

CROSS

Connection



The Cross Connection is a monthly publication of the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod published for its clergy, members, deacons, lay leadership and ecumenical partners.

February 2018

Our first child was born just a couple of weeks before Ash Wednesday. Our new family of three traveled the dark gravel roads of rural Kansas to a small white church where my husband was the pastor. It was the first time people had gotten to see our newborn, and I was as proud as any young mother could be. I sat in the front pew, my arms full of baby—*my* baby—and listened attentively to the service, enjoying the novel opportunity to be part of the congregation. When the appropriate time arrived: I went and knelt at the altar rail, so that Matthew could place an ashen cross on my forehead. *“Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”* Amen.

And then, my beloved husband, my best friend, the father of the infant in my arms, turned and dared to place his ashy black finger on my daughter’s pristine sleeping forehead and pronounce, *“Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return,”* solemnly making the sign of the cross on the brow that hadn’t even experienced the cross of baptism yet.

My reaction was immediate and visceral. I wanted to snatch my sweet baby away from him, to run from the room, to declare, *“No. Not my baby. Not her. Death doesn’t get to have her. Take me. Leave her alone.”*

Except, of course, that death lays claim to us all. Whether we like, acknowledge, allow, accept, welcome it...or not. The dust of death clings to us from the moment we draw our first breath, until our last. Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

This year, Ash Wednesday is on Valentine’s Day. They seem like strange holidays to share a day, on the surface. Pink hearts, red roses, candy, romance on one hand...dark, grit, ash, repentance on the other. As disconnected as these two observances seem to be, there is also a wonderful similarity between them. Those of us who choose to mark this day with an ash-emblazoned cross are bearing witness to a love that is far greater and more enduring than the loved associated with Valentine’s Day.

Those ashy crosses we wear should serve to remind us of two things: one, that we are dust. And two: the cross saves us from death. That we are loved by the One who’s death has destroyed death, and who’s rising has opened to us the way of everlasting life. Death may lay claim to us, but in Christ that claim has no merit. No hold. No power. God reacts with all the ferocity of a new mother when Death dares lay a finger on her beloved child, *“No. Not my baby. You don’t get to have her. You can have me. But not her.”* What wondrous love is this, oh my soul, oh my soul?

May God grant us all a blessed Lent.

+Bishop Kristen

+Bishop Kristen



SAVE THE DATE

Lutheran Campus Ministry Benefit Dinner
May 5th at Advent Lutheran Church in Spokane Valley

Join us for a Cinco de Mayo Celebration, auction, drinks and hor d'oeuvres followed by dinner and a free-will donation time. All donations can be made before and after the event as well. If you aren't able to attend the event, donation can be sent to the EW-ID synod office, through Karla Geiger-our financial secretary, or sent to Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Cheney, WA.

*Tell your friends, family, and colleagues
about this dinner event! Hope to see you there!*

Summer Institute in Pastoral Theology: Leading a Congregation in Anxious Times

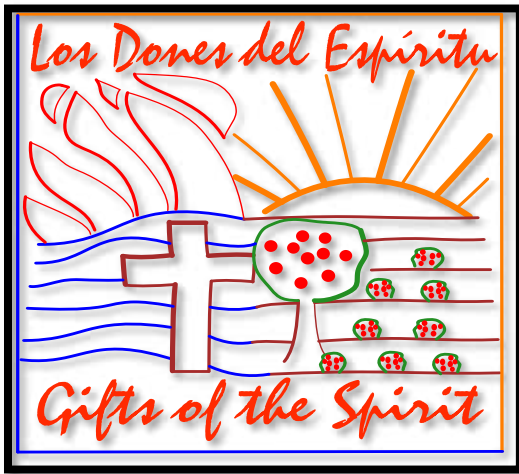
June 11-13, 2018

Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Washington

Join renowned clergy coach and consultant Margaret Marcuson along with PLU Professors Marit Trelstad and Samuel Torvend and Institute Chaplain Pr. Jan Ruud for the 2018 Summer Institute in Pastoral Theology.

This event is designed especially for pastors and congregational leaders who want to reflect on leading a congregation during anxious times. Save the dates! More information at <https://www.plu.edu/congregations/>

Pilgrim Lutheran in Puyallup, WA has an opening for a Director of Family and Youth Ministry. For more information, please visit <http://pilgrimpuyallup.org/youth-family/>



SAVE THE DATE
SYNOD ASSEMBLY 2018

April 27-29, 2018

Yakima Washington

Yakima Convention Center /Howard Johnson Plaza Hotel

Join us this April in the heart of scenic central Washington for a weekend of community, communion and celebration. We gather to worship, study, explore, share, serve and celebrate - all while we conduct the annual business of the Synod. Come and *gather* as one body of like mind. Plan to *worship* and *explore* more deeply our unique GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT. *Study* 1 Corinthians 12 as it relates to our shared and individual gifts and ministries. *Share* in dynamic ministry practices and partnerships at work around our Synod. Enjoy opportunities to *serve* in ministry and *celebrate* our shared faith in Christ. This year's Assembly promises to be dynamic, hands on and engaging. Mark your calendars now to join Bishop Kristin Kuempel, along with Churchwide representative Rev. Ron Glusenkamp for this year's Assembly!

Registration includes meals Fri evening through Sun morning. Why print when you can have GUIDEBOOK on your phone or tablet at no additional cost? Those requesting printed materials will be charged \$10 print fee.

STANDARD (ROOM INCL.)	SINGLE	\$535 / \$460**
	DOUBLE	\$410 / \$335**
COMMUTER		\$360 / \$285**

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, APRIL 27

NOON	REGISTRATION OPENS
12:30 /2:00 PM	HEARINGS/WORKSHOPS
4:00 PM	OPENING EUCHARIST
6:00 PM	GATHERING/ SOCIAL
6:30 PM	FAMILY-STYLE MEAL
7:15 PM	PROGRAM feat.
	Rev. Ron Glusenkamp

SATURDAY, APRIL 28

7:00 AM	BREAKFAST TABLE TALKS
8:30 AM	BUSINESS SESSION I
10:40 AM	BUSINESS SESSION II
NOON	LUNCH
1:00 PM	WORKSHOPS
2:45 PM	BUSINESS SESSION III
4:15 PM	BUSINESS SESSION IV
6:45 PM	DINNER
7:30 PM	PROGRAM
9:00 PM	EVENING PRAYER

SUNDAY, APRIL 29

7:00 AM	BREAKFAST
9:00 AM	SHORTS & REPORTS
10:30 AM	CLOSING EUCHARIST
NOON	ASSEMBLY CLOSSES

** retired rostered

Registration will open in early February. Look for an email from the synod office or check at www.ewaidssynod.org.

A \$50 late fee will be charged for all registrations after March 15.

The 2018 Assembly Chair Deacon Dave Hellerich wants you to know that there are still plenty of opportunities to serve! If you want to volunteer or have questions, contact Assembly Manager Julia Bennett at jvpbenett@gmail.com or contact the Synod office at 509-838-9871.

DON'T FORGET: it's time to elect your 2018 Voting members!

Presiding bishop

Church speak

By Elizabeth A. Eaton



A colleague at the Lutheran Center related this story. An unchurched friend of hers was visiting and noticed her Advent calendar. “What is Advent?” she asked. A simple question. But my colleague soon discovered it wasn’t that

easy to explain Advent to someone who had never heard of it, but who also had no frame of reference for it.

My colleague talked about a season of hope, longing and preparation, about the coming of the Christ child. Noticing her friend’s puzzled look, she stopped short of talking about the eschatological and hermeneutical possibilities presented by the season.

It’s not that my colleague lacks an understanding of Advent or isn’t herself a faithful person. Nor are her communication skills deficient—she is wicked bright and funny, and relates well to people. No. She had come face-to-face with the reality that a growing segment of our population has had little or no connection with the church or any other religious tradition. They don’t speak our language. They don’t know our stories. They don’t measure time the way we do—Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Pentecost. They literally don’t know what we are talking about.

You might have had a similar experience—not just an encounter with someone from another religious tradition, but with someone with no religious tradition. How do we talk to them? How do we tell them about the intimate, abiding, deep love that God has shown to us in Jesus? How do we even tell them about Jesus? How do we explain Jesus and the incarnation, the crucifixion and the resurrection?


We know what we are talking about, but we can’t assume that others do. Many people don’t even know that they need to know Jesus—or that the Jesus they think they know isn’t the Jesus they need to know.

I once asked a group of our pastors and deacons to explain the gospel in a tweet without using the words sin, grace or gospel. A tweet then was 140 characters—it’s now 280 characters, but I don’t think that would make the assignment any easier.

Those of us (myself included) who have spent our lives in the church live in a kind of bubble. We do speak the same language—church speak. We know what we mean, we understand key phrases and metaphors. We know what makes sense to us. But for those who have either no experience with the church or a painful one, we speak an unintelligible language.

So where do we start? I believe we should start from the conviction that Jesus has the words of eternal life, that he is the way to truth and hope and life. Can we even explain that to ourselves? Do we have the words that speak to our own hearts? Can we explain the Christian tradition to ourselves, and do we believe it? When we are able to confess, live and breathe that we live, move and have our being in God, we then need to find the language that speaks to those outside of the church bubble.

We can’t cede the public space to the popular culture or to a distortion of the Christian message. It’s hard to take that both Harry Potter and the Marine Corps (I’m a huge fan of both) have a more compelling exposition of the gospel (“It’s all about love, Harry”) or of *koinonia* (“Serving something greater than themselves”). We are missionaries again. Without diluting the gospel or in any way pandering for popularity, it falls to us to commend the faith within us clearly and genuinely.

I know we stake our lives on the truth of Jesus’ death and resurrection. This brings freedom and life to us so we can invite others into God’s freedom and life. 

A monthly message from the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Her email address: bishop@elca.org.

This article originally appeared in *Living Lutheran*’s January 2018 issue. Reprinted with permission.

Cantor Position Opening Queen Anne Lutheran Church - Seattle, WA

Queen Anne Lutheran (QALC), ELCA, Seattle, Washington, enthusiastically announces an opening for the full-time position of cantor. The cantor works together in ministry with the pastor, staff, and people of QALC to involve the worshipping community in making high-quality, beautiful music together.

A complete job description is available on the church website. There is a link to the full job description from the "Cantor Position" button on the website's home page. The application (resume with references provided) deadline is February 15, 2018. Applications may be emailed to jobs@queenannelutheran.org or mailed to the church at the address below:

Queen Anne Lutheran Church
Phone: (206) 284-1960

2400 8th Avenue West
Seattle, WA 98119

Lutheran Staff Association Retreat

The 2018 Lutheran Staff Association Retreat March 11-14. Sunday evening of March 11 through the Wednesday morning. Cost will be approximately \$250. Our quest speaker is Pastor Janine Goodrich who serves American Lutheran Church in Newport, WA. The subject is Boundaries – both in relationships and as it relates to church safety. The conference will be at Lutherhaven in Coeur d'Alene, ID. LSA aka CALM -Conference of Associated Lay Ministers is an ecumenical lay staff gathering. Registration details will posted on the CALM website soon.

Help Keep Us Updated, Please

Reports to the Bishop for those on the roster are available on the ELCA website: <http://www.elca.org/Resources/Office-of-the-Secretary>. Under the Synod tab, please download the appropriate form, SAVE it to your computer. Fill out the form SAVE again and send it as an attachment.

Parochial Reports have been mailed to each congregation. You will find your congregation ID number and password on the paper copy mailed. You are encouraged to file the form electronically on the ELCA website: <https://webapps.elca.org/FormAAndC/Login.aspx>. If needed, please call the Synod office to request your ID number and password. Our goal is to have **100%** of our parochial reports submitted. The information submitted is used and is a valuable resource for planning.

Congregational Leaders If you have recently elected new leaders, please send us updated information. The downloadable form is available: <http://ewaidsynod.org/resources>

Call Process Status

A Process beginning/congregational study	I Interim	AP Associate/Assistant Pastor
B Names received or on-site visits in process	P Pastor	VP Visitation Pastor
C Call in process/issued	CP Co-Pastor	D Deacon
NV New Vacancy	LP Lead Pastor	L Lay Position
TC Term call	SP Supply Pastor	TM Transition Minister (available for the open-ended call)
VP Visitation Pastor		

POS	LOCATION/CONGREGATION	STATUS	PASTORAL CARE
P	Cheney, WA – Emmanuel Lutheran	B	Ward Robak I
P	Cheney, WA – Campus Ministry EWU	B	
P	Chewelah, WA – St. Paul Lutheran	A	Bob Edwards SP
P	Davenport, WA - Zion Lutheran	NV	Stacey Friedlein TEEM
P	Davenport (Egypt), WA – Christ Lutheran	NV	Stacey Friedlein SP
P	Ephrata, WA - Holy Trinity	B	Ethan Bergman SP
P	Goldendale, WA – Christ the King	NV	Mary Johnson SP
P	Kennewick, WA – First Lutheran	A	Alan Berg I
P	Leavenworth, WA - Faith Lutheran	B	Misael Fajardo-Perez I
P	Mattawa, WA – Grace Lutheran	B	
P	Otis Orchards, WA – Peace Lutheran	A	David Olson TM
P	Quincy, WA - St. Paul Lutheran	B	Ethan Bergman SP
P	Spokane, WA – St. Mark’s Lutheran	A	Eric Dull Kate LePard CP
P	Toppenish, WA – Faith Lutheran	NV	Phylis Stromme I
P	Sunnyside, WA – Our Saviour’s	NV	Phylis Stromme I

Calls Accepted -

Rev. Virginia Johnson has accepted the call to serve Good Hope Lutheran Church - Lind, WA.

Retirements -

Rev. Ginny Krekling has retired from the roster of Word and Sacrament December 1, 2017

Zion Lutheran Church - Millwood, WA Seeks a Office Manager

Job responsibilities include weekly bulletins; monthly newsletter; bi-weekly payroll; tax reports; track weekly offering; maintain office files and equipment; manage supplies and equipment ordering; and putting together the annual report. Office support for the pastor will be required. Excellent computer skills are required including ability with Office, Word, Publisher, and also experience with QuickBooks. Phone skills and a welcoming attitude to the parishioners is necessary. This is a full time position with benefits.

For more information e-mail: pastorgail@zionlutheranspokane.org

Pray with us



We ask that you keep the ministry of the church, our synod, and the whole world in your prayers, as well as the people listed below . . .

Rev. Anne Palma, as she begins ministry with Our Savior Lutheran Church - Twin Falls, ID
 Those with illness and pain, especially when these afflictions are not outwardly visible.
 Those who are anxious, or worried about an uncertain future.
 Congregations and leaders in call process.

Prayer Requests . . . to be included or removed from the Synod Prayer Request list, please send your request to the synod office@ewaidssynod.org, or call 509-838-9871.

Upcoming SEMINARS

Nov. 2-3, 2017
Seattle, WA

Feb. 6-7, 2018
Portland, OR

May 16-17, 2018
Sokane WA

June 5-6, 2018
Seattle, WA

Coming Soon to Portland!

Crossroads

Redefining Your Vocational Vision

What's Next on Your Vocational Horizon?

The purpose of the Crossroads Seminar is to provide a safe and open venue for clergy and other rostered church workers to explore and discern potential vocational transitions in their personal and professional lives.

For more information, contact Phil Streufert at Consultation to Clergy
 (206) 623-8193

This 2-day workshop will help you to:

- Clearly assess your key vocational strengths, interests, values and transferable skills
- Better understand your best vocational "fit" in terms of your professional strengths and interests
- Identify a number of viable vocational options and potential "next steps"
- Redefine your personal and professional vision for the next chapter in life and ministry
- Develop a workable strategic plan to live out your vision



EASTERN WASHINGTON IDAHO SYNOD

of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

314 S. Spruce St., Suite A
Spokane, WA 99201-5823
509-838-9871

February 2018 Newsletter



Let Down the Nets

Lifting Our Vision
Jesus First, Last, Always
God's Grace, Our Gratitude
The Spirit Powers Us
No Fear! Transformation
Connections Multiply Miracles
Go, Tell & Serve



Please reproduce any and all articles for publication in congregational newsletters or bulletins.

The **Cross Connection** is also available on the synod website at

<http://www.ewaidsynod.org/synodpublications.html>.

Deadline for articles is the 5th of each month.

Synod Calendar

January 2018

- 25 Executive Committee Meeting - Spokane, WA
- 26-27 Synod Council Meeting - Spokane, WA
- 27 Faith Action Network Annual Legislative Conference - St. Mark's - Spokane, WA

February 2018

- 19 Synod Assembly Meeting - Yakims, WA

March 2018

- 11-14 Lutheran Staff Association - Lutherhaven
- 15 Deadline - Assembly Resolutions and Nominations
- 12-13 Deans' Retreat



Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our Hands

Staff

- Bishop The Rev. Kristen E.M. Kuempel
- Program Administrator Cathy Steiner
- Assembly Manager Julia Bennett
- Communication Director Gib Dominguez
- Net-Worker Rev. Phylis Stromme
- Net-Worker Rev. David Kappus
- Net-Worker Rev. Barbara Harrison-Condon

THE PARISH PAPER

IDEAS AND INSIGHTS FOR ACTIVE CONGREGATIONS

EDITORS: CYNTHIA WOOLEVER AND DANA HORRELL—WWW.THEPARISHPAPER.COM

January 2018—Volume 26, Number 1

Copyright © 2018 by Cynthia Woolever

18 QUESTIONS FOR 2018

Tim Shapiro, from the Indianapolis Center for Congregations, believes that vibrant congregations exhibit a commitment to increasing congregational capacity. As demands on congregations grow, clergy and laity struggle to “maintain agency over their problems rather than the problems having hold on them.”¹ Through the learning process, congregations can discover how to solve a challenge that once outran them. Based on his congregational theory of development, he explains that the first step is defining the challenge. The following exercise helps members identify their goals: what they already know, what they still need to learn, and how their plan fits into the church’s overall mission.

Questions to Ignite Conversations

Ask members of the governing board or any leadership group in the congregation to review these eighteen questions.² Invite them to select three questions they believe are most crucial for the congregation to discuss. At the first meeting, take a tally of the questions that were chosen. This tally alone will indicate if leaders are focused on the same issues or are concerned about a quite diverse group of questions. Have a conversation about the three questions that received the most votes. Over the course of several meetings, help the group to identify their top questions or concerns. Next, assess the congregation’s level of capacity. Before taking any action steps, determine if the leaders need more information, training, education, or transformation.³

1. What is the distinctive theological message this church seeks to send? What words do we use to define our core values and identity? Do our pastor and lay leaders find agreement and unity around this message?

2. What will be the number one driving force for the allocation of scarce resources (such as time and energy of volunteers, staff time, money, building use) in the future planning of our church’s ministry? Local or world missions? Children’s ministry? Becoming a more diverse worshipping community? Maintaining

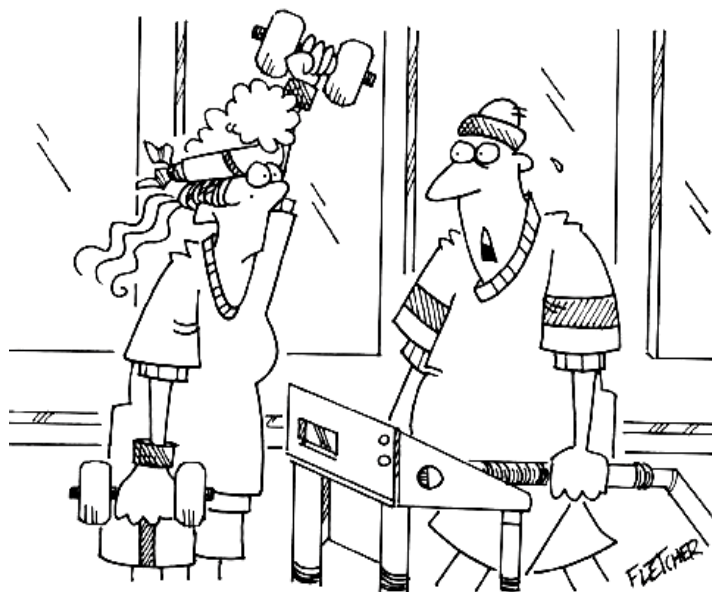
harmony? Satisfying the preferences of our current members?

3. What size is God calling this worshipping community to be? Does our current building and location limit or facilitate our size goals? Are there strategic decisions that we could make about buying or selling property or other assets that could benefit our long-range vision?

4. Are our programs, governance, and staffing consistent with our current size? Do we have a sense of how we compare to other churches of our size in terms of leveraging resources for ministry?

5. How strong is the desire for community among current members? How does this preference balance with those who feel more comfortable with anonymity? Do these contrasting preferences inhibit decision-making about church growth, outreach, or staffing priorities?

6. What approach is best for our congregation to design worship experiences that meet the spiritual needs of multiple generations? How does worship connect to the teaching ministries of the congregation?



“MY CHURCH IS BIG ON CONTINUED LEARNING FOR ADULTS... OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL JUST SPENT TWENTY-THREE WEEKS FINISHING AN 8 WEEK STUDY OF JONAH.”

7. How committed is our congregation to continued learning for adults? How many adult classes or groups do we want? When and where will they meet? Who will lead them? Do we have a mechanism for the creation of new groups or classes?

8. How many “congregations” make up this church? In a typical church, about one in three participants regularly attend, give generously, and volunteer many hours in church programs and ministries. Another “congregation” consists of less committed members who attend worship but who rarely serve as leaders or participants in church programs. They tend to give only when they attend. The third “congregation” consists of members who demonstrate minimal involvement and rarely attend. What percentage of your church membership falls into each of the categories? Has this changed over the past five years? What factors could explain these patterns?

9. What proportion of the operating budget should we allocate to increase the church’s visibility and to invite new people to participate in our church’s ministries?

10. Does our congregation reflect the racial, ethnic, and economic diversity of our neighborhood or region? If not, what barriers keep newcomers from becoming active participants in our church?

11. Are we a regional church, neighborhood church, or something else? What is our primary calling in this geographic location?

12. What assumptions underlie our current church-staffing model? Does our mission depend on staffing at least one full-time ordained clergy person? How might a bi-vocational, part-time, or second career pastoral leader enhance our effectiveness?

13. What do we anticipate the church’s challenges and opportunities to be ten years from now? What ministries are likely to become more important or less important because of those changes?

14. What is the greatest impediment to designing and implementing a new five-year plan? Is one of the obstacles a high level of contentment with the status quo? Another possibility is a long list of attractive alternative courses of action and the reluctance to choose out of fear of making the wrong choice.

15. Does fear play a role our decision-making? For example, in some church locations, fear arises from incidents of vandalism and crime in the neighborhood. In other instances, fear stems from a sense that the church lacks measures to address future potential

problems. Does our congregation allow members to express their fears and are there processes to acknowledge practical realities in our future planning?

16. How does our congregation respond to disappointment? Can we describe some setbacks and what we learned from the experience? Did we find an alternative path forward?⁴

17. Will the passage of time expand our range of attractive choices? In general, the best time to strengthen and reinforce ministry is the present. What immediate actions would allow us to take advantage of multiple options?

18. Are our congregation’s best days ahead of us or behind us? What evidence points to our “best days” as a congregation? Are our criteria consistent with our core religious commitments?

Could Something Be Better?

Our theological views and commitments color the ways we think about the past, present, and future of our congregation. And as American churches embrace broader narratives about our nation’s history, their own church story reflects those themes. For example, historians find two distinct American “jeremiads”—stories of decline, like the prophecies of Jeremiah.⁵ The traditionalist jeremiad sees the past as virtuous and the present as full of problems. On the other hand, the progressive jeremiad sees the past as the source of our best ideals or principles, upon which we can build a better future. Both jeremiads acknowledge our present problems. But the traditionalist jeremiad asserts that the best approach to overcoming present challenges is to return to past ways of believing and behaving. Whereas the progressive jeremiad finds heroic examples of people facing predicaments and overcoming injustice. Both views reflect a tension between despair in the present and a hope for the future. Disappointment in the present is central to the American narrative and central to what drives churches to take on their next challenge.

1. Tim Shapiro, *How Your Congregation Learns: The Learning Journey from Challenge to Achievement* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield: 2017), 4-8, xv.

2. Many of these questions are similar to ones asked by church consultants Lyle Schaller and Herb Miller in their ministry with congregations.

3. Shapiro, 36.

4. *Ibid.*, 77.

5. Andrew R. Murphy, *Prodigal Nation: Moral Decline and Divine Punishment from New England to 9/11* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).