

Resolution Concerning Amendments to the Synod Constitution

Action: Passed

The Assembly considered a resolution to strike language in the synod constitution that referred to board membership with Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota.

Resolution Concerning Pulpit Supply Compensation

Action: Passed

The Assembly considered a resolution to offer compensation and expense recommendations to congregations utilizing pulpit supply. A draft covenant was also offered in the resolution should congregations to use such a document.

Resolution Offering Anniversary Greetings to Our Companion Synod of the Lutheran Church in the Central African Republic

Action: Passed

The Assembly considered a resolution to offer greetings and congratulations to our global companion synod in the Central African Republic as they celebrate 100 years of life in the Gospel. And that we recommit ourselves to future ministry together as companions with them and the Lord in the common work to which our Lord calls us. We also received a video greeting from Bishop Joseph Ngoe from ELC-CAR.

Assembly Offerings

Thank you for your generosity!

Worship Offerings:

\$ 1,401.02 to support the Western ND Synod Lutheran Youth Organization

\$ 2,969.50 to support ELCA Missionaries Anne & Willie Langdji

Love Offering for Outdoor Ministries: \$ 3,095.00

Gifts to support our companion synod – The Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Central African Republic: \$ 1,710.92

Videos of many parts of the 2023 Synod Assembly are available at – <https://vimeo.com/showcase/10379724>

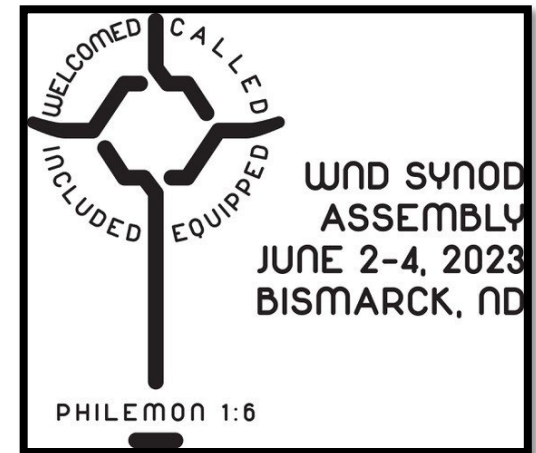
2024 Synod Assembly will be held May 31 – June 2, 2024 in Minot.



Western North Dakota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

2023 Synod Assembly

Over 230 members of the Western North Dakota Synod gathered together in Bismarck June 3-5, 2022 for Synod Assembly. The theme for the Assembly was “Welcomed | Included | Called | Equipped.” The WND Synod Why Statement guided this theme – “to encourage and equip the ministries of the Western North Dakota Synod – ELCA, so that the Good News of Jesus Christ is proclaimed, and all God’s children feel welcomed and included in the ministries to which God calls us.”



Pre-assembly Events

Pre-assembly festivities began Friday morning as synod council prepared to welcome voting members and guests from across the synod, as well as shift the leadership responsibilities of the assembly since our Assembly Manager was not able to be present this year. We give thanks for the strong leadership of our synod staff and synod council in the many ways they went above and beyond this year. And hold our Assembly Manager, Sherie Heine in prayer as she continues down a path to healing.

Pre-assembly workshop attendees had the opportunity to attend 2 of 3 options Friday afternoon. Deacon John Weit, Executive for Worship of the ELCA, offered a workshop on the new ELCA worship resource *All Creation Sings*; Dr. Michael Chan, Executive for Faith and Learning at Concordia College, presented the workshop *Witness to the Work: Recovering the Spiritual Practice of Testimony*; and Paul Marsh, WND Synod Stewardship Specialist from GSB Fundraising, offered a report on the synod’s visioning process and invited a brainstorming session to help us continue this visioning work that has been underway for the past two years.

Friday ended with an evening reception celebrating outdoor ministry. Summer staff from Badlands Ministries, Metigoshe Ministries, and Camp of the Cross Ministries – three of our synod’s four bible camps – joined assembly participants sharing stories of faith and the gift of music. These gifted staff were blessed and sent to share the love of Jesus with children and adults across our synod.

Synod Assembly

Worship: Worship on Saturday morning began with a Land Acknowledgement honoring our Indigenous siblings. The Rev. Robert Schmidt from Bethel and Bethlehem Lutheran Churches in New Town, ND served as our Assembly Chaplain and offered the sermon during opening worship and prayer throughout the assembly.

Again this year, Sunday offered the entire synod an opportunity to worship together as Bishop Schweitzer shared a message with the assembly that was also shared via video or read by lay ministers in local congregations gathering in worship across the synod. This shared message offered an opportunity to celebrate our unity and connection even as we are dispersed in communities across this prairie.

Rostered Minister anniversaries were recognized during closing worship. Additionally, all rostered and synod authorized ministers received a blessing from Bishop Schweitzer and the assembly. All voting members also participated in a blessing and sending for mission to go and share the good news of Jesus across the synod.

Bible Study: Dr. Michael Chan also served as our bible study leader throughout assembly. He offered four different bible studies that lifted up the four words of our theme using texts from Acts 9, Isaiah 56, Exodus 3-4, Jeremiah 1, Proverbs 2:1-15, and Proverbs 9:7-12. All four bible studies are available on the synod Vimeo page - <https://vimeo.com/wndsynod>.

Synod Book Read: Bishop Craig Satterlee, bishop of the North West Lower Michigan Synod and author of the book *You are Witnesses to These Things: Sharing the Story of Jesus*, introduced the assembly to his latest book and the important role that sharing the story of Jesus has on living out our baptismal promises. Bishop Schweitzer is inviting and encouraging every synod congregation to read this book in 2023. An online book read will be offered this fall.

Partner Ministries: Throughout the assembly, we heard of the ways we are being invited to share the story of Jesus through our welcome, inclusion, calling, and equipping as a synod. Ministries featured this year included the work of the churchwide expression of the ELCA, Mission Investment Fund, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services of North Dakota (LIRS-ND), Concordia College, Lutheran Campus Ministry at Minot State University, and many, many more.

ELCA presiding bishop Elizabeth Eaton shared a video message about living out our baptismal calling in an ever-changing church and world. We've always been an immigrant church, and in most places of the church today that looks different than it has ever looked before. Bishop Eaton concluded her video message by saying "We know that the gospel changes lives. And as the world

changes, we seek new ways to share the good news of Jesus with our neighbors. Together, we go out into our communities to share the love of Jesus, so that all may come to know God's grace in action. And together, we are called to offer our gratitude. First to God, for the grace given to us through Christ Jesus, and to you, who have faithfully served Christ's church in so many ways. Together, we are called."

Conference Caucuses: Caucuses are a time for voting members from geographic areas of the synod to meet one another and engage in conversation and prayer about the hopes and challenges of ministry in their local communities. We give thanks to our Conference Deans who led the caucuses and also provided leadership in several other capacities throughout the assembly.

Assembly Workshops: A variety of workshop were offered Saturday afternoon for learning and equipping, covering a variety of topics – an emerging lay preaching academy, stewardship best practices, utilizing volunteers, updates regarding a social statement being developed regarding faith and civic engagement, a workshop on Native American spirituality and Lutheran theology, updates regarding our work with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service of North Dakota, a wonderful offering on building consensus when we don't always agree, and a time of questions and conversation with Bishop Schweitzer.

Summary of the Work of the Synod in Plenary

Elected to Serve on WND Synod Council:

Conference Representatives: Heart River Conference - Rev. Kathi Nygaard, Beulah; Heart River Conference- Mr. Paul Kadrmaz, Mandan; Turtle Mountain Conference – Rev. Connie Monson, Rugby/Leeds; Western Prairie Conference – Rev. Chris Lenning, Plaza; At-Large Position – Mr. Josh Cook, Kenmare; At-Large Youth – Mr. Pacey Kutzer, Bismarck.

Western ND Synod Ministry Financial Plan for 2024

Action: Passed

The Assembly adopted the fiscal plan for the 2024 fiscal year as proposed by synod council.

2024 Compensation Guidelines for Rostered Ministers

Action: Passed

The Assembly adopted the 2024 Compensation Guidelines for Rostered Ministers serving in the Western North Dakota Synod as proposed by synod council.

Resolution Concerning Amendments to the Synod Constitution

Action: Passed

The Assembly considered a resolution to amend the synod constitution following the updates adopted at the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.