

Dear Voting Member:

In a few short weeks our Synod will be meeting in Lansing along with the North/West Lower Michigan Synod for our Joint Synod Assembly. Synod Assembly materials are now posted on the website. You will note in the agenda that our Joint Assembly opens on May 20, 2010, with Lutherans on the Lawn, which is a lunch on the lawn of the State Capitol from 12:00 noon until 3:00 p.m. This lunch will provide us with the opportunity to meet with our state senators and state representatives to talk with them about justice issues related to the legislative agenda of Lutheran Social Services of Michigan (LSSM). For many of you this will be the first time that you have ever engaged in a conversation with an elected official and you may be a little bit nervous about exactly what is involved and what you should say and do. This letter will provide you with information that will answer many of your questions.

First, you should know that Bishop Marsh and Bishop Schleicher have both extended invitations to many state representatives and state senators to attend this lunch on the Capitol lawn. We now urge each of you to send a personal invitation to both your state senator and state representative asking them to attend the lunch as well. Personal invitations from voters in their districts will be as important to the state senators and state representatives as the letters from both Bishops. State legislators want to hear from the people who elect them.

Second, we have put a process in place that will make it very easy for you to send these personal invitations. All you need to do is visit the website of LSSM (www.lssm.org). On the left side of the page, click on "Advocacy/Public Policy." Once you reach the Advocacy/Public Policy page, scroll down to the Lunch on the Lawn link. You will see an invitation to the Lunch on the Lawn event that you can personalize or that you can send just as it is. Once you personalize the letter, or decide to send it as it is, fill in the blanks for your name and address. The program will then automatically add the name of your state senator to one invitation and the name of your state representative to another invitation. The website will then ask if you want to send your letter, click yes and the invitations will be sent for you.

Third, if you go to your Synod website you will find a link to a short training DVD made by both Bishop Schleicher and Bishop Marsh that provides instruction on how to talk with your state legislators. In addition, over the next few weeks we will be providing you with Issue Briefs. These Issue Briefs will outline important issues that you can discuss with your state legislators. These Issue Briefs will also contain specific talking points about these issues that you can use during your conversation with your state legislators.

Even if you meet and talk with just one senator or representative, you will have taken a giant step in sharing God's love. Pray for the courage to do this. We look forward to seeing all of you on May 20, 2010 at noon on the lawn of the state Capitol, for our Lutherans on the Lawn event.

Should you have any questions about the Lutherans on the Lawn event, or any information in this letter, please feel free to contact either:

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