



God of Peace will be with you.

2021 Southwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly

Assembly Information you have been waiting for!

Our 2021 Synod Assembly will begin on Sunday, June 6th at 2 pm. Our first plenary session will last approximately 3 hours and then we will recess for a couple of hours. We will reconvene at 7 pm the same evening for a little more business and then we will recess until Friday, June 11th when we open with a virtual worship service. We hope to close our assembly early afternoon on Saturday, June 12th. Our proposed agenda will be up in the coming days.

We will have three practice sessions for all voting members prior to the assembly. These sessions will allow you to practice logging into the meeting. We will also practice voting using our two voting platforms. It will be important that you attend one of these sessions. Information is coming soon!

We will host two forums to discuss our Proposed 2022 Budget and our Proposed 2022 Compensation Guidelines. Information on these forums will be posted soon.

All voting members will have the option to have a complete Pre-Assembly book mailed to them for free. You can also opt out and view the Pre-Assembly book online.

The cost of the assembly is \$145/voting member; \$45/advisory.

Congregations have likely already elected assembly voting members. If you have questions on how many voting members your congregation receives, please click this link: <https://swmnelca.org/synod-assembly/registration/>. All voting members will need to have access to the internet. They also must have their own unique email address.

We will have elections at this assembly. The Nominating Report will be posted on our website. It will also be in the Pre-Assembly book. We will elect a new bishop. Individuals, congregations, and conferences have pre-identified several rostered leaders who have accepted. Their biographical information will be posted soon. Voting members will have the opportunity to nominate one Minister of Word and Sacrament on the roster of the ELCA for Bishop of the SW MN Synod. The bishop election process is posted on our website: <https://swmnelca.org/bishop-election/>. It will also be outlined in our Pre-Assembly book.

Registration will be a 2-step process. First, you will click the registration link from our website. Once registered, you will receive a registration confirmation email. You will then receive another email beginning April 1st. Emails will be sent out to all voting members registered so far with a Zoom Link, and Election Runner information, with your Voter ID. If you register after April 1st, this email will arrive within 48 hrs. Please do not share your own unique Voter ID or the Zoom link with anyone. They are your voting member credentials. Your votes are confidential. However, we do need to account for each vote. Please write down your unique Voter ID and keep it near you. Each time you join the assembly you will be asked your name and Voter ID number to verify you are, indeed, a registered voting member.

Step 2 is setting up and signing into Election Runner and Zoom for practice sessions.

ASSEMBLY REGISTRATION WILL CLOSE MAY 17, 2021. PLEASE REGISTER TODAY.

Registration: Step-by-Step

Registering for our assembly this year involves more than just one step. It is extremely important that we verify each member for voting in the digital assembly. For this reason, it is important that each of your voting members are registered correctly. But first, you will be more successful if you gather all necessary information before you start. This is what you will need from each person you are registering:

- + First and last name
- + Registration category (voting lay, voting rostered/pastors, advisory)
- + Congregation name and city
- + Conference
- + Individual, unique email (**each voting member must have their own email address**)
- + Cell phone
- + Home address (we will be mailing packets to voting members who request them)
- + Gender (male, female, other)
- + Payment must be made at time of registration (credit, debit, or check info)
- + Cost is \$145/voting member; \$45/advisory members.

Below are the steps to guide you:

- + From our website, click this link: <https://swmnelca.org/synod-assembly/registration/>
- + Enter your email address. Our database might recognize you. You can choose to enter your password or register as a guest. Click "Sign In" or "Continue as Guest".
 - **If you are registering someone else or more than one person**, check "**I am registering someone else**". Remember to have all your information in front of you. Type in each name and click "**ADD**". STAY ON THIS PAGE until you see all your voting members. Click "**NEXT**". Scroll down the list to verify it is complete. If not, hit the "back" button and add them prior to moving forward. Fill in all the blanks. Click "**NEXT**". Fill in YOUR information. (WHO is filling out the registration?) Click "**NEXT**". This is a summary of your information. Click "**NEXT**". To complete your registration, you **must** enter in your payment information. You can pay by Credit/Debit Card or enter in your check information. You should receive an email confirmation. If you do not, please check your spam/junk folder. Otherwise, please contact kristin.bakeberg@swmnelca.org.
 - **If you are registering just yourself**, check "**I am registering myself**". Enter your first and last name. Our database might recognize you. You can choose to enter your password or register as a guest. Click "**Sign In**" or "**Continue as Guest**". Click "**ADD**". Click "**NEXT**". Fill in all the blanks. Click "**NEXT**". This is a summary of your information. Click "**NEXT**". To complete your registration, you must enter in your payment information. You can pay by Credit/Debit Card or enter in your check information. You should receive an email confirmation. If you do not, please check your spam/junk folder. Otherwise, please contact kristin.bakeberg@swmnelca.org.

Definition of Assembly Terms

- + **Zoom:** Cloud-based video conferencing platform where we will virtually meet for our assembly. Each voter has a unique Voter ID for credentials and Zoom polls.
- + **Election Runner:** A secure online election platform designed to simplify the process of administering elections. Each voter has a unique Voter ID and can only vote one per ballot. Ballots are confidential.
- + **Voting Member:** At an assembly of this church, an individual elected to listen, discern, and decide on behalf of the whole church. (The term, "delegate" is not used in relation to synod assemblies).
- + **Lay member:** A term referring to the people of God who are not Ministers of Word and Sacrament (Pastors) or Ministers of Word and Service (Deacons).
- + **A note about gender:** The synod constitution (§7.21.c) asks that lay voters from congregations be as equal as possible in the number of male and female members they bring. The Southwestern Minnesota Synod recognizes and welcomes people with a diverse set of gender identities. As such, the registration form has the option to choose male, female, or other.
- + **Advisory Member:** A term referring to members of the assembly who have voice but not vote. This refers to our retired rosters persons and rostered persons not currently under call.
- + **Credentials:** The process used to authenticate voting members.
- + **Plenary:** A full session of all voting members in which business is conducted and reports are heard.
- + **Quorum:** The minimum number of voting members required to be present for transaction of business to occur.
- + **Parliamentary Procedure:** The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern parliamentary procedure of this Synod Assembly (§7.32.), except as otherwise provided for in the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of either the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or the Southwestern Minnesota Synod.

Leadership Terms

- + **Pre-Identified Person/Candidate:** A Minister of Word and Sacrament on the roster of ELCA who is pre-identified as a possible nominee for Bishop of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod.
- + **Deacon:** A rostered minister called to the ministry of Word and Service.
- + **Interim:** A rostered minister who is serving a ministry in transition from one called minister to its next called minister.
- + **Synod Authorized Minister (SAM):** A lay person who has been authorized by the synod bishop to serve the congregation in the absence of an available rostered minister.
- + **Intern:** A seminary student who is on staff in a ministry as part of his/her theological education.