

**Virginia Synod, ELCA SYNOD ASSEMBLY**  
**June 9 at 12:30 PM- June 11 at 12:00 PM, 2023**  
**at Roanoke College Kerr-Cregger Center in Salem, Virginia**

**2023 ASSEMBLY THEME**



*The* **WAY** *in the*  
**WILDERNESS**

Hear the voice of the prophet Isaiah call out:  
“In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord.” (Isa 40:3a).

God is always with God’s people, including joining us in all the wildernesses of life. Wilderness can feel anxious, inviting, calming, terrifying, or all of the above at the same time. Wilderness can be physical space - the desert, the forest, the plains, the city, etc. - and wilderness can also be those spaces in our own hearts or in our lives where we might feel nervous or scared, or calm and comforted. Wilderness encompasses so many times, places, and spaces - and God is present with us in all of them!

God has been, is now, and will always be with God’s people in all of our wildernesses:

- God’s presence with Hagar and Ishmael in the wilderness, providing them life-giving water, reminds us of God’s holy, steadfast presence. (Genesis 21.8-21)
- Like God’s people who fled slavery in Egypt, sometimes we do not want to be in the wilderness and long to return to what felt safe and familiar (but was it?). God is present with us then too, leading us to new life and hope. (Exodus 16:1-3)
- The wilderness can be a place of comfort, rest, and sanctuary - God’s protection and love with us always. (Psalm 63)
- Jonah tried repeatedly to run from God’s presence by hiding out in the wilderness (including the belly of a fish!); yet God remained faithful, would not let him go, and still sent Jonah where God called him to be. (Jonah 1-4)
- We can feel lost (literally and figuratively) in the wilderness - much like Jesus when he was tempted in the wilderness. God’s loving presence with us grounds us and holds us firm - always. (Luke 4:1-13)

This year’s Synod Assembly theme expands on the Virginia Synod Vision of Faithful + Bold + Serving. The people of the Virginia Synod gather in assembly for worship and praise, and for fellowship and community, and for electing leaders to walk with us through all of the wildernesses of our lives. God is faithful - and walks with us always. God is bold - calling us forth into God’s hope. God is serving - upholding us with steadfast love and peace. In all of the wilderness of our lives, God in Christ Jesus is always the way.

**ELCA REPRESENTATIVE**

The ELCA representative is Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, Secretary of the ELCA.

**ASSEMBLY PURPOSE**

We are gathered at this assembly to experience and express what it means to be church. Together as the Body of Christ, we care for necessary items of business, participate in and experience corporate worship, and engage in fellowship and faith formation.

**ASSEMBLY APP**

Our free mobile app (ideally for tablets) replaces printed paper resources for the assembly and is the information source for assembly participants. This app will be updated throughout the event as additional resources and information are available. The app is available at <https://guidebook.com/g/#/guides/va2023sa/details>.

**ASSEMBLY WORSHIP**

A Service of Holy Communion, including Ordination(s) if applicable, will be held on Saturday evening at Kerr-Cregger Fieldhouse, beginning at 7:00 p.m. Rostered ministers are strongly encouraged to vest (stole color will be announced) and participate in the procession.

The Assembly will open and close with worship. We will gather for morning prayer each day. The Assembly will also remember and honor, with a necrology service, rostered ministers and synod leaders who died.

Worship materials will be available on the Assembly App and projected on the screens during the assembly. You may request a printed copy of the Saturday Festival Worship during registration.

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION FOR THE ASSEMBLY

### FEE SCHEDULE

With the return to a three day Assembly, the registration fee reflects increased costs for food, facilities, and voting machines. For Lay Voting Members and Rostered Ministers Under Call, the registration fee is \$350. Rostered ministers retired or on leave from call: \$175.00. [Click here](#) for the full fee schedule.

### TRAVEL EQUALIZATION & TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

Voting members of the assembly pay a \$20.00 Travel Equalization Fee as part of the assembly registration fee. Auto mileage reimbursement will be paid at the rate of fourteen cents per mile. Travel reimbursement checks will be mailed within two weeks of the close of the assembly.

### REGISTRATION

Registration is online. To [register, click here](#), you will need a debit or credit card to process the registration fees. (Remember to submit the [lay voting member credential form](#) and make [hotel reservations](#).)

### LAY VOTING MEMBER CREDENTIAL FORM

All congregations should certify their lay voting members, using a [voting member credential form](#). Congregations are encouraged to turn in this form by May 10, 2023. **The cut-off time for lay voting member credential forms is 10 days (May 30, 2023) before the first day of the assembly. If the credential form is not received in the Synod Office by May 30, the layperson will not be able to vote (per the Virginia Synod Constitution (\$7.21.03.))**

### AREA HOTELS

Registration for the Synod Assembly does not include lodging. We have provided a [list of area hotels](#) including prices and discount codes to use when making your hotel reservation.

### RESOLUTION FORM

The [Resolution form](#) is to propose a resolution to the Virginia Synod Assembly, which will be voted on at the Synod Assembly. **The Synod Constitution states all resolution requests must be submitted thirty days (May 10) before the first day of the assembly.**

### YOUTH ASSEMBLY

Lutheran Youth of the Virginia Synod will be holding their annual assembly concurrently with the Virginia Synod Assembly. They will be joining the main assembly at various times for worship or to observe the assembly in action. Registration for youth assembly is separate and available at [vasynod.org/event/youth-assembly](https://vasynod.org/event/youth-assembly).

## NOMINATIONS FOR SYNOD LEADERSHIP ROLES TO BE ELECTED AT SYNOD ASSEMBLY

For the 2023 Synod Assembly, we are looking for nominations to serve on the Synod Council, the Consultation Committee, and the Committee on Discipline. Refer to [roles to be elected at the 2023 Synod Assembly](#). If you are interested in serving please complete a [nomination form](#).

### What is the Consultation Committee?

The Virginia Synod Consultation Committee assists the bishop in efforts to resolve a situation - involving rostered ministers - in which there are indications that a cause for discipline may exist and before charges are made. The Consultation Committee is described by the ELCA Constitution and Bylaws in 20.22.04.

### What is the Committee on Discipline?

The Virginia Synod Committee on Discipline serves the Consultation and Discipline Process in this church. The consultation and discipline process assures due process and due protection for the accused, other parties, and this church in the discipline process, which governs officers, rostered ministers, congregations, and members of congregations.

## What is the Virginia Synod Council?

The Synod Council serves a visionary role in the Virginia Synod. In conjunction with the Office of the Bishop, the Council reviews and coordinates all planning proposals and establishes synod priorities. The members of Synod share their various gifts for the purposes of God's mission and ministry through the Virginia Synod and through the churchwide organization of the ELCA.

The Virginia Synod Council also serves as the board of directors of the Virginia Synod and meets quarterly to supervise the administration of the Synod. These leaders are elected by the Synod Assembly. The Synod Council is composed of members of congregations from across the Virginia Synod, including both rostered ministers (pastors and deacons) and laypeople (those not ordained).

## ASSEMBLY OFFERINGS

Offerings are designated to support:

- **Lutheran Disaster Response:** Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) brings God's hope, healing and renewal to people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.
- **Virginia Synod Disaster Response:** The Virginia Disaster Response Fund allows the Virginia Synod to respond locally to disasters by making gifts which will provide grants and support to congregations and affiliated organizations undertaking disaster response. The Virginia Synod Disaster Response Fund is a local supplement to the work of Lutheran Disaster Response.

## SYNOD ASSEMBLY FORMS

[LAY VOTING CREDENTIAL FORM](#) and [RESOLUTION FORM](#) (see above)

[NOMINATION FORM](#) - used to nominate oneself or another individual for an elected position at the upcoming Synod Assembly. This form is due by May 10, 2023

[AT-LARGE VOTING MEMBER REQUEST FORM](#) - used to submit names of youth/young adults and of persons of color and/or whose primary language is other than English, who can be appointed by Synod Council as lay voting members of the Assembly. This form is due by May 10, 2023.

[CONGREGATION SIGNIFICANT EVENTS FORM](#) - are used to share any significant milestones or events from your congregation to be celebrated during the Synod Assembly. This form is due by May 10, 2023.

[DISPLAY AREA REQUEST FORM](#) - Displays depicting the many ministries of the synod, its agencies, and institutions will be set up in the Kerr-Cregger Fieldhouse. These displays will be maintained throughout the assembly, and all voting members and visitors are urged to take the time to view them. If you would like to request a display, this form is due by May 10, 2023.

## LIVESTREAMING

The Synod Assembly will be available by livestreaming on our [YouTube channel](#). Stay up to date with videos as they happen live, or you can also watch the videos following the Synod Assembly.

## PARKING

[Parking](#) is available in any of the parking areas shown on the Roanoke College map. **Handicap parking** will be available in the Upper Olin Parking Lot located on High Street across from Luther Plaza. **General Parking** is available in the parking lot across from the Kerr-Cregger Fieldhouse on High Street and the second parking lot on Peery Drive. **Golf carts** will be available to transport guests who need assistance to and from the Peery Drive parking lot.

## EVENT CHECK-IN AND INFORMATION

You must check-in and pick up your materials for the assembly in the lobby of the Kerr-Cregger Fieldhouse. Check-in will open at 10:00 AM on Friday, June 9.

## [VOTING MEMBER INFORMATION](#) AND ORIENTATION

Each congregation of this synod with 400 or less baptized members are entitled to two lay voting members at assembly, normally one a man and one a woman. For each additional 200 baptized members, the congregation is entitled to an additional voting member. An optional orientation for all voting members will be held on Friday, June 9 at 11:00 am.

## PLENARY SESSIONS AND SEATING FOR PLENARY SESSIONS – KERR-CREGGER FIELDHOUSE

All voting members and official visitors will be seated at tables on the floor of the Kerr-Cregger Fieldhouse. During all elections, visitors will be required to move to extra seating on the sides of the Fieldhouse. Visitors are asked to honor this arrangement so that voting members will have an adequate workspace at the tables and to facilitate distribution of ballots for the several elections and the counting of the house on calls for “division.”

**We recommend that you bring a sweater or dress in layers in the Kerr-Cregger Fieldhouse. Those with hearing concerns may choose to sit nearer or further from the speakers – this is a large space, and it is difficult to keep sound and temperature levels the same in all areas.**

**No food or drink except water will be allowed in our meeting space for Synod Assembly, please plan accordingly. This is a Roanoke College policy for the Kerr-Cregger Fieldhouse. Please be respectful of the College’s space.**

## BASIC SYNOD ASSEMBLY SCHEDULE

Friday, June 9	Location	Pre-Event
10:00 am-12:30 pm	Cregger Center	Event Check-in
11:15 am-12:00 pm	Pickle Lodge, Colket Center	Voting Member Orientation
11:00 am-12:30 pm	Colket Center Commons	Lunch ( <i>included with event registration</i> )
Friday, June 9	Location	Plenary Session 1
12:30 pm-5:30 pm	Kerr-Cregger Fieldhouse	Opening Worship, Organization of the Assembly; 1st Ballot for Election of the Bishop; Reference & Counsel; Report of Nominating Committee; Results 1st Ballot Bishop Election; Report of the Officers; Election VP, Secretary; Intro. & Recognitions
5:15 pm-6:30 pm	Colket Center Commons	Dinner
7:00 pm		Celebrations of Anniversaries & Synod Leadership, Reception
Saturday, June 10	Location	Plenary Session 2
6:30 am-8:00 am	Colket Center Commons	Breakfast
8:15 am-12:00 pm	Kerr-Cregger Fieldhouse	Morning Worship; 2nd Ballot Bishop Election; Elections-Synod Council; Comm. on Discipline; Comm. on Consultation; Ministry Moments; Results 2nd Ballot Bishop Election; Report of Synod Council; Resolutions; Report of ELCA Representative; Ministry Moments
Saturday, June 10	Location	Plenary Session 3
12:15 pm-1:30 pm	Colket Center Commons	Lunch
1:30 am-5:15 pm	Kerr-Cregger Fieldhouse	3rd Ballot Bishop Election; Ministry Moments; Introduction of Synod Council; 4th Ballot Bishop Election; Ministry Moments
5:15 pm-6:30 pm	Colket Center Commons	Dinner
7:00 pm	Kerr-Cregger Fieldhouse	Festival Worship
Sunday, June 11	Location	Plenary Session 4
6:30 am-8:00 am	Colket Center Commons	Breakfast
8:15 am-12:00 pm	Kerr-Cregger Fieldhouse	Opening prayer, Word and Necrology; Approval of Spending Plan; General Resolution ELCA Q&A; Report of Youth Assembly; 5th Ballot and results of Bishop Election; Worship and Closing of Assembly

We look forward to seeing you at this year’s Synod Assembly.

**All information, forms, and online links for the 2023 Synod Assembly can be found at:**

<https://vasynod.org/2023-virginia-synod-assembly/>

