



33rd Annual Synod Assembly
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA
October 16 and 18, 2020
October 23 and 24, 2020

Directions for Online Assembly Registration

The 33rd Annual Assembly of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod will be held online. Because the assembly will elect a new bishop, and because lengthy online sessions are fatiguing, the assembly will be conducted over two successive weekends and plenary sessions are scheduled to last no longer than two and one-half hours.

- Friday, October 16
 - Opening Worship from 6:00-6:40 p.m.
 - Plenary Session from 7:00-9:30 p.m.
- Sunday, October 18 from 2:00-4:00 p.m.
- Friday, October 23 from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.
- Saturday, October 24 from 9:30-11:45 a.m. and from 1:30-3:50 p.m.

The first ballot for electing a bishop will occur by 7:30 p.m. on Friday, October 16. Any ELCA minister of word and sacrament can be nominated on this ballot. Following this ballot, time will be needed for individuals to notify the elections committee if they desire their names be removed. The second ballot for bishop will occur at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 18. The result of that ballot will be announced at the conclusion of the session. Voting members will have the following week to discuss and compare thoughts about the nominees.

The assembly will resume on Friday, October 23 at 7:00 p.m. During this session each of the seven nominees from ballot two will make a two-minute address. After a break, the nominees will answer questions prepared ahead of time.

The third ballot for bishop will occur on Saturday, October 24 at 9:30 a.m. and a report on the ballot will be provided at the end of that session.

The next session will begin on Saturday, October 24 at 1:30 p.m. with three-minute statements from each of the three nominees from ballot three. Immediately following those statements, a fourth ballot will occur. A report of ballot four and, if necessary, ballot five will be part of this session.

Other business of the synod will be conducted throughout the sessions, including adoption of the spending plan and compensation guidelines, other elections, conversation on resolutions brought to the assembly, and other reports and presentations. Included will be a presentation by Mr. William Horn II, Vice President of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

ONLINE WORSHIP will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, October 16, prior to the opening of the assembly. Bishop Zeiser will preach. An offering for World Hunger will be received through a “donate” button on the synod website.

ONLY VOTING MEMBERS (pastors, deacons, and lay voting members) need to register for the online assembly.

VISITORS ARE WELCOME and encouraged to view the assembly with a live stream and can observe plenary sessions and join in worship. Information needed to view the assembly will be available on the synod website. You will be able to watch the livestream with any device.

REGISTER ONLINE at www.godslove.org. Congregations may register all rostered ministers and voting members at one time. The cost for online registration is \$99 per person. Online registration will be open until midnight, October 1.

REGISTER BY MAIL by completing separate registration forms for each voting member. The cost to register by mail is \$109 per person and must reach the synod office by October 1.

THE DEADLINE FOR ALL REGISTRATIONS IS OCTOBER 1. NO registrations will be accepted in the synod office or by mail after Thursday, October 1 in order to prepare the online components of the assembly.

TO BE A VOTING MEMBER FOR THE ONLINE ASSEMBLY you will need to have access to either a laptop or desktop computer. The computer should also have a microphone and a camera. The computer must be able to connect to the internet and be able to see and hear a YouTube video. Any computer that has been used adequately for a Zoom meeting is suited for use at the assembly. Two people can watch and vote from one computer. Each person will have their own voting authorization code. You will not be able to watch and vote with just a smart phone or tablet.

WATCH PARTY – VOTING MEMBERS CAN GATHER in one place (with Covid-19 precautions) and fully participate. In this case they should have one computer to watch and each voting member should have his/her own smart phone or tablet to vote. If you plan to have a watch party, please provide that information on the registration form and help will be provided to plan your set-up.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT EVERY VOTING MEMBER register with your home address and email so you can receive a confirmation letter which will include information needed to sign on and vote at the assembly. If you do not receive a confirmation letter in the mail by October 13, please contact the synod office.

INFORMATION ABOUT TRAINING AND PRACTICING will also be included in your confirmation letter.

VOTING MEMBERS WILL NEED TO BE PRESENT for the entire assembly – both weekends. As with in-person assemblies, the same people need to

represent their congregations for the entire assembly.

RETIRED ROSTERED MINISTERS (pastors and deacons) are welcome to participate. Retired rostered ministers under contract with a congregation at the time of the assembly will have the privileges of voice and vote. Congregations being served are responsible for registration costs. Retired rostered ministers *not under contract with a congregation* at the time of the assembly who wish to register as voting members, with privileges of voice and vote, may do so. Registration costs are the responsibility of the rostered minister.

A DEDICATED ASSEMBLY PAGE on the synod's website at www.godslove.org will have all the documents and information you will need before and during the assembly, as well as information about the bishop's election as it is received.

WHO PAYS? The only cost for the online assembly is the registration fee, to be paid for all voting members by the congregation or employing agency.

THE REGISTRATION FEE covers the costs for Lumi Global, a company with 25 years of experience in providing an online platform to securely vote, ask questions, and participate electronically in real time. Instant polling results and reports will be provided as Lumi Global supports the synod from the beginning to the end of the assembly.

EXCUSES NEEDED: Written excuses for the absence of pastors or deacons under call, or for congregational voting members should be sent in advance of the assembly to Debbie Frey at debbie@nepsynod.org or mailed to 2354 Grove Road, Allentown, PA, 18109-3044.

THE DEADLINE FOR RESOLUTIONS AND NOMINATIONS to be received by the synod office is Thursday, October 2. The forms needed can be found at www.godslove.org.

QUESTIONS regarding the assembly may be directed to Pr. Kurt Garbe or Debbie Frey. They can be reached at The Lutheran Center, 610-266-5101, kurt@nepsynod.org, or debbie@nepsynod.org