

Virginia Synod, ELCA Synod Assembly
April 27, 2024 from 9:00 AM-1:00 PM
Online by Zoom



Strong Connections

ASSEMBLY THEME

We, too - the many - are different parts that form one body in the Anointed One [Christ]. Each one of us is joined with one another, *and we become together what we could not be alone.*
(Romans 12:5 - The Voice)

Strong Connections . . . for God is with us.

. . . *and we become together what we could not be alone.* The emphasis for this year's Synod Assembly is the command that God gives to the Virginia Synod to be strong. We discover strength together by focusing on our ministries, on the peoples that serve, and on how ministries grow stronger through our partnership in the Gospel.

Our God is a God of relationships:

- Genesis 2 tells the story of God's creation and care for humanity, given life through God's very breath.
- Genesis 11 begins the story of God's covenant relationship with Abraham and Sarah and their descendants.
- Exodus 3 begins the journey of Moses and a dynamic relationship with God's people, the children of Israel.
- Luke 1 relates the story of Elizabeth and Mary whose strong family ties provided encouragement for each other as both were chosen to bear sons. One son would offer a message of the coming Savior, and the other Son would be the Savior.
- Acts 2 reminds us of the Holy Spirit' coming upon those disciples who were gathered in the upper room together, each one speaking in a different language, but with one message, the Good News of Jesus Christ.

All Virginia Lutherans are partners in the sharing of the Gospel, with our unique distinctiveness. As we work toward our common goal of sharing with others how to love our God and how to love others, the Holy Spirit multiplies what we are able to do.

As we trust in the Lord as the source of our strength, let us pray that God will:

*"Bind us together, Lord, Bind us together
With cords that cannot be broken.
Bind us together, Lord, Bind us together
Bind us together in Love"* Bob Gillman

Strong Connections . . . for God is with us. . . . *and we become together what we could not be alone.*

DIGITAL ASSEMBLY

Synod Assembly 2024 will take on a digital look and feel. It will be live streamed from Trinity Lutheran Church, Newport News, which is located on the Peninsula. Our connections will not be physical but digital. This will give our congregations and ministry sites an opportunity to encourage and invite participants to gather together to watch and worship and learn that even through the means of technology our connections can still be and remain strong because of our foundation in Christ our Lord.

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 business items, participate in and experience corporate worship, and build up the Body of Christ.

PRE-ASSEMBLY GATHERINGS

We will offer pre-assembly gatherings online to help you prepare for the assembly. Anyone is invited to participate, and each gathering will be recorded and shared following the event. There is no cost to attend. More information, registration, and recordings can be found at vasynod.org/2024-pre-assembly-meetings.

The gatherings and dates offered will be:

RESOLUTION AND MEMORIAL WRITING – January 23 at 7 PM

VIRGINIA SYNOD AND ELCA CHURCHWIDE ELECTIONS – February 29 at 7 PM

INVESTMENT IN MINISTRY PLAN AND COMPENSATION GUIDELINES – March 7 at 7 PM

HOW TO VOTE 101 – April 16 at 7 PM

RESOLUTION AND MEMORIAL REVIEW – April 18 at 7 PM

ASSEMBLY WEBPAGE

A dedicated webpage for the assembly will be the information source for assembly participants. It will include links for forms, Bulletin of Reports, worship, nominations, etc. It will be updated throughout the event as additional resources and information are available. This page can be accessed at vasynod.org/2024-virginia-synod-assembly.

ASSEMBLY WORSHIP

The Assembly will open and close with worship.

ASSEMBLY OFFERINGS

Offerings designated to support GraceInside's Chaplains are dedicated to meeting the spiritual needs of all residents of Virginia's state prisons. Chaplains provide one-on-one pastoral care, conduct worship services and work with the Department of Corrections staff in offering rehabilitative programs. Chaplains are also responsible for scheduling all religious programs conducted by volunteers representing many faith traditions. This year GraceInside Chaplains will serve approximately 24,000 imprisoned men and women in Virginia's state correctional facilities.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION FOR THE ASSEMBLY

FEE SCHEDULE

This year's Assembly registration fees reflect the unique experience of a digital Assembly. Lay Voting Members and Rostered Ministers Under Call: \$65.00. Rostered ministers who are retired, on leave from call, or on disability leave: \$55.00. [Click here](#) for the full fee schedule. An early bird discount is available until March 18.

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](#)).

LAY VOTING MEMBER CREDENTIAL FORM

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. All congregations should certify their lay voting members using a [voting member credential form](#). Congregations are encouraged to turn in this form by March 28, 2024. **The cut-off time for lay voting member credential forms is 10 days (April 17, 2024) before the first day of the assembly. If the credential form is not received in the Synod Office by April 17, the layperson will not be able to vote (per the Virginia Synod Constitution (S7.21.03.)).**

VISITORS

Visitors will not register for the 2024 Synod Assembly. All visitors can participate in the assembly by the live stream. The link will be posted on the Virginia Synod website.

NOMINATIONS FOR SYNOD LEADERSHIP ROLES TO BE ELECTED AT SYNOD ASSEMBLY

For the 2024 Synod Assembly, we are looking for nominations to serve on the Virginia Synod Council, the 2025 Churchwide Assembly, the ELCA Churchwide Council, and the Consultation Committee. Refer to [roles to be elected at the 2024 Synod Assembly](#). If you are interested in serving, please complete a [nomination form](#).

Churchwide Assembly: July 28-August 2, 2025, in Phoenix, Arizona

The ELCA Churchwide Assembly, the primary decision-making body of the church, is a process of communal spiritual discernment that happens every three years. This event is invitation-only but is always available via live stream for the general public.

What is the Churchwide Council?

The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is both the board of directors of a Minnesota nonprofit corporation and the interim legislative authority of the churchwide organization, one of the three “expressions” of a denomination with deep roots in the U.S. In fulfilling its dual constitutional roles, the Church Council exercises fiduciary, strategic, and generative responsibilities to govern the ELCA churchwide organization. [The full explanation of roles and responsibilities linked here](#).

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 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).

SYNOD ASSEMBLY FORMS

[LAY VOTING CREDENTIAL FORM](#) *(see description and information above)*

[RESOLUTION AND MEMORIAL FORM](#) - used to propose a resolution or memorial 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 (March 28) before the first day of the assembly.**

[NOMINATION FORM](#) - used to nominate oneself or another individual for an elected position at the upcoming Synod Assembly. This form is due by March 28, 2024

[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 March 28, 2024.

[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 March 1, 2024.

[DIGITAL DISPLAY AREA REQUEST FORM](#) - A designated online display space depicting the many ministries of the synod, its agencies, and institutions will be available. To share information and resources, complete this form by March 28, 2024.

YOUTH ASSEMBLY

Lutheran Youth of the Virginia Synod will be holding their assembly on **Saturday, May 25, 2024 from 9:30 am-3:30 pm**. The event will allow youth to gather at one of the four places around the Synod and will be linked via Zoom for our worship, singing, and discussions! The four locations are College, Salem; Christ the King, Richmond; Muhlenberg, Harrisonburg; and Trinity, Newport News. More information and registration can be found at vasynod.org/event/youth-assembly.

LIVESTREAMING

The Synod Assembly will be available by livestreaming, the link will be posted on our website. Stay up to date with videos as they happen live, or you can also watch the videos following the Synod Assembly.

EVENT CHECK-IN

You must check-in for the event from 8:45-9:00 AM.

VOTING MEMBER INFORMATION AND ORIENTATION

If you have not participated as a voting member for a Synod Assembly, [here is a written resource](#) of information as an optional orientation for all voting members. We encourage you to participate in the pre-assembly meetings as well.

PARTICIPATING IN THE ASSEMBLY TOGETHER

Additional information will be provided to help congregations and conferences view, vote, and engage in the Synod Assembly onsite together.

TECH SUPPORT

Technology support will be available during the assembly. More information will be shared closer to the event.

BASIC SYNOD ASSEMBLY SCHEDULE

Saturday, April 27	Pre-Event
8:45 am-9:00 am	Join Zoom and Event Check-in
	Plenary Session 1
9:00 am-10:30 am	Opening Worship; Organization of the Assembly; Report of Nominating Committee; Nominations from the Floor for Elections; Report of the Officers
10:30 am-10:45 am	Break
Saturday, April 27	Plenary Session 2
10:45 am-1:00 pm	Elections; Investment in Ministry Plan; Report of ELCA Representative; Report of Lutheran Youth Organization; Resolutions/Memorials; Closing of the Assembly

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

All information, forms, and online links for the 2024 Synod Assembly can be found at:

vasynod.org/2024-virginia-synod-assembly/

