

Texas Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod

KEY LEADER CONVERSATIONS

The following reflects in-person and phone interviews with 25 key leaders, both lay and clergy. I was on site August 13-16 and September 15-17 to conduct these interviews.

The following represent common themes from these conversations. I have also identified possible areas of future focus, energy, and planning based on the feedback I received.

Common Themes

- Great trust and support for Mike's leadership
- People consistently mentioned how important it was for the Bishop to take the time to visit each congregation and how that continues to be a strength to build on
- Monday morning sermon reflection has a positive impact far beyond being a homiletical resource
- Good grades for the whole synod staff – some concern that folks have too much on their plates
- Clergy feel connected, known, cared about, and listened to
- A general feeling that the synod staff/ministry understands its primary role as being there to be a support to leaders and congregations and not the other way around
- Evan's role was mentioned regularly as a strength
- A sense that few congregations are growing and thriving
- Strong new pastors
- "It's about leadership"
- Partnerships/ Relationships/ Connections – within the synod
- An appreciation for the efforts made to support leaders and congregations through the regional leadership events and other initiatives – more of this hands-on teaching/training is desired
- Now is the time to leverage the trust in synod leadership and commit to a bold vision for the future
- Focus
- Proactive
- Invest in strength and demonstrated/emerging potential
- Regional strategies for growth and increasing congregational and missional vitality – "We need a Brenham strategy"
- Mixed feelings on an ethnic-specific vs. a multi-cultural approach to engaging the diversity within the synod
- Need to focus on who's not here yet
- "Let's grow this church!"

Possible Areas of Focus

All of these areas build on work and ministry currently happening within the synod:

- Leadership Development
- Mission Outreach/Evangelism
- Investment in Strength and Capacity
- Building Relationships and Partnerships
- Engaging and Celebrating Diversity (targeted and fully resourced)
- Telling the Story/Building the Brand

Engaging strong lay leaders in this process as shapers and supporters will be key.

Next Steps

- Thank and report back to those who participated in the process.
- Report back to the entire synod.
- Organize "Bishop's Gatherings" with key leaders in October/November to begin charting a course and developing the Strategic Plan.