



Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod www.mnosynod.org

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To: Council chairs and rostered leaders serving MNO congregations

From: Synod Discernment Committee on the election of a new bishop

For: We need your help, beginning in January. This is time sensitive. Please read and incorporate into your January Council Meeting

A VERY IMPORTANT INVITATION FOR YOU

WHAT: Calling the people of your congregation into the synod wide process of prayerful discernment.

WHY: At MNO Synod Convention, April 26-28, 2018, we will be electing our next synod bishop, as Bishop Elaine has indicated her desire not to stand for re-election.

WHO: The immediate question is not so much “whom we choose”, but how we get in tune with whom God is choosing to lead the church in the MNO Synod at this time in history. This discernment involves both our knowing about the business of our synod and about the Spirit of our synod.

HOW: In order to prepare for the convention, we are asking your congregation and others in our synod to a disciplined time of Scripture reflection and prayer. For the next four months, you are being encouraged to “Dwell in the WORD” using four biblical stories, one each month. These are being provided as devotions for your church council meetings. The first devotion for January, 2018 comes as a separate attachment and a new one will come to you each month. Please make this resource available for other small group gatherings in your congregation (women’s group, men’s group, youth group, choir, etc.), or invite folks to come to the first half hour of your council meetings. Limit this devotional time of discernment and prayer each month to 30 minutes.

As soon as your delegate(s) to convention has(have) been finalized, assure that they participate as much as possible in your “Dwelling in the Word” discussions.

Within this process of Scripture reflection and prayer, there will be a gathering for all convention delegates, enabling your delegate(s) to dialogue on what collectively we are discovering about how God is leading and providing for our synod. This will take place on Saturday, March 3, 2018 from 10:00 – 11:30 am. For those living more than an hour from Winnipeg, we are making arrangements for localized delegate gatherings that we hope to hook in electronically via ADOBE CONNECT. Make certain that your delegate(s) “save the March date” and watch for further details as they become available.

NOTE: This process is being initiated by Synod Council through a discernment sub-committee because they believe that the choosing of a new bishop is a spiritual undertaking that needs to be grounded in the spiritual practices of dwelling in the Word, prayer, listening to God and to one another. Thanks for participating in this spiritual task of discernment.

Questions may be directed to Pastor Larry Ulrich, email: ulrich.lef@gmail.com