



NOVEMBER 2022
PRESIDENT'S LETTER

BEING THE BODY OF CHRIST IN CHALLENGING TIMES

I recently had two incredible continuing education experiences in the same week. The first was a visit by Dr. Craig Nesson of Wartburg Seminary to my congregation, Hope Lutheran in Eagle, Idaho. The second was the Bishop's Convocation of the Northwest Intermountain Synod in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Both events dealt with the above theme in different ways.

Dr. Nesson spoke of the importance of leadership mobilizing people in these times. Leaders need to focus on the fundamentals of identity and mission, because knowing these will guide us as we empower others. Dave Daubert, speaker at the Bishop's Convocation, spoke of the importance of baptism as the center for congregational vitality. Our baptismal promises are lived out again and again in congregational life and ministry.

Dave Daubert asked an interesting question:

Do we know how to structure congregational life around discipleship? He gave the example of being in a restaurant, and the server asks: What would you like? You can't answer this until you've studied the menu and made your choices. What do our congregation's menus (ministries) say about us? How are our people making choices? These are foundational questions, to be answered carefully and prayerfully in our different settings.

Both continuing education experiences gave me a lot of hope. Our foundation as faith formation leaders flows out of baptism as we live into and create community. During these events, we read the baptismal promises from the ELW, and it occurred to me that we can do this often to remind us of what we are living out. The actions of the promises are at the center of faith formation. LIVE, HEAR PROCLAIM, SERVE, AND STRIVE. We can look at our ministries through these lenses.

Another reason for hope is our relationships. I saw friends and colleagues I hadn't seen in three years at the Convocation. These relationships are life giving and affirming. My life and ministry have changed dramatically in three years, as is true for most of us during these times. Through all the ups and downs and in between times, relationships have sustained me. And the relationship at the center, with our Lord and Savior, gives us hope as we minister in challenging times.

I am grateful for all the relationships in the Christian Education Network,

Diane McGeoch

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"...that they may be encouraged
in heart and united in love..."

Colossians 2.2 (NIV)