

THE 2025 VIRGINIA SYNOD YOUTH ASSEMBLY - INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS, PASTORS, DEACONS, FAMILIES, AND YOUTH WORKERS

All registration instructions and materials for the Youth Assembly are at the “Youth Ministry” tab at the Virginia Synod website: <https://vasynod.org/ministries/youth-ministry/>.

What is Youth Assembly?

The Virginia Synod Youth Assembly is the annual meeting of the *Virginia Synod Lutheran Youth Organization*, to which all ELCA Lutheran youth in Virginia automatically belong. The Virginia Synod LYO is also the group in Virginia that relates to the ELCA regional and churchwide youth ministries. When the Synod Assembly is an in-person event, the Youth Assembly meets at the same time on the Roanoke College Campus.

This Year’s Event is: June 13-15, 2025 (noon Friday to noon Sunday), the same dates as the Main Assembly. (Youth will need to be excused from school on Friday, June 13th)

The Purpose of the Youth Assembly is :

- to give glory to God, celebrate the good news of the gospel, and nurture faith in the synod’s young leaders.
- to conduct the business of the Virginia Synod Lutheran Youth Organization, including election of the LYO Board.
- to hear and explore the story of the church’s work beyond the youth delegates’ congregations and equip them to share and interpret those stories in their home contexts.
- to give voice to and encourage leadership among youth in the church.

☞ Youth Delegates should understand that the activities and atmosphere of the Youth Assembly are different from those of our other Synod Youth events (Seventh Day, Lost and Found, Winter Celebration, Kairos)!

This year’s Virginia Synod Youth Assembly theme will parallel the Main Assembly theme, “Intertwining Hope.”

Who Attends the Youth Assembly?

Each congregation of the Synod may send up to **four delegates** to the Youth Assembly (*see below*). In addition, any youth who is nominated for the LYO Board (*see next page*) may also attend as a delegate, and if event registration has not exceeded capacity by May 19st the congregation may ask to send an additional delegate of any grade level (*if you desire to do this, contact Dave Delaney at the Synod Office – cell: 540-529-6893 or delaney@vasynod.org - to make sure there’s room*). Congregations may also send an additional delegate if that person comes from a multi-cultural background or identifies as a member of the “tAbled” community.

Congregations may select their youth delegates in whatever fashion they choose. If possible, identify youth from a variety of grades, genders, cultural backgrounds, etc. They need not have any prior experience in Synodical activities, but they should be responsible young people who have an interest in the life and work of the church, and they must be willing to abide by the expectations of the event. Youth delegates register using the special form provided for Youth Assembly, available under the “Youth Ministry” tab on the synod website, and the congregation should plan to pay the cost for youth delegates. **No adult advisors from the congregation are required to come;** the Youth Assembly staff serves as advisors for the event, although the pastor or another adult from that congregation at the Main Assembly must agree to share responsibility for the youth from their congregation in case there is a need during the weekend. Adults interested in serving as staff for this event are invited to contact Pastor Dave Delaney for more information.

The cost for this year’s Youth Assembly is \$190 (\$175 if submitted before May 1st) and can be sent using the “Youth Assembly” tile at the “Give” tab of the Synod website (www.vasynod.org).

What is the Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) Board?

The Virginia Synod Lutheran Youth Organization Board consists of seven youth members – one each in grades 9-12 elected by the Youth Assembly, an 8th grader appointed by the Board, a multi-cultural representative appointed by the Board, a definitely-abled representative appointed by the Board – and three adults appointed by the Synod’s Youth Ministry Committee, all of whom serve for one-year terms between annual assemblies. **The**

youth members of the Board are elected at each youth assembly for one-year terms from candidates nominated by their home pastors or congregation presidents, **using the nomination form that is available on the synod website.** The 12th grade Board member becomes the president of the Board (which entails some additional responsibilities, such as representing Virginia to ELCA Youth Leadership events, reporting to the Main Assembly, and being present where

possible at the other youth events throughout the year), and the 11th grade Board member becomes the vice-president. The basic commitment of Board members is to attend Board meetings over the course of the year (no more than five) and to attend the next year's assembly. **This expectation should be made clear to candidates before they are nominated.** Use the "Nomination Form" ONLY if a youth from your congregation is being nominated for the LYO Board for the upcoming school year. Nominees will be sent or may download the additional information form which they must complete and return to the Synod Office so that it can be made available to Youth Assembly Delegates. It includes a section that must be reviewed with the nominee. In addition to the nomination form itself, please notice that there is a reference form to be filled out by a congregational leader.

**Expectations for
Participants in
Youth Assembly**

PASTORS AND OTHER ROSTERED MINISTERS / YOUTH WORKERS / PARENTS: PLEASE MAKE SURE THESE EXPECTATIONS ARE MADE CLEAR TO YOUR YOUTH ASSEMBLY DELEGATES! PLEASE ALSO NOTE YOUR ROLE IN HELPING THE YOUTH ASSEMBLY STAFF TO ADMINISTER THESE EXPECTATIONS! An adult who will be in attendance at the Main Assembly is required

to sign the Youth Assembly registration form certifying that your youth delegate understands the event expectations.

- Participants will participate fully in all activities of the Youth Assembly.
- Participants will wear the event name tag visibly at all times. This is for safety as well as other reasons.
- Participants will abide by the established guidelines, procedures, and expectations for the Youth Assembly.
- Participants will show full respect to the Youth Assembly adults and leaders as well as the staff of Roanoke College.
- Participants will remain on the Roanoke College Campus at all times. Special exceptions must be cleared with the event director, Pastor Dave Delaney.
- No weapons, alcohol, or drugs other than required medications may be brought to the event.
- Participants may keep cell phones but are not permitted to use them during Youth Assembly sessions.
- The curfew, lights out times, and other requirements necessary for the safety of every person and the smooth running of our event will be conscientiously observed.
- All participants in Youth Ministry events sponsored by the Virginia Synod must adhere strictly to the Synod's official guidelines protecting individuals from sexual harassment or other sexual misconduct. No unwelcome touching or suggestive or other inappropriate language is permitted.

All delegates to the Youth Assembly and their pastors or another adult from the congregation must read these expectations and sign the registration form indicating their agreement to abide by them.

**Other
Information
About the Youth
Assembly.**

Ministers and Youth Workers should pass along this information to youth delegates:

- After registering using the online form or mailing in the downloadable forms, youth will receive a packet confirming their registration and providing information on what to do upon arriving at Roanoke College, an event schedule, and a map of the campus.
- Delegates to Youth Assembly will be housed as a group on the Roanoke Campus and will be responsible to the adult leaders of the Youth Assembly; delegates must agree to abide by

the expectations of the event.

• **Please note the special area on the registration form to be signed by the Youth Assembly delegate.** There is also a place for the Pastor or another Main Assembly delegate **to sign and provide a cell phone number** as an agreement to assist the Youth Assembly staff should there be an emergency during the event or should an unusual discipline problem develop.

**Need More
Information?**

If you have additional questions about the Youth Assembly or about the Virginia Synod LYO Board, please contact: The Rev. Dave Delaney
Virginia Synod, ELCA, PO Box 70, Salem VA 24153
delaney@vasynod.org (540) 529-6893 (cell)

For Youth Assembly forms and information go to <https://vasynod.org/ministries/youth-ministry/> and scroll down to the Youth Assembly link.