square when both have "rights" that seem to be in conflict?

Robert Tuttle and Ira Lupu are both on the faculty of George Washington University Law School in Washington D.C. Tuttle is an ELCA Lutheran and the attorney for the Metropolitan D.C. Synod. The authors have distinguished themselves in constitutional law theory as teachers and now in their book "Secular Government Religious People" provide excellent reflections on the history and context of modern constitutional law in relationship to church and state. The subject is complicated and the language dense but the reading of this book is rewarding even as you may disagree with some of their assumptions and conclusions.

It all begins with the First amendment to the U.S. Constitution. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." The two parts relating to religion proper are known as the "establishment of religion" clause and the "free exercise" clause. They continue to provide plentiful opportunity for litigation in state and federal courts. Lupu and Tuttle believe that the best way to preserve freedom of religion honoring all Americans and their beliefs or lack thereof is to look at all questions in terms of a "jurisdictionally based view" of the first amendment. The question for the court is, does the court have jurisdiction here or as Lupu and Tuttle put it, does the court have the "competence" to decide the issue. Competency for the court is "the principle that civil courts are constitutionally incompetent to decide ecclesiastical questions (that are) long-standing, deep, and far-reaching...The principle applies to disputes between congregations and their members. For example, if a congregation refuses to admit someone to communion, or excommunicates a member, the person excluded can find no relief in civil courts." (p.69) "The state is not jurisdictionally competent to make religious decisions, such as what constitutes the most faithful interpretation of religious texts, the fitness of a person for religious ministry, or the relative religious significance of particular beliefs or conduct." (p.226)

Thomas Jefferson famously coined the phrase "a wall of separation between church and state." Most Americans recognize the historical and legal importance of the phrase and would agree with its sentiments but do not often understand it in the same way. Questions struggled with in the legal system historically include whether religious social institutions can receive tax dollars? What about religious elementary and secondary schools and funding of text books, transportation, or non-religious academics? And under what circumstances can tax monies be used? What about religious universities receiving federal money for student financial aid? "In the path breaking decision in Everson v. Board of Education, rendered in 1947 by the Supreme Court, all nine justices agreed that the non-establishment principle now applied to state and local government as to the federal government." (p.83) Thus, all state and local governments, school boards, and other government entities were henceforth subject of legal challenges concerning religious practices.

Another seminal case came to the Supreme Court in 1971. In Lemon v. Kurtzman, a three part test for all religious cases concerning the Establishment Clause was promulgated. "Laws must have a secular purpose, reveal a primary effect for not advancing religion, and avoid 'excessive entanglement' between the state and religious entities."
While giving these conditions or "tests" in its ruling, the authors here believe the Court has often ignored Lemon itself in its decisions. The Supreme Court has in the last decades been heavily politicized by both national political parties. The polarized court (lots of 5-4 decisions along very predictable ideological lines) have produced some conflicting and even contradictory decisions in the religious area. Lupu and Tuttle see this as the result of trying to balance competing rights instead of asking if the court deciding the question had "competence" in this matter.

Lawyers have opinions. (Clergy do too, but that is another story!) In May 2014, the Supremes gave us a divided 5-4 decision in Town of Greece v. Galloway. In that case, the constitutionality of invocations and benedictions given by clergy were tested. Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote for the majority and "concluded that the town's prayer practices did not violate the Establishment Clause." (p. 263) Lupu and Tuttle would have joined the dissenters. They believe that "the majority's opinion ignore the key constitutional issue in the case whether the town of Greece's policies and practices of legislative prayer represent a government asserting its own religious character. (p.264) "By permitting the town to maintain a prayer practice that manifests such a character, the Court invited other governmental bodies to do likewise."(p.266)

Military chaplaincy will yield considerable court action in the years ahead. "Some chaplains have asserted that when called upon to pray at official events, they have a constitutional right to pray in the language of their faith tradition."(p. 258) Lupu and Tuttle do not believe they have that right. That to me seems odd. Clergy are invited into the military as religious practitioners and professionals and it would be dangerous for the government to determine their religious beliefs even if that faith is publically shared by the chaplain. I do not see how their "competency test" for the government agent (in this case the commanding officer) can justify governmental oversight of the chaplain's theology when they write, "If the chaplain prays at an official event, the chaplain prays as the government's agent, and content of the prayer is subject to governmental oversight." (p.258) How is it all constitutional for the government to, for all practical purposes, write prayers for clergy even if the clergy are employed by the government?

Elites in the American society are becoming increasingly religion-less. Courts will in the days ahead scrutinize any perceived privilege that religious communities or their clergy possess. For those tens of thousands of clergy who rely on housing allowance tax exemption, Lupu and Tuttle predict further legal tests and its probable demise. "In its current scope, the parsonage exemption no longer responds to any distinctive burden on religious entities, and is therefore constitutionally questionable." (p.225)

Lupu and Tuttle are advocates for the widely accepted doctrine that the United States Constitution creates a "limited State" which cannot, among other things, resolve theological issues for its people. A limited state as opposed to a totalitarian regime is what the founders sought. Free speech, religious liberty, private property and a legal system that protects the individual from coercion from both private and state players make the state limited. In religion the "deference to religious communities decisions about fitness for ministry is a central feature of religious freedom in America. So is the comparable deference to the ways that a religious organizations choose to structure ownership of property, or determine qualifications for membership. This posture of deference is not a narrow, technical, or specialized approach for arcane and unusual cases...the essence of our central thesis that the Constitution guarantees a government whose character must be secular...The secular character of government creates space within which individuals and institutions can flourish in their faith commitments. Such a regime is not the product of any sweeping theory of church autonomy or religious privilege. Instead, it is the inevitable consequence of a limited state." (p.73)

Lupu and Tuttle have given us the opportunity to think through important ideas about religious freedom and the religious community. Their work contributes to the conversation within our country and our church. The book is very good. Read it!

+Thomas A. Skrenes
August 31, 2015
Bishop’s Discretionary Fund
Rev. Chad Christensen

ELCA Good Gifts
Holy Cross, Baraga
Immanuel, Rhinelander

ELCA Disaster Funds
All Saints, Wakefield
Holy Trinity, Chassell
Grace, South Range
Trinity, Rhinelander
Bethany, Amasa
Messiah, Marquette

ELCA Walk for Water Campaign
Prince of Peace, Eagle River
Bethany, Escanaba
Good Shepherd, Houghton
Emanuel, Skandia

Endowment /Answer the Call
Rev. Kevin Kaiser
Kay and Roger Knuth

Lutheran Campus Ministry
Good Shepherd, Peshtigo
Faith, Rock
Prince of Peace, Marquette
Grace, Gwinn

Lutheran Social Services
Emanuel, Skandia
Trinity, Ishpeming

Lutheran World Relief
Salem, Ironwood
Grace, South Range
Calvary, Minocqua
Zion, Manistique
Zion, St. Ignace
Prince of Peace, Marquette
Messiah, Marquette
Grace, Gwinn

Maternity/Malaria Project
St. Paul’s, Mass City
Messiah, Marquette

NGLS Companion Synod Projects
Prince of Peace, Eagle River
First, Gladstone
Christ Lutheran Parish, Ironwood
Bethany, Escanaba
First, Gladstone
Rev. Robert & Deloris Langseth (in memory of Mildred Ozanich)
Zion, Manistique
Our Redeemer, Newberry
Immanuel, Negaunee
Bishop Thomas A. Skrenes
NGL Synodical Women’s Organization

NGLS Mission Outreach
Immanuel, Escanaba

Seminarian Support
Faith, Rock
Faith, Ishpeming

World Missionary Support
Mission United, Pelkie
Trinity, Rhinelander
Bethel, Ishpeming
Messiah, Marquette

WWW Ad Campaign Support
Grace, South Range
First, Gladstone
Zion, Allenville
Bethany, Republic
Prince of Peace, Marquette
Betsy Koski
Prayer Calendar – April 2016

1. Pray during April, **Cancer Awareness Month**, that all people are diligent about visiting their doctors and *getting cancer screening tests*. And for **all those currently fighting cancer**.

2. Pray for the **members** of Ukong Lutheran Church, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and their **NGLS Companion Congregation, Calvary, Rapid River** (Rev Stephen Gauger, pastor.)

3. Pray for **Pastor Jay Welshonse** as he is **installed today as pastor for the Northern Lights Parish** (Siloa in Ontonagon, St. Paul in Mass City, First in Winona) at Siloa, Ontonagon at 3:00 p.m. today.

4. For those attending the **World Hunger Committee** meeting today at 1:00 the synod office and **for all those in our synod and around the world who worry about where their next meal is coming from**.

5. Pray for all of our **Licensed Lay Ministers** as they continue their leadership positions: **Darrel Diers**, St. James, Marinette; **Elaine Hendrickson**, Our Saviour's Atlantic Mine; and **John and Sharon Babbit**, First, Grand Marais.

6. **Pray for our Synod Staff** as they prepare for the Synod Assembly at their staff meeting today at 11:00.

7. For those attending the **Mission Outreach Committee** meeting at the synod office today at 11:00.

8. Pray for the **Adoptive Family Retreat at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp** April 7-10 and for all of those families formed by adoption or foster care.

9. Pray for the **members of St. John Lutheran Church in Cumberland MD** (Rev Tormod Svensson), **St. Luke Lutheran Church, Cumberland MD** (Rev David Wright), and **St. Paul Lutheran Church in Cumberland MD** (Rev Marsha Garrett).

10. For **children and families dealing with autism and other learning disorders**.

11. Pray for **Rev Breanne Johnson** who is **celebrating the anniversary of her ordination** this month.

12. Pray for all those in the congregations of **Bethany in Norway and Calvary, Quinnesec** and their interim pastor, **Rev Doug Johnson**, as they continue in the call process during a **pastoral vacancy**.

13. Pray for our **Rostered Clergy**, active and retired, who are **celebrating birthdays** this month; **Mark Bangert 4/13**, **George Kaiser 4/14**, **Nancy Kauppi 4/16**, **John Autio 4/16**.

14. For **all of the children** that they are kept safe from abuse and **cared for with love, patience, and understanding**.

15. For **Bishop Tom Skrenes** as he travels to Minneapolis for **Lutheran Men in Mission Meeting**, April 15-17.
| 16 | Pray for our **Rostered Clergy**, active and retired, who are **celebrating birthdays** this month; Ken Ranos 4/20, Melinda Quivik 4/21, Doug Pohlman 4/24, Chrys Levesque Hendrick 4/28. |
| 17 | Pray for the **Annual Meeting** and all those attending it at **Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp** 2:00 - 5:00 pm CT. |
| 18 | For those attending the **Clergy Stewardship Retreat** at **Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp** today and tomorrow. |
| 19 | Pray for our **retired clergy** and their **spouses**: Rev Robert and Deloris Langseth and Rev. Wallace and Alice Leno. |
| 20 | For those attending the **Synodical Women’s Organization** Meeting at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp, 10 a.m. CT. |
| 21 | Pray for those attending the **Companion Synod Committee** Meeting at synod office, at 11:00. |
| 22 | For this planet on **Earth Day**. Pray that all people would take care of this place God has entrusted to us and **preserve it for future generations by recycling and not wasting its resources.** |
| 23 | Pray for those children attending the **Upper Elementary (grades 3-6) Retreat** and also those attending the **Bi-synodical candidacy meeting** at FLLC April 22 and 23. |
| 24 | Pray for the **spouses of deceased pastors** – Diane Shepard and Dora Jane Swanson. |
| 25 | For all those **suffering from malaria** and those in danger of contracting malaria today on **World Malaria Day**. Also for those attending the **Youth Committee** meeting at the synod office today at 10:00. |
| 26 | For all the **Seminary Students** from our synod, but especially this month we pray for **Katelin Bingner**. |
| 27 | Pray for our **Rostered Clergy**, active and retired, who are **celebrating birthdays** this month; Bob Patrick 4/29, Amanda Kossow 4/29, Bob Sutherland 4/30. |
| 28 | For those attending the **Spirituality Retreat** at St. Mark’s in Marquette today. |
| 29 | Pray for the folks at the **Clergy Spouse** overnight gathering at the Skogman residence tonight. |
| 30 | Pray for the **members of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Frostburg MD** (Rev Richard Schoenly), **St. Paul Lutheran Church in Funkstown MD** (Rev Michael Louia), and **Christ Lutheran Church in Hagerstown MD** (Rev Salley Fenstermacher). |

“We pray for congregations in the Delaware-Maryland Synod as part of our domestic partner synod relationship.”
Prayer Calendar – May 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pray for all those <em>graduates and their families</em> at the Finlandia University Baccalaureate ceremony today.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pray for all our <em>Rostered Leaders, both active and retired who celebrate birthdays this month</em>; Philip Johnson 5/1, Tamra Harder 5/4, and Erik Heskin 5/9.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pray for <em>Bishop Skrenes</em> as he travels to Madison WI to attend the Lutheran Planned Giving Meeting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Pray for all the green and growing trees and plants and the flowers that God has given us as they once more show us their glory and renew us after a white winter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>For those attending the Lay School for Mission/Licensed Lay Ministry Board Meeting at the Synod Office, 11:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pray for our <em>clergy celebrating anniversaries of their ordinations this month</em>: Nick Johannes, Don Wandersee, Douglas Buck, Norman Peterson, and George Kaiser.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>For those attending the NGLS Endowment Committee meeting at the synod office at 11:00.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Pray for Mothers everywhere on Mother’s Day. Honor your mother and pray that all mothers become loving and responsible parents raising their children to honor and respect all living things.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>For choir members, directors, and church musicians who give their time and energy to practice and who offer up their voices in praise to God in the congregations of our synod.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Pray for all those in our <em>Synod who are ill</em>. Pray that our great God will heal them or comfort and soothe those whom he is calling home to live with him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Pray for all our <em>Rostered Leaders, both active and retired who celebrate birthdays this month</em>; Marcia Solberg 5/10, Frederick Hallanger 5/21, and John Shallow 5/21.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Today is National Nursing Day. Pray for all those nurses in our congregations and everywhere who care for us and our loved ones when we are ill and most vulnerable.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Pray for the hundreds of people attending the Synod Assembly May 13-14 at Messiah Lutheran Church today and continuing at Northern Michigan University tomorrow as we celebrate coming together to conduct business, learn, and worship together.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Pray for the members of Haven Lutheran Church in Hagerstown MD (Rev Linda Allesandri), St. John Lutheran Church in Hagerstown MD (Rev Edward Heim), and St. Mark Lutheran Church in Hagerstown MD (Rev Stanley Steele).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>all those young adults who are getting confirmed</strong> this spring and becoming full voting members of their congregations. <em>May they continue to grow in faith towards Jesus Christ, our Savior.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td><strong>May is Mental Health Awareness Month.</strong> Pray for all those with any of the wide spectrum of mental illnesses and pray <strong>that more resources be provided</strong> for research and treatment of mental illness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>retired clergy</strong> and <strong>spouses</strong> – <strong>Rev Ingmar Levin</strong> and <strong>Rev. Norman Lund</strong>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Pray for the members of <strong>Magogoni Lutheran Church</strong>, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and their <strong>NGLS Companion Congregation</strong>, <strong>Christ the King Lutheran Church, Escanaba</strong> (Rev Chris Johnson, pastor.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Pray for our <strong>clergy celebrating anniversaries of their ordinations this month</strong>: John Shallow, Dean Peterson, Frederick Hallanger, Doug Schoen, Dale Skogman, and Mary Weinkauf.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Pray for all those <strong>addicted to drugs and/or alcohol</strong> that they will seek help and keep trying to stay substance-free even when they slip up.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Pray for all those <strong>who are lonely and long for companionship and conversation.</strong></td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>spouses of deceased pastors</strong> – <strong>Ruth Warmanen</strong> and <strong>Jane Magnuson</strong>.</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Pray for the <strong>unemployed and underemployed</strong>. We ask you, Heavenly Father, to <strong>send them opportunities to work, to keep their families well-fed</strong>, and to teach those of us more fortunate how we may help them.</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>For all those <strong>seminarians from our synod</strong> preparing for a life of ministry. This month we especially <strong>pray for Terry Frankenstein</strong>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td><strong>We thank God for creating us all differently</strong> with diverse races, colors, sexes, customs, and personalities and we pray that we can <strong>acknowledge that we are all God’s children.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Pray for the <strong>members of Trinity Lutheran Church in Hagerstown MD</strong> (Rev David Oravec), <strong>St. Peter Lutheran in Hagerstown MD</strong> (Rev Thomas McCleaf), and <strong>Mt. Zion Lutheran Church, Boonsboro in Rohrersville MD</strong> (Rev Blaine Feightner.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Pray for the <strong>peace makers in Afghanistan, Syria and in all other troubled lands</strong>. We pray especially to keep civilians; men, women, and children safe from the violence they must endure each day.</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>farmers, ranchers and all those growing our food</strong> and tending the soil. We pray that their growing season is bountiful and their work rewarding.</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>For God’s children <strong>in prisons</strong>. Keep them from harm, help them to keep from offending again and give them the strength to succeed when released.</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>🌺 We thank God for all <strong>Americans who have died serving this country</strong> on this <strong>Memorial Day</strong> and we pray that there will come a day when no more wars will be fought and no more soldiers will die.</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>students</strong> who will be <strong>graduating</strong> in the coming days that higher education and employment opportunities will be available to them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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