

# SYNOD NEWS

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

## Bear Creek Camp Confronts the Pandemic

### New Ways for Ministry in Summer Season 2020

When COVID-19 forced the suspension of the summer camp program for this season, the staff and Board of Directors of Bear Creek Camp quickly grappled with the challenge. They moved toward new ministry opportunities that could still provide for the safety and health of their community. Two programs emerged from their work: **Family Vacation Rentals** and the **Bear Creek Camp Conservation Corps (BCCCC)**.

Family Vacation Rentals was a unique opportunity for families to visit the camp, stay in cabins, eat meals prepared carry-out style, and enjoy the nearly 3000 acres of forest and streams through swimming, hiking, and relaxing time together.



Family Camping

The BCCCC was a select group of twelve returning summer staff who had previously made the commitment to serve as counselors this summer. Throughout the four weeks of their time together, they lived as a cohort and formed an intentional Christian community.

Each day the team worked on maintenance projects including improving trails and overnight sites, building new high and low ropes elements, constructing bridges, and painting anything they could get their hands on.

They also connected with the campers and their families, creating digital content to share on social media and assisting with programming on-site.



Painting Crew

Above and beyond these duties, the group spent each day in devotion and worship with one another. They also took time to focus on professional development and on building skills to benefit the summer camp experience in 2021.

As Bear Creek Camp moves towards the Fall and beyond, your prayerful financial support will be more important than ever before. To learn more about programs at BCC throughout the year, visit [www.bearcreekcamp.org](http://www.bearcreekcamp.org).



Trail Blazers

# Assembly 2020 - A New Way of Being Church Together

**Friday evening, October 16 & Sunday afternoon, October 18**

**Friday evening, October 23 & Saturday morning and afternoon, October 24**

Because of concern for the safety of the voting members in this time of pandemic, Assembly 2020, including the election of a bishop, will be conducted online. The Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod is not the first to hold an online assembly this year; and based on the experience of other synods, especially the South Carolina Synod, the assembly planning team has full confidence that our assembly will be able to conduct its business and elections efficiently and in good order.

We have a production team, Events Staging, that has worked with our synod for a number of years to produce the video for our in-person assemblies. And we also have contracted with Lumi, a tech firm that specializes in online voting and that has been used by the ELCA for churchwide assemblies as well as by other synods for their local assemblies. With the support of these teams, and with the hard work of synod staff and some willing volunteers, Assembly 2020 promises to be a groundbreaking event!

## How will this work?

The entire assembly will be broadcast live and can be viewed by anyone with an internet connection. Voting members will need to register and will be given individual credentials to login to a more tailored experience, including the ability to vote, ask questions, and speak to resolutions or other matters. For "visitors" - those who simply wishes to watch the proceedings - unlike past years, there is no need to register.

## What do I need to participate?

To participate as a voting member you will need a reliable internet connection, for example, one that can watch a YouTube video without problems. You will also need either a desktop or laptop computer with a microphone and camera. It will be possible for two or more people to share a computer; however, each individual will need a separate device (like a smartphone or tablet) in order to vote.

## What if I'm not very tech savvy?

The assembly planning team is working to make participation as simple as possible. Detailed written instructions, as well as an instructional video, will be sent to each voting member well before the assembly. There also will be an opportunity to login to an orientation session prior to the actual assembly in order to discover and fix any issues a voting member might encounter. Finally, there will be a support line to contact a tech team for individual help with any question or problem.



We Are Church  
Together

NEPA Synod Assembly 2020

If your congregation has not yet selected its voting members,  
volunteer to participate in this exciting new experience.

**Registration is now open.** Visit the synod website at [nepasynod.org](http://nepasynod.org).

**We Are Church Together and We Can Do This!**

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