METROPOLITAN
WASHINGTON, D.C.
SYNOD ELCA

From: Barbara A. Bilodeau, Secretary
The Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod, ELCA

To: Ministers of Word and Sacrament
Ministers of Word and Service
Congregation Presidents
Unit Chairs
Synod Council
The President, United Lutheran Seminary
The Rev. Yehiel Curry, Presiding Bishop, ELCA
Regional Representative, Portico Benefit Services
The President, Gettysburg College
The President, Roanoke College
The President, Thiel College
The Coordinator, ELCA Region 8
The Rev. Alex Stall, Assembly Coordinator

Dear Siblings in Christ,
According to S7.13 of the Synod Constitution, "Notice of the time and place of all meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be given by the secretary." As such, I announce that the 2026 Synod Assembly will be held on Saturday, June 6, 2026 at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 16420 S Westland Drive, Gaithersburg, MD, 20877. The theme of this Assembly is "Hope Alone."

This Assembly will be run in a hybrid format where attendees have the option of being in-person or on-line, in accordance with Constitution S7.01.01 ("The Synod Council shall decide whether a meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be held in person, electronically, or in a hybrid format where some voting members are physically present while other voting members use an online meeting platform (such as Zoom webinar).") There is a cost required for voting members attending on-line due to the cost of the electronic voting tools. Non-voice, non-voting visitors may attend on-line for free.

All active ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service on the roster of the Synod are expected to attend. If you are rostered with the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod and cannot attend the Assembly, you must send a letter or email to the Bishop addressed to the Secretary of the Synod requesting to be excused. In accordance with Constitution S7.22.01 ("Retired rostered ministers on the roster of this synod shall have voice and vote at Synod Assemblies.") all retired rostered ministers are also invited. For this Assembly, the Synod Council has chosen to also invite those rostered ministers who are On Leave From Call (OLFC) to have a voice and vote.

Congregations are reminded to consult their congregation constitution with reference to those sections pursuant to election of lay voting members to a Synod Assembly.

Chapter 7 of the Synod Constitution deals with the Synod Assembly. According to that chapter, sections S7.21, S7.21.A92, and S7.21.02:

- The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows: (S7.21)
- All rostered ministers under call on the roster of this synod shall be voting members of the Synod Assembly. (S7.21.a)
- A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more

baptized members related to this synod, typically one of whom shall be a man and one of whom shall be a woman, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that at, as nearly as possible, least 45 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men. (S7.21.b)

- Voting membership shall include the officers of this synod. (S7.21.c)
- For the allocation of lay members of the Synod Assembly the most current church body statistics are the basis for determining baptized members. To achieve the proper ratio, each congregation of 450 baptized members will be entitled to an additional voting member and another voting member for each full 250 members over 450. (S7.21.A92)
- Congregations with active participants of which at least 10 percent are persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English will be entitled to one additional lay voting member. That member will be a person of color and/or person whose primary language is other than English, as well as being a voting member of a congregation of this synod. (S7.21.03)

While the Constitution requires a *minimum* of one voting member per congregation, †S7.21 indicates that the membership of the Synod Assembly should be composed of at least 60 percent laypersons. Towards that end, **the Synod Assembly invites a minimum of *two* voting members per congregation.** *Congregations are strongly encouraged to consider persons of color, youth, or young adults aged 30 and under in their voting members as well as the gender balance referred to in S7.21C (above).*

The following allocation of lay voting members of the 2026 Synod Assembly is shown below. The single asterisk (*) indicates one additional member has been added for congregations fulfilling S7.21.02, but only if that member is a person of color and/or whose primary language is other than English).

D.C. Conference

Augustana (2024)	4*
Christ (2023)	3*
First Trinity (2024)	3*
Georgetown (2024)	3
Grace (2023)	3*
Luther Place (2024)	4*
Oromo Evangelical Lutheran (2024)	3*
Peace, Bermuda (2024)	3*
Reformation (2024)	4*
St. Matthew (2023)	3*
Swahili Lutheran Church – Worshiping Community	2
St. Paul's (2024)	5
	40

Fairfax Conference

Abiding Presence, Burke (2024)	4
Bethel, Manassas (2024)	5*
Bethlehem, Fairfax (2023)	4*
Christ, Fairfax (2024)	3
Covenant, Dale City (2024)	2
Epiphany, Dale City (2021)	3*

Good Shepherd, Woodbridge (2024)	4*
Lord of Life, Fairfax (2024)	5
River of Grace, Manassas (2021)	3*
Shepherd of the Hills, Haymarket (2024)	4
St. Mark, Springfield (2024)	4*
St. Matthew, Woodbridge (2024)	5*
	46

Maryland

Abiding Presence, Beltsville (2024)	3*
All Saints, Bowie (2024)	3*
Good Samaritan, Lanham (2023)	2
Grace, Bowie (2023)	2
Grace, Ft. Washington (2024)	3*
Hope, Clinton (2024)	3*
Hope, College Park (2023)	3*
Peace, Waldorf (2024)	3*
St. Michael's Truth (2024)	3*
St. Nicholas, Prince Frederick (2024)	2
Zion, Takoma Park (2023)	4*
	31

Montgomery

Christ, Bethesda (2021)	3*
Christ the Servant, Gaithersburg (2024)	3*
Emmanuel, Bethesda (2024)	6
Epiphany, Burtonsville (2024)	3*
Good Shepherd, Gaithersburg (2023)	7*
Living Faith, Rockville (2024)	3*
Prince of Peace, Gaithersburg (2024)	5*
St. John's, Rockville (2024)	3*
St. Luke, Silver Spring (2024)	7
St. Luke's, Derwood (Redland) (2024)	3*
St. Stephen, Silver Spring (2024)	3*
Trinity, North Bethesda (2024)	4*
	50

Potomac

Advent, Arlington (2024)	3*
Epiphany, Alexandria (2024)	2
Faith, Arlington (2024)	4*
Good Shepherd, Alexandria (2024)	4*
Holy Trinity, Falls Church (2023)	4*
Hope, Annandale (2024)	3*
Nativity, Alexandria (2024)	2
Peace, Alexandria (2024)	4*
Resurrection, Arlington (2024)	4
	30

Virginia

Bethel, Lovettsville (2021)	2
Christ the King, Great Falls (2024)	4*

Christ the Servant, Reston (2024)	2
Community, Sterling (2024)	4*
Emmanuel, Vienna (2024)	5
Holy Cross, Herndon (2024)	4*
Holy Trinity, Leesburg (2024)	4
King of Kings, Fairfax (2024)	5*
New Jerusalem, Lovettsville (2024)	2
Redeemer, McLean (2024)	8*
St. Andrew, Centreville (2024)	3
Zion, Lovettsville (2024)	2
	45

Voting Members Summary:	Ministers of Word and Sacrament (active)	78
	Ministers of Word and Sacrament (OLFC)	9
	Ministers of Word and Sacrament (retired)	85
	Ministers of Word and Service (active)	8
	Ministers of Word and Service (OLFC)	1
	Ministers of Word and Service (retired)	8
	Total roster	189
	Lay Members	242
	Synod Council Lay Members (one vacancy)	10
	Total	**441**

Fees

Fees for attendance at the 2026 Synod Assembly are as follows:

- $150 for rostered ministers and voting members ($125 early bird rate)
- $140 for voting members aged thirty and younger ($115 early bird rate)
- $140 for rostered ministers who are retired ($115 early bird rate)
- $150 for all visitors and rostered leaders on leave from call ($125 early bird rate)
- $165 for all late, on-site registrations, and virtual voting members after May 1
- $95 for all virtual voting members (lay or rostered), through May 1
- $0 for all virtual visitors (non-voting attendees)

To support full participation in the Assembly, the Synod is offering up to two scholarships of $100 each to congregations that may have difficulty paying the full fees. Scholarships are available only for voting members and rostered leaders and are not available for late registrations. To encourage participation, we will continue our practice to waive registration fees for BIPOC rostered leaders, and leadership from congregations that are predominantly persons of color. To apply, please contact Rev. Mike Gutzler, Treasurer (treasurer@metrodcelca.org) ***before*** submitting your registrations online and provide the name of your congregation and the number of scholarships requested.

I look forward to seeing you at the 2026 Synod Assembly.
Blessings,

Barbara A. Bilodeau
Secretary of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod, ELCA