



November 2018 Message for Congregations and Lay and Rostered Leaders

Dear Beloved of God –

We have just concluded the season of Area Gatherings: Northern (Sept. 28-29 at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Stony Plain in collaboration with St. John Lutheran of Golden Spike, Spruce Grove and St. Matthew, Spruce Grove), Southwestern (Oct. 13 at First Lutheran, Calgary), Southern (Oct. 13 at Spirit of Grace Lutheran, Brooks via video report and telephone Q&A) and East and West Central (Oct 20 at Zion Lutheran, Bashaw).

Thank you to the Area Leadership Teams for your preparation for and planning of the Area Gatherings. I value these times when we have the opportunity to gather together as God's people for worship, learning, conversation and feasting.

This year we gathered under the theme: “Faith, Hope and Love” which was an extension of our Synod Convention theme and conversation from I Cor. 13. For our Dwelling in the Word we spent time together considering the text of I Thess. 1:2-3: *We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Participants shared in part of the need to see ourselves as “we”, as community together; conversation centered around how a spirit of gratefulness might impact our faith community and neighborhood; and of the work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope which they see.

Then most gatherings viewed a brief video (The Synod Convention Interview - All Questions) prepared during the Synod Convention around faith, hope and love. These videos and a summary (all questions) video are available on our synod website for your use: <http://albertasynod.ca/convention/area-gatherings/area-gathering-videos/>

Much of the rest of our time was spent in conversation around how we might work collaboratively within our Areas and across our Synod in faith, hope and love.

I look forward in the next couple of months to meet with each Area Leadership Team for further conversation, listening and discernment together as we move forward *always giving thanks...constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

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)*