



Faith Country
Shared Ministry

Faith Country Chronicle

September 2017



September 2017 Message for Congregations and Lay and Rostered Leaders

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ –

With you I have been greatly disturbed by the recent events in Charlottesville.

Plainly and without question, both the hatred and prejudice expressed in Charlottesville and the attack on counter-protesters are murderous acts. There is no way in which to justify behavior of this kind as even remotely “Christian.” Indeed, the rhetoric of this group is reminiscent of the manipulation of the Gospel by Adolf Hitler and his inner circle.

Let’s not kid ourselves. Charlottesville is not so far from Alberta and the Territories. Here we know, too, of racism and prejudice, of hatred and discrimination of many sorts.

I was particularly moved by the quiet witness of the rostered and lay leaders, indeed, of the faith community’s response. I was moved to tears as a group of clergy walked arm-in-arm into the very center of the storm, so to speak, delaying entry to a park as they stood, sang, and kneeled. Others formed a wall of silent testimony, or offered water to the parched, or provided pastoral care to those seeking comfort and support.

How might we respond?

Condemn actions of this kind without qualification.

Do what we can to foster a climate in which such actions face collective resistance and condemnation.

Continue to learn, listen and educate ourselves.

Recognize the places where healing has yet to take root and strive do what we can to foster progress.

Practice personal vigilance that opens our lives to the work of the Holy Spirit in places where our own attitudes and prejudices remain unredeemed.

Stand alongside our brothers and sisters.

Contradict, at every turn, the efforts of these groups to wrap their behavior in the mantle of the Church.

And yes, we need to pray:

“O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

(A prayer I shared recently via Facebook and written by The Rev. Dr. Scott Sharmon, currently interfaith chaplain at the University of Alberta and also the Anglican Diocese of Edmonton’s ecumenical officer, who has been named as the Anglican Church of Canada’s animator for ecumenical and interfaith relations beginning September 1.)

In Christ Jesus –

Shalom,

+Bishop Larry Kochendorfer

(with thanks in part to www.patheos.com “8 Things We Can — and Should Do — in Response to Charlottesville” August 13, 2017 by Frederick Schmidt



08-25-2014

CAN YOU HELP SET ME UP SO I CAN FRIEND AND LIKE JESUS, TEXT HIM MY PRAYERS, AND SHARE ALL HIS TWEETS?

Don't Stop Growth

No parent in his/her right mind wants to thwart the growth of a child God has given to them. The physical, mental, social, and especially spiritual growth of children is always on the mind of good godly parents. It is unconscionable for parents to deliberately hinder the growth of a child in any of these areas.

It is sickening to read or hear of children being starved or tortured. Our laws are solidly against child abuse or any kind. Some time ago a new report told of a child being found chained in a closet. The child was malnourished and sick. Had the officials not intervened, no doubt the innocent child would have died. All right thinking people recognize just how reprehensible this is.

Think of the local church as a growing organism — in the same way a child is to grow. It would be as reprehensible and sinful to hinder the growth of a local church just as it would be with a child. I have known several local churches that began to show growth, both numerical and spiritual, that came to an impasse and stopped growing. Why? Let me suggest a few things that will hinder congregational growth and development.

1. Factionalism. Factionalism is usually a group of contentious or opinionated Christians who seek to control the mind and activity of others. They usually are a minority in a larger group, but are very active. It doesn't take but one factious person to disrupt the growth of a local church.
2. Failure to cooperate. The growth of any local congregation is equal with the amount of cooperation that exists among all the members. After Paul warned of false doctrine and factionalism, he wrote, "Instead, speaking the truth in love, we

will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work" (Eph. 4:15-16,). I think this fits the context of Paul's words. Instead of fussing and fighting over non-essential issues, each of us in the same local congregation should join and hold together. How? By "every supporting ligament (member) doing his/her part of the total work.

3. Indifference. The ultimate result of factionalism is indifference. Excitement is dead where we are indifferent. Where there is no excitement in a local church, there will be no growth. We won't worry about saving others; we won't encourage others, and we won't grow as God expects us to grow. May God help us to avoid any and all hindrances to growth.

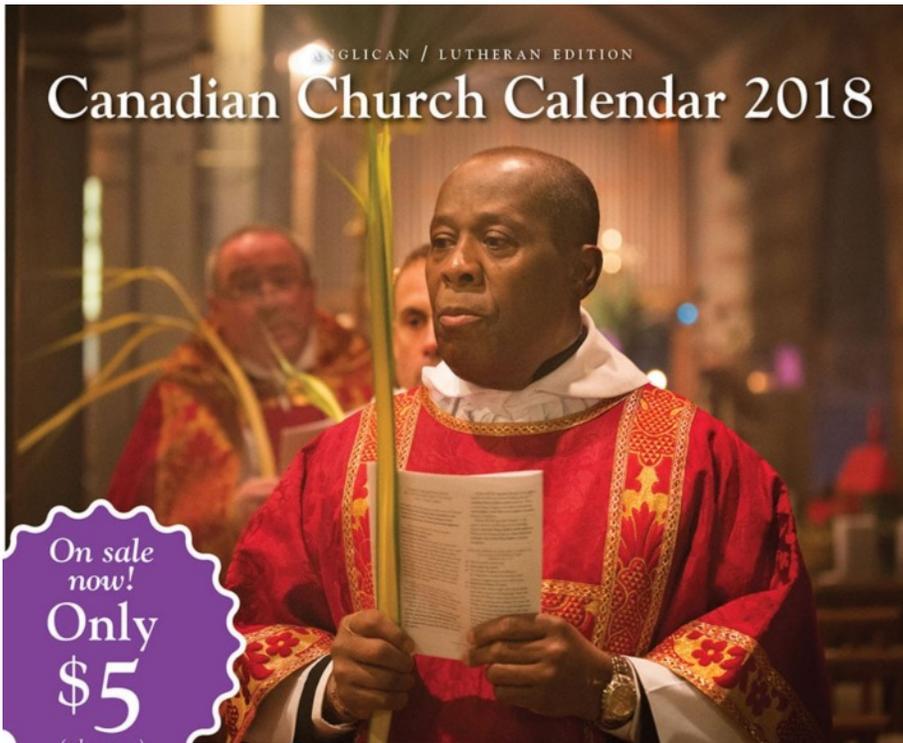
Let us all determine that we will never hinder the growth of the Lord's church, but to the contrary, will join in whole heartedly in bring others to the Lord through actively and zealously spreading his word. Let us all determine to help, and never hinder, the growth of the church.



The **Faith Country Chronicle** is published monthly from September through May by the partners in the Faith Country Shared Ministry:

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Web: www.fcsm.ca
 Email: pastor@fcsm.ca
 Tel: (780)582-2140



Canadian Church Calendars

The new calendars for 2018 are available for purchase through our joint Anglican/Lutheran church supply store.

If you are interested in purchasing a copy, please let Pastor Rick know and he will make sure you get your copy as soon as they're in.

ABT Synod 2017 Area Gatherings

The East and West Central Area gathering will take place on October 14, 2017 at Peace Lutheran Church in Innisfail.

Please let Pastor Rick know if you are interested in attending and representing your congregation.



FAITH COUNTRY SHARED MINISTRY

~ September 2017 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Proper 17 (22) (Year A) 10:30 Trinity Communion Service	4	5 1:30 Hope Worship Committee	6	7	8	9
10 Proper 18 (23) (Year A) 9:15 Hope Worship Service 11:15 St. John's Eucharist Service	11	12	13	14 Holy Cross (Year A)	15	16
17 Proper 19 (24) (Year A) 10:30 Trinity Song Service	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 Proper 20 (25) (Year A) 9:15 Hope Worship Service 11:15 St. John's Morning Prayer	25	26	27	28	29	30