

NORTHEASTERN OHIO SYNOD

September 11, 2014

Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.

Genesis 12:1

Dear people of God in the Northeastern Ohio Synod,

And so, as with Abram (see text above), the adventure begins.

As I write these words to you I am sitting in the office of the bishop, still trying to wrap my mind around the fact that the person who occupies this office is me!

You would think that by now I would have gotten used to the fact. After all, it's been nearly four months since I was elected. And yes, since then I have spent a day or two a week in the building, meeting with staff, sitting in on committee meetings, having lengthy conversations with Interim Bishop Marcus Miller, and in many and various other ways preparing for this call.

But the preparation is over. From here on out everything that happens becomes my responsibility. That's not quite an accurate statement – it is a shared responsibility. We are all partners in God's mission here on earth. But as President Harry S. Truman used to say, "The buck stops here."

So here are a few things I want to share with you in this, my initial newsletter to you as bishop.

One of the words you'll hear me toss around quite a bit is, "relationship." I tend to characterize myself as a relational person. I spoke about that a couple of months ago when Bishop Miller asked me to contribute a few thoughts to this newsletter. Let me reiterate the words I stated in that initial offering. *I want to visit your congregations, to engage in conversation with you, to get to know you better, and to walk alongside you as we build and develop relationships.*

I really mean that.

Please invite me to share in the joys of your worship experience. That goes not only for me but for the rest of my staff. We are all committed to being present as many Sundays (or other days of the week) as possible. I have obligated them and myself to be in synod congregations three of the four Sundays in a month. I believe that everything we are and everything we do flows from worship. And what better way to get to know you than to worship with you.

Along those lines, I worshipped with the good people of **First, Lorain** on Sunday, August 31. As you may know by now, on August 28, a fire destroyed their sanctuary and did

extensive smoke and water damage to the rest of the building. Please keep the people of First continually in your prayers. They are going to need our support in a variety of ways. We will try to keep you updated as to their needs as often as possible, but you can also check their website www.firstlutheranlorain.org and know firsthand how they are progressing.

On the topic of communication, we are working to improve our electronic interaction with you. In the coming months we are also looking at redesigning the synod website as well as the weekly e-news. You will also see more frequent posts on our Twitter and Facebook pages. In addition to those platforms, I am readily accessible electronically. I am on Facebook and twitter and I also have a blog, *Walking Together in Faith*. Please feel free to follow me there. The addresses are:

for Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/abraham.allende>;
for twitter: @Padre_Abraham;
for the blog: www.pastorallende.com.

I will have more on the synod staff changes in next month's mailing as we are still in the process.

Let us now begin this journey together.

The peace of Christ be with you always,

The Rev. Abraham D. Allende, Bishop



Staff congregation visits for the next weeks include:

Bishop Allende will be:

September 14	Advent, Mentor
September 21	Bethel, Boardman
September 28	Grace Hubbard Emmanuel, Warren, Fall Bishop's Gathering
October 12	Faith, Lakewood

Judy Hoshek will be:

September 21	Martin Luther, Youngstown, Install David Kamphuis
September 28	Emmanuel, Warren, Fall Bishop's Gathering
October 5	Trinity, Clinton
October 11	St Paul's, Massillon, Install David Saylor

