



# Soundings

Vol. 27, Issue 4

April 2011

## Japan's Earthquake and Tsunami

On March 11, one of the largest earthquakes on record with a magnitude of 8.9 struck Japan near the town of Sendai triggering tsunami warnings across the Pacific Ocean. The initial earthquake was followed by 30-foot waves, devastating Japan's coastal areas, and more than 50 aftershocks. The death toll continues to mount.

The Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church (JELC) has reported minimal damage to its churches in Tokyo and

is assessing the full extent of impact to JELC congregations near the epicenter, particularly Sendai Lutheran Church. The President and General Secretary of JELC were in Malaysia attending a Lutheran World Federation leadership conference at the time of the earthquake. The ELCA, through the churchwide unit for Global Mission, currently has 22 missionaries serving in schools and parishes of the JELC; all have been found to be safe and secure.

The ELCA stands in solidarity with its companion on the ground, JELC, as they assess the safety and security of



Photo credit: REUTERS/KYODO

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## A Word From The Bishop



**The Rev Wm  
Chris Boerger**

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God. Romans 13:1

We are in that time when people are getting their tax refund checks or delaying filing their tax return because they want to put off paying taxes until April 15. Our relationship with governing authorities is a complicated issue. We elect our leaders. They make decisions that make us happy or distress us. We also live in a curious relationship with governing authorities.

The church in this country is granted the privilege of having donations made to it be deducted from one's income for tax purposes. This declaration of the IRS has been received by the ELCA. By virtue of each congregations' membership in the ELCA this privilege is extended to each congregation. A very small number of congregations have filed the necessary paperwork with the IRS to get their own declaration.

This means that in the political realm some activities of congregations and pastors are limited. We cannot endorse political candidates running for election. We can support issues, but not candidates.

Another aspect of this tax relationship is with the State of Washington. We are not required to pay tax on property that has been exempted by the state. There are limits to the total amount of property that can be exempted and the purposes for which it is used. I am concerned that some of the groups or individuals who ask to use our buildings might put this tax property tax exemption in jeopardy. It is not about whether a person is paid for their use of the building. It is about whether their activity is permitted under law. We have posted information about this on our

website. I would encourage each congregation council to review the regulations so that this is not a problem in the future.

Finally I want to comment on a third area of legal responsibility that I see abused. We need to pay attention to copyright law. It is not true that because you own hymnals you can reprint the contents of these books without paying attention to copyright permissions. Congregations should be the role models of observing copyright law. It is a matter of acting in a legal manner and a matter of economic justice for those who create the materials we want to copy.

There is a role for prophetic ministry that challenges the laws and rulers of the country. There is no place for taking advantage of the legal system and ignoring the laws that we agreed to follow. We have agreed to certain restrictions by accepting the tax benefits of the country and state. We do need to pay attention to this aspect of our citizenship.

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## A Word From The Bishop

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office@lutheransnw.org; www.lutheransnw.org

Deadline for copy of the May/June 2011 issue of *Soundings* is Wednesday, April 6. Current and archived issues can be found on the synod's website.

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## Have You?

As of February 28, 75 of our ELCA-primary plan members and their eligible spouses have taken the Mayo Clinic Health Assessment. We need 65 more people to take the assessment to reach 65% and earn our 2% discount on ELCA health contributions this year.

Earning this discount, your congregation will pay 2% less for health contributions this year.

If you have ELCA-primary health coverage, take the health assessment today for your synod, your congregation and yourself. You'll earn your \$150 personal wellness account credit and can begin using your personal health summary to make small changes to improve your health. (This doesn't count for retirees.)

Take the assessment at <https://www.elcaforwellness.org>. View our progress toward 2% at [https://www.elcabop.org/BenefitsAdmin/2\\_percent\\_progress.aspx](https://www.elcabop.org/BenefitsAdmin/2_percent_progress.aspx).

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## Japan

its members and communities served by the church. Through its predecessor bodies, the ELCA has been present in Japan since 1892 and will accompany the JELC in its planned response to this disaster.

Special needs and opportunities have arisen in response to the current crisis. The ELCA invites gifts to ELCA Disaster Response in order to continue its work in Japan and surrounding region.

Your gifts to ELCA Disaster Response, designated "for the Pacific Earthquake & Tsunami," will be used entirely (100 percent) to this disaster.

You may give by phone 800-638-3522; donate online (<https://community.elca.org/netcommunity/page.aspx?pid=631>); or you can send your checks to ELCA Disaster Response, 39330 Treasury Center, Chicago, IL 60694, memo: Pacific Earthquake and Tsunami.

Every Thursday evening the Covenant House at the University of Washington is transformed into a place of world encounter. A group of about 40 Chinese scholars and students gather for a meal hosted by people from area congregations. The students and scholars are eager to practice their English and they are a delight to meet and get to know.

More congregations are needed to serve these meals. The goal is to involve enough churches that each would serve a meal every two months (about five times a year when accounting for school breaks).

All kinds of dinners are appreciated: American, Asian, Mexican, Italian, etc. The meal is served at either at 5:30 p.m. (winter) or 6 p.m. (summer). Meal teams may prepare the food elsewhere and bring it to the Covenant House, or bring groceries to the Covenant House and prepare the dinner there. Other responsibilities include serving and cleaning up. Teams are also asked to provide beverages.

Paper plates are stored at the Covenant House. The meal time lasts about 30 minutes, and then clean-up may begin. After clean-up the meal team is welcome to leave, or team members can stay and be part of “talk time”.

The Ministry to Chinese Students and Scholars belongs to our Synod. This ministry began in February 2009 with support from the Synod, Grace Chinese Lutheran Church, Lutheran Campus Ministry at UW, and ELCA Churchwide. The goal of the ministry is to offer the love of Christ to Chinese students and scholars, who will be China’s future leaders.

For this school year, we have 11 more Talk Times left. They are: March 31; April 7, 14, 21, 28; May 5, 12, 19, 26; and June: 2, 9. You may contact Zhenchuan Liu, Ministry Coordinator, if you have questions or are ready to sign up. His contact information is: 206-524-7900 (office); 425-691-8701 (cell); or liuzc999@hotmail.com. Thank you!

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## Meals Needed at Covenant House

## **LPPO Legislative Update**

By the time this reaches you there will only be about 3 weeks left in the session (last day is April 24<sup>th</sup>-Easter Sunday). The main message that LPPO urges congregational advocates to send to their state legislators (1-800-562-6000) is:

“As a person of faith, and a part of the LPPO Statewide Network, I urge you to consider the poor and most vulnerable in our state as you face the unenviable task of balancing the 2011-2013 biennial budget that has a \$4.5 billion shortfall. LPPO is a part of Our Economic Future Coalition that urges repealing tax exemptions, requiring transparency and accountability for the 500+ tax exemptions in our state, and preserving our state’s safety net.”

Please visit our website at [www.lppowa.org](http://www.lppowa.org) to find more specific issues to advocate on and how to communicate with your state legislators.

### **Lutheran Public Policy FundRaiser**

Lutheran Public Policy Office of Washington, also, announces it’s 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraising and Awards Dinner on Sunday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2011 from 4:30-7pm. The event will be held at St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church, 7916 1<sup>st</sup> Ave NW, Seattle 98117.

Our theme is Advocacy Jam, Preserving Services for the Common Good. Tickets are \$70 each, or a table for eight is \$500. If you’d like to RSVP and/or donate an auction item, please contact Kathy Long via [lppooffice@lcsnw.org](mailto:lppooffice@lcsnw.org) or by calling 206-464-4133.

Please join us in supporting advocacy as we live out our baptismal calling to work for peace and justice in the world.

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## Here 'n There

- **Josephine Sunset Home** invites the public to attend the dedication of the new Memory Care Unit at 2 pm on Sunday, March 27, 2011. The afternoon will begin with a short worship service in the Josephine Chapel followed by a dedication and tour. The new secure unit includes 16 beds, a private courtyard, refurbished common areas and specially trained 24-hour caregivers. Please RSVP to Becky at 360-629-2126, ext 146 by Friday, March 25.
- In April **St. Luke's in Bellevue** will be sending dress lengths of donated fabric worldwide. To make sure that the recipients can make their own clothes, members will also include, thread, needles and buttons. Do you have a button collection? Contact Roselyn Olson, Associate in Ministry, at 425-822-7907 or email at [roselynnolson@slukes.org](mailto:roselynnolson@slukes.org).
- In February members of **Mount Si in North Bend** assembled 11 goody bags for college students filled with caramel popcorn, hot chocolate, fruit bar, candy, devotionals and a special Valentine card made by their youth groups.
- Seniors at **First Lutheran Church of Richmond Beach** will be holding their third Senior Luncheon at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, April 20, in the Fellowship Hall. The guest speaker is Kirsten Larson who will share her experiences of growing up as a teenager in Nazi-occupied Denmark during World War II. She was a runner of secret communications among members of the Danish underground. Kirsten and her husband, Leif, lived in Denmark until 1955.
- The senior high youth group from **Salem in Mount Vernon** served dinner at the Compass Housing Alliance on March 20.
- Members of **Our Savior's in Everett** received a letter from Operation Bootstrap Africa thanking them for their support. The letter mentioned that recent gifts have allowed them to help villagers build six new classrooms at Ilboro Primary School, pay teachers' salaries in Madagascar and support 270 students at the MaaSae Girls Secondary School.

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## Here 'n There

- Jill Peterson, member of **Gloria Dei in Alderwood Manor**, traveled with her father to Tanzania to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro. She also visited the Masama Girls School delivering solar-powered calculators and pens to the school.
- Members of **Edison in Bow** received a thank you from the Warm Closet at Burlington Lutheran Church in Burlington. Edison donated 42 men's coats, 33 women's coats, 26 children's coats, 23 pairs of gloves, nine pairs of warm socks and eight hats. Edison also received thank you's from Camp Lutherwood, Josephine Sunset Home, Friendship House and Alger Food Bank.
- 2011 marks the 83rd Annual "Blessing of the Fleet". Through the decades members from **First in Ballard** have blessed the men and women who harvest the seas, praying for their safety. This year members gathered on March 13 at the Fishermen's Memorial Site at Fishermen's Terminal praying for this community.
- Members at **Luther Memorial in Seattle** are once again dreaming of home grown carrots, tomatoes and green beans. All grown in the church's garden plots. The neighborhood community is also invited to plant fruits and vegetables in these plots.
- **Queen Anne in Seattle** is hosting two upcoming events: A Hymn Festival at 4 p.m. on Sunday, May 22, with organist Lorraine Brugh from Valparaiso University, Indiana; and a Wech Pipe Organ Concert at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 25, with organist Paul Tegels from Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma.
- Seven members from **Kent in Kent** are participating in the Kent Academy of Lay Preachers. Participants are exploring the development of a sermon and worshippers will receive the proclamation from these preachers during the next year.



**We continue To Hold In Our Prayers:**

- † **The Rev. Mary Bosell, On Disability**
- † **The Rev. John Ericksen (ret.)** and his wife, Marita
- † **The Rev. Phil Petrasek (ret.)** and his wife Linda
- † **The Rev. Paul Wuest (ret.)**

**We Pray For:**

- † **Kenneth Miner, father of Judy Thompson and father-in-law of the Rev. Duane Thompson (ret.)** died Tuesday, February 22. Judy is in Bellingham but Duane was unable to make the trip due to impending hip replacement surgery. Services were held February 28 at Moles Funeral Home, Bellingham. Please keep Duane in prayer for his hip surgery as well. Cards may be sent to: Judy and Duane Thompson, 15 Spring Road, Bellingham, WA 98229-7644.
- † **Gerald Buss, father of the Rev. Jerry Buss, Assistant to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission,** suffered a severe stroke on February 23. Jerry was on his way to Orlando, FL for Mission Developer Training and was able to join his father. Cards may be sent to: Jerry Buss, Northwest Washington Synod, 5519 Phinney Ave N, Seattle, WA 98103.
- † **Pastor John S. Lindsay, Church of the San Juans, and his sister Susan Berg, wife of Pastor Tor Berg, First Lutheran, Bothell,** ask for prayers for their father, John H. Lindsay, and their brother, Kurt Lindsay. John H. Lindsay was recently moved to in-home Hospice care. He and his wife live in the home of Tor and Susan Berg. Susan is the primary care giver. Kurt Lindsay was diagnosed with cancer last summer and has now been

**Within Our Family**



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## **Within Our Family**

placed in hospice care. Kurt also is staying with Susan and Tor for the final weeks of this treatment. Cards may be sent to: Pastor John Lindsay, Lutheran Church in the San Juans, PO Box 2535, Friday Harbor, WA 98250-2535; and Susan Berg, First Lutheran Church, 10207 NE 183rd St, Bothell, WA 98011-3417

### **† Margit Peiffle, Synod Communications**

**Administrator**, returned home from Synod Staff meeting on February 22 to find her home fully engulfed in fire. She lost everything in the fire including family photos and negatives, and her quilts. She has insurance. The cause is still unknown. Friends and neighbors have gathered around Margit and her immediate needs are being met. Cards may be sent to: Margit Peiffle, Northwest Washington Synod, 5519 Phinney Ave N, Seattle, WA 98103.

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## **Spring Bishop Convo**

This year's Spring Bishop Convo will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Tuesday, April 5, at Our Savior's in Everett. The topic is *Preaching the Supper, Promoting an Eucharistic Economy* presented by Dr. Samuel Torvend, Associate Professor of European Religious History, Pacific Lutheran University.

Cost is \$25 for active rostered leaders; \$20 for retired rostered leaders, interns and person on leave from call; or \$30 at the door (all participants). Lunch is included in the registration.

For program questions contact the Rev. Julie Hutson, Luther Memorial in Seattle, at 206-364-2510 or [lmlcpastor@yahoo.com](mailto:lmlcpastor@yahoo.com). For registration questions contact Elaine Harrison at 206-783-9292 or [elaine@lutheransnw.org](mailto:elaine@lutheransnw.org).

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 Northwest Washington Synod Transitions

|  | Location/Event                                | Effective Date |
|--|---|----------------|
| <b>Calls Accepted</b>                                |   |                |
| Thomas Hamren  | Shepherd of the Valley, Startup               | 2/1/2011       |
| Jason Lukis  | Grace, Des Moines                             | 3/21/2011      |
| Cindy Salo   | Central, Seattle                              | 1/30/2011      |
| <b>Installations</b>                                 |   |                |
| Jason Lukis  | Grace, Des Moines                             | 4/3/2011       |
| <b>Leaving/Joining the ELCA</b>                      |   |                |
| Prince of Peace                                      | Everett                                       | 3/14/2011      |
| <b>Ordinations/Commissionings/<br/>Consecrations</b> |   |                |
| Jason Lukis  | Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter,<br>Minn | 3/21/2011      |
| <b>Transfers in/out of Synod</b>                     |   |                |
| Karen Bloomquist                                     | From Metro Chicago Synod                      | 1/26/2011      |
| William Strehlow                                     | From Metro Chicago Synod                      | 1/26/2011      |
| <b>Deaths</b>  |   |                |
| William Vaswig                                       | Issaquah, Washington                          | 1/23/2011      |
| <b>Resignation</b>                                   |   |                |
| Karen Ward (Episcopal Priest)                        | Church of the Apostles (COTA),<br>Seattle     | 2/1/2011       |
|  |   |                |

Northwest Washington Synod Mobility

| In Call Process                  | Position | Status | Current, Interim/Supply Pastor |
|----------------------------------|----------|--------|--------------------------------|
| Arlington, Our Saviour           | PR       | TR     | Paul Anderson, Interim         |
| Bellevue, St. Andrew's           | A/SP     | I      | James McEachran, Pastor        |
| Bellingham, Our Saviour's        | PR       | I      | Supply                         |
| Burien, Glendale                 | PR       | NV     | Red Burchfield, Interim        |
| Duvall, Lord of Life             | PR       | NV     | Supply                         |
| Ferndale, Christ                 | PR       | C      | Christen Anderson, Interim     |
| Monroe, Morning Star             | PR       | TR     | Tim Wolbrecht, Interim         |
| Mount Vernon, Fir-Conway         | PR       | TR     | Michael Swain, Interim         |
| Nooksack, Clearbrook             | PR       | TR     | Supply                         |
| Point Roberts, Trinity Community | PR       | TR     | Supply                         |
| Renton, Lord of Life             | PR       | I      | Phil Reitz, Interim            |
| Seattle, Faith                   | PR       | I      | Karen Hanson, Interim          |
| Seattle, Gethsemane              | PR       | P      | Maynard Atik, Interim          |
| Seattle, Magnolia                | PR       | TR     | Doug Stensby, Interim          |
| Stanwood, Freeborn               | PR       | TR     | Supply                         |
|                                  |          |        |                                |

| Mobility Position Key: |  |
|------------------------|--|
| PR                     | = Pastor   |
| A                      | = Associate  |
| AIM                    | = Associate in Ministry                                  |
| DM                     | = Diaconal Minister                                      |
| A/SP                   | = Associate with Special Emphasis contact (Synod Office) |

| Mobility Status Key: |   |
|----------------------|---|
| I                    | = Interviewing                              |
| C                    | = Calling                                   |
| NV                   | = New Vacancy                               |
| V                    | = Vacancy                                   |
| SC                   | = Synod Call                                |
| TR                   | = Transition process                        |
| P                    | = Profile presented (receiving nominations) |
| TR/DO                | = Div for Outreach Transformation Process   |