



Faith Country
Shared Ministry

Faith Country Chronicle

November 2018



SYNOD OF
ALBERTA
AND THE
TERRITORIES

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 labour 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 centred

around how a spirit of gratefulness might impact our faith community and neighbourhood; and of the work of faith and labour 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: albertasynod.ca/convention/area-gatherings/area-ga...

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

A Remembrance Day Story

He was very old now, but could still hold himself stiffly at attention before the monument. His war, the one to end all wars, now just a fading part of history. Very few could remember, first-hand, the savageness of the ordeal that had sent millions of young men to their deaths. Cannon fodder, they'd called them, sent before the guns to be mown down -- blown apart by chunks of metal which had decimated their frail bodies. The cream of a generation; almost wiped out. He was haunted by the faces of the boys he'd had to order into battle, the ones who'd never come back. Yet one nameless ghost was able to bring

a measure of comfort to his tormented mind. At the sound of the gun signalling the eleventh hour he was mentally transported back to the fields of Flanders.

The battle had raged for over two hours, with neither side gaining any advantage. Wave after wave of soldiers had been dispatched from the muddy trenches and sent over the top. So many had died already that day that he decided he could not afford to lose any more men before reinforcements arrived. Perhaps they'd give the remnants a few more days of life. There came a slight lull in the battle due to the sheer exhaustion of the men on both sides.



Let's commit ourselves like we did last year, to building our own reverse Advent calendar. Beginning in November set aside an item of food (staple goods only please!) each day and then bring them with you when you come to worship.

We will collect the donations at each of our congregations and then take them the Flagstaff Food bank on December 14th in time for their Christmas Sharing program. Collection dates will be as follows:

Trinity - Sunday, December 2

St. John's & Hope - Sunday, December 9

During this interval, a young soldier came up to him requesting that he be allowed to go over the top. He looked at the boy who couldn't have been more than nineteen. Was this extreme bravery in the face of the enemy or was the soldier so scared he just needed to get it over with?

"Why would you want to throw your life away soldier? It's almost certain death to go out there."

"My best friend went out over an hour ago, captain, and he hasn't come back. I know my friend must be hurt and calling for me. I must go to him, sir, I must." There were tears in the boy's eyes. It was as if this were the most important thing in the world to him."

"Soldier, I'm sorry, but your friend is probably dead. What purpose would it serve to let you sacrifice your life too?"

"At least I'd know I'd tried, sir, he'd do the same thing in my shoes. I know he would."

He was about to order the boy back to the ranks, but the impact of his words softened his heart. He remembered the awful pain he'd felt himself when his brother had died. He'd never had the chance to say goodbye.

"All right soldier, you can go." Despite the horror all around them, he saw a radiant smile on the boy's face, as if a great weight had been lifted from his shoulders.

"God bless you, sir," said the soldier.

It was a long time before the guns fell silent for the last time and each side was allowed to gather their dead and wounded. The captain remembered the young soldier. He looked through the many piles of bodies. Young men. So many as to give an unreal quality to the scene before him.

When he came to the makeshift hospital, he looked carefully through the casualties. He soon found himself before the prone body of the soldier, alive, but severely wounded. He knelt down beside the young man and gently laid a hand on his shoulder.

"I'm so sorry, son. I knew I was wrong to let you go."

"Oh no, sir. I'm glad you did and I'm glad you're here now so I can thank you. You see sir, I found my friend. He was badly wounded, but I was able to comfort him at the end. As I held him dying in my arms, he looked me in the eyes and said: "I knew you'd come."

The young soldier faded between consciousness and oblivion for some time before he finally slipped away. The captain stayed by his side until the end, tears streaming quietly down his cheeks. Only in war could the happy endings be so terribly sad.

As the bugle sounded "Taps", the old captain envisioned once again the young soldier's face. Looking up, he could almost hear the stone monument calling out to him: "I knew you'd come."



Christmas Services

Mark your calendar with the following dates:

Christmas Eve - December 24

7:30 PM - Christmas Candlelight Service
at Hope, Forestburg

9:30 PM - Eucharist Service at St. John's,
Sedgewick

Christmas Day - December 25

10:30 AM - Holy Communion Service at Trinity,
Lougheed



FAITH COUNTRY SHARED MINISTRY

~ November 2018 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 6:30 St John's Worship Committee 7:30 FCSM Council Meets at St. John's	2	3
4 10:30 Trinity Communion Service	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Remembrance Day No Service at St. John's today due to Remembrance Day services. 5:30 Remembrance Day supper & service at Hope	12	13	14	15 1:30 Acts 29 (St John')	16	17
18 10:30 Trinity Song Service	19	20	21 RBC Sports Day in Canada 1:30 Hope Worship Committee	22	23	24
25 9:15 Morning Prayer - St. John's 11:15 Communion Service - Hope 1:00 Hope Council Meeting	26	27	28	29	30	Notes:



FAITH COUNTRY SHARED MINISTRY

~ December 2018 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 World AIDS Day
2 10:30 Trinity Communion Service 5:30 Hope Christmas Dinner	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 8:15 Eucharist Service - St. John's 10:15 Communion Service - Hope	10 Human Rights Day	11 Anniv. Statue of Westminster	12	13	14	15
16 10:30 Trinity Song Service	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 9:15 Morning Prayer - St. John's 11:15 Communion Service - Hope	24 7:30 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at Hope 9:30 Christmas Eve Eucharist Service at St. John's	25 Christmas 10:30 Christmas Day Holy Communion Service at Trinity	26 Boxing Day	27	28	29
30	31	Notes:				