



## January 2018 Message for Congregations and Lay and Rostered Leaders

Dear Beloved of God –

In the fall of 2017 I was privileged to participate, among other events, in three *Common Prayer* Services with the Roman Catholics, and with Anglican presence and participation, in Calgary, Edmonton and Whitehorse.

Following the *Common Prayer* liturgy prepared for the Lutheran-Roman Catholic service in Lund, Sweden in 2016 when Lutheran World Federation President Munib Younan, General Secretary Martin Junge and Pope Francis jointly presided over a Lutheran, Roman Catholic reformation commemoration, each of the Services included a commitment to five ecumenical imperatives. The imperatives were proposed by the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity, in anticipation of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.

They are:

1. Catholics and Lutherans should always begin from the perspective of unity, and not from the point of view of division, in order to strengthen what is held in common, even though the differences are more easily seen and experienced.
2. Lutherans and Catholics must let themselves continuously be transformed by the encounter with the other and by the mutual witness of faith.
3. Catholics and Lutherans should again commit themselves to seek visible unity, to elaborate together what this means in concrete steps, and to strive repeatedly toward this goal.
4. Lutherans and Catholics should jointly rediscover the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ for our time.
5. Catholics and Lutherans should witness together to the mercy of God in proclamation and service to the world.

The *Common Prayer* Services were meaningful in their hopefulness, in a moving forward together, and in their commitment. Regularly, over the course of the next year I will be briefly reflecting on these imperatives via this monthly newsletter article.

I am hopeful, more so than I have ever been. When I participated in these special liturgies this fall, I was consciously affirming a personal commitment to continue working toward the goal of full eucharistic sharing between our two traditions. It is a goal sought by many in our

respective churches; a goal whose achievement I pray to someday experience. This is a God-pleasing reformation goal that we can collectively advance as we live out these commitments. Won't you join me?

In Christ Jesus –  
Shalom,  
+Bishop Larry Kochendorfer

*The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,  
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*  
Romans 15:13