



**SYNOD OF
ALBERTA
AND THE
TERRITORIES**
Incorporated as Alberta Synod

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***Spirit-Led
Leadership***

***Hope-Filled
Discipleship***

***Innovative
Tradition***

***Collaborative
Partnerships***

November 25, 2020

Beloved in Christ:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.

Yesterday, November 24, Premier Kenney declared a state of Public Health Emergency which includes mandatory restrictions.

These restrictions include no indoor social gatherings with outdoor gatherings restricted to a maximum of 10 people. Funerals and weddings, held indoors or outdoors, seated or non-seated, are limited to no more than 10 participants. No receptions are permitted.

For worship, immediate restrictions include a maximum of 1/3 sanctuary (room) capacity and mask use is mandatory. Further information is available at the alberta.ca website (Stop the Spike).

With the state of Public Health Emergency in mind, **I continue to strongly recommend that all congregations suspend all in-person worship and meetings.**

I do not make this recommendation lightly. This is a time for us, as a faith community, to show leadership. Our baptism calls us to care for our neighbour; right now, that means, in part, limiting how many people we come in contact with, even for worship.

I encourage you to make use of the many alternative ways that rostered and lay leaders have been providing worship and devotional materials while we cannot gather. Many other resources have been highlighted in recent editions of Wednesday's Word.

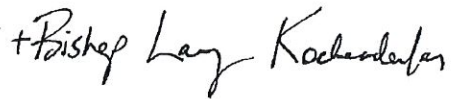
The Synod Office will be closed to the public.

Please pray for those who will find these restrictions difficult, for all who are isolated or lonely, for our congregations, rostered leaders, the vulnerable in our midst, for those suffering from COVID-19, for provincial leaders, and for emergency workers, doctors, nurses, and essential workers who are bearing the burden of this pandemic.

Beloved of God, as people of faith, continue to be humble and gentle with one another. Honour each other. Make space for lament. Welcome moments of joy. Help each other live into hope. Learn from this journey in the coronavirus wilderness and let the learning lead us forward. Trust that God is at work in this time and look for the new things God is doing even now.

"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).

In Christ Jesus – Shalom,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Bishop Larry Kochendorfer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

+ Rev. Dr. Larry Kochendorfer, Bishop
Synod of Alberta and the Territories
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada