

May 1, 2020

Dear brothers and sisters who serve as heads of faith communities in Saskatchewan,

Warm greetings. We hope you are all doing as well as possible amidst the challenges of the day, which are many.

We are writing with an invitation to provincial faith leaders to a virtual conversation next week, with the possibility of requesting a meeting with the Premier so that he can hear some of the challenges facing faith communities at present, and so that we can engage him in a discussion about the parameters around appropriate steps in our worshipping communities as we move through the various phases of reopening.

In the Premier's address to the province last week, there was no mention of faith communities. Yet each of us, in distinct ways, face challenges as discussions about phases of reopening are raised. Many of us are also receiving questions from our adherents, with some in our communities pushing for us to take steps now within the parameters of what is allowed, and others pushing for us to listen to the advice to encourage people to stay at home, to minimize interactions which could lead to the transmission of the COVID-19 virus, and to do everything we can to protect vulnerable sectors of our society, which includes many of our people.

We don't anticipate that a meeting with the Premier would address all of our questions, but it would be an opportunity to allow him to hear directly about how we are being impacted by the pandemic, and questions or decisions that are or will be before us in the coming weeks. We could also layout the various categories of activities that faith communities engage in, and around which there will be need to make decisions. The discussion could help the Premier and his staff to help us.

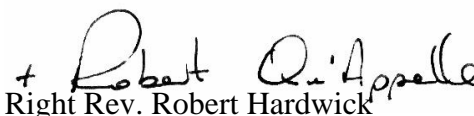
There is no comprehensive provincial structure for heads of faith communities, so this invitation comes from on behalf of the Anglican, Lutheran, Roman and Ukrainian Catholic bishops of the province, who wish to explore the possibility of acting together in initiating this conversation.

If you would be interested in participating in a conversation to formulate an agenda and plan for a request to have a virtual meeting with the Premier, please let us know. We are tentatively proposing next Thursday, May 7, at 2 p.m., for this preliminary conversation, and will send a link to all faith leaders who are interested.

Peace,



Most Rev. Bryan Bayda
Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon



Right Rev. Robert Hardwick
Anglican Diocese of Qu'Appelle



Most Rev. Donald Bolen
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Regina



Rev. Sid Haugen
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
Synod of Saskatchewan

Most Rev. Murray Chatlain
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas

Most Rev. Mark Hagemoen
Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon

Right Rev. Adam Halkett
Bishop of Missinippi
Anglican Diocese of Saskatchewan

Right Rev. Christopher Harper
Anglican Diocese of Saskatoon

Right Rev. Michael Hawkins
Anglican Diocese of Saskatchewan

Most Rev. Albert Thévenot, M. Afr.
Roman Catholic Diocese of Prince Albert