



Delaware-Maryland Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

DATE: March 2018

TO: Ministers of Word and Sacrament, Ministers of Word and Service, Members of the Order of St. Stephen Deacon, Congregations and Visitors

FROM: Nancy L. Gordon, Secretary, Delaware-Maryland Synod

SUBJECT: **2018 Delaware-Maryland Synod Assembly**

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ! (2 Corinthians 1:2).

This will serve as your official notification of the 31st annual Assembly of the Delaware-Maryland Synod which will be held **Thursday, May 31, through Saturday, June 2, 2018. Assembly will be held at a NEW VENUE this year, the Delta Hotels Baltimore Hunt Valley, 245 Shawan Road, Hunt Valley, Maryland 21031.** The assembly begins on May 31 at 10:30 a.m. and closes on June 2 at 12:00 p.m.

This letter provides detailed information on the assembly program, registration procedures, hotel rooms, cost and related items. Please read it carefully and proceed accordingly.

Assembly Theme and Keynote Speaker

With this year's assembly, we celebrate the theme, **"Beyond the Reformation: What's Next?"** Our keynote speaker, Brian D. McLaren, is an author, speaker, activist, and public theologian and is passionate about *What's Next* for the church! A former college English teacher and pastor, he is a passionate advocate for "a new kind of Christianity" – just, generous, and working with people of all faiths for the common good.

A frequent guest on television, radio, and news media programs, he has appeared on All Things Considered, Larry King Live, Nightline, On Being, and Religion and Ethics Newsweekly. His work has also been covered in Time, New York Times, Christianity Today, Christian Century, the Washington Post, Huffington Post, CNN.com, and many other print and online media. He has taught or lectured at many seminaries and at denominational and interfaith gatherings.

Brian will give our keynote address on Friday evening of our annual Assembly. He will also hold a workshop on Saturday morning of the Assembly. Due to his popularity, we will have an extra 150 chairs set up on Friday evening and Saturday morning, so you may invite key leaders from your congregation. The cost will be \$10.00 per person for attending Friday evening and \$10.00 per person for attending Saturday morning. Seats must be paid for on the guest registration form, which will be made available on May 1. After May 15, there are no more opportunities to reserve a seat. Register early as space will be limited!

Representation at Synod Assembly

Each congregation of the Delaware-Maryland Synod will be represented by two or more lay persons, normally one male and one female, up to the first 185 reported baptized members. For each additional reported 185 baptized members, or major fraction thereof, a congregation will be entitled to one more lay representative, male or female. In addition, each congregation is entitled to send one youth/young adult voting member. **The number of voting members to which your congregation is entitled will be posted on the synod website under the “Assembly” tab.**

All Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service who are on the roster of this synod, all retired ministers rostered in this synod and the lay members of the Synod Council are voting members.

Under our church’s constitution and by-laws, leaders on the roster of this church are **required** to attend. **Those who are unable to attend for whatever reason must send a letter to the bishop by April 15, 2018, explaining the circumstances and asking to be excused.** Those letters may be sent by US Mail or by email to Bishop Gohl, in the care of Justina Sergeant, jsergeon@demdsynod.org.

The 2010 Synod Assembly passed a resolution to allow each congregation to send one additional voting member, either male or female, who is a youth or a young adult. The term "youth" means a voting member of a congregation who has not yet reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term "young adult" means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service. On Thursday evening, May 31, there will be an opportunity for interested youth and young adults to gather to debrief the day and fellowship with one another; more details will be available as the assembly approaches.

More details will be posted on the synod website, under the “Assembly” tab, as we move closer to the Assembly. If you have any further questions regarding youth/young adults (only) at Assembly, contact Deacon Julie Stecker at jstecker@demdsynod.org or 410-230-2864.

All materials are on the website; printed materials BY REQUEST ONLY

All materials for the business sessions of the Synod Assembly will be posted on the synod’s website, www.demdsynod.org, as well as in Guidebook for your review prior to the assembly. **In an effort to continue to become green, again this year we will not provide printed hand-outs but will leave it up to voting members to print and bring their own copies or to access documents electronically.** IMPORTANT: If you need the synod office to provide you a paper copy of materials, please contact Cindy VanVliet at cvanvliet@demdsynod.org.

Materials sent to us for inclusion in an Assembly packet will also be scanned and uploaded (by May 15, 2018) and available with all other materials.

Registration is open from March 15 – May 15, 2018

Registration for the 2018 Synod Assembly opens on March 15 and closes on May 15, 2018. **The primary mode for registration will be ONLINE through the synod website.** Please note that your email address will be automatically added to our weekly E-letter distribution list so that we can keep you informed of synod events and happenings. If you do not wish to receive the E-letter, you may unsubscribe at any time. **To register:**

- Go to the Delaware-Maryland Synod website on or after **March 15, 2018:** www.demdsynod.org
- Click on the 2018 Synod Assembly link under the Synod Assembly tab; you will see a registration button to click.
- Online payments are to be made by credit card. This is a secure site for registration.
- Multiple registrations may be completed by one person. No password is needed. Please enter individual email addresses for each registrant.
- If you prefer to pay by check, **please print out a copy of your online registration and send with the check to:**

**Cindy VanVliet, Associate for Community
Delaware-Maryland Synod, ELCA
575 South Charles Street, Suite 202
Baltimore, MD 21201-2482**

If you are unable to register online, please call the synod office **before May 15, 2018** for assistance.

If you are a volunteer and/or your registration is paid by the synod, please contact Cindy VanVliet, after March 15, 2018, for a code that links to your on-line registration: cvanvliet@demdsynod.org or 410-230-2860.

Workshops

This year at Assembly a variety of 60-minute workshops will be offered on Saturday morning. Brief descriptions of each workshop will be posted on our synod website under the Assembly tab during registration. **You must select the workshops you would like to attend during registration. This will be the only opportunity to do so.**

The first workshop will be presented by Brian McLaren. It is important that you reserve a seat during registration if you would like to attend this first workshop. It will be opened to the public on May 1, 2018 and we need to know how many seats we may make available to those who are not Assembly attendees.

You will have many options to choose from for the second workshop. You may consider spreading out so that each of your congregation's attendees attend a different workshop and later share the information with each other.

Registration fees

The 2000 Synod Assembly approved a resolution to make the Synod Assembly self-sustaining. The registration fees were set by the Synod Council at its meeting on January 27, 2018.

NEW THIS YEAR: A full breakfast on Friday and Saturday included in each registration fee.

The Synod Council includes an incentive for early registration again this year, so register early and be charged the lowest available registration fee!

Rates in chart below apply to: Minister of Word and Sacrament Minister of Word and Service Lay Voting Members Youth/Young Adult Voting Members		
Early Bird Rate (includes breakfast Friday & Saturday): \$199.00 Online and mail-in registration must be received by 4/29/18. <i>No exceptions.</i>	Regular Rate (includes breakfast Friday & Saturday): \$219.00 Online and mail-in registration must be received by 5/15/18. <i>No exceptions.</i>	On-Site Rate (includes breakfast Friday & Saturday): \$249.00 After May 15, 2018, you must wait to register on-site at Assembly. On-site registration attendees will be assigned overflow seating. <i>No exceptions</i>

Rates in chart below apply to: Retired Minister of Word and Sacrament Retired Minister of Word and Service Ministers of Word and Sacrament on Leave from Call Ministers of Word and Service on Leave from Call Visitors		
Early Bird Rate (includes breakfast Friday & Saturday): \$70.00 Online and mail-in registration must be received by 4/29/18. <i>No exceptions.</i>	Regular Rate (includes breakfast Friday & Saturday): \$75.00 Online and mail-in registration must be received by 5/15/18. <i>No exceptions.</i>	On-Site Rate (includes breakfast Friday & Saturday): \$80.00 After May 15, 2018, you must wait to register on-site at Assembly. On-site registration attendees will be assigned overflow seating. <i>No exceptions</i>

NEW THIS YEAR

All Assembly business will take place during the morning and afternoon sessions. On Thursday evening, May 31, 2018, there will be a variety of evening activities offered:

- Orioles vs. Yankees game at Camden Yards (tickets are \$15.00 & must have own transportation)
- Dinner Church with Campus Ministry at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Lutherville, MD (\$15.00)
- Organ Crawl with reception beginning at 7:00 pm at St. Mark’s Lutheran on St. Paul St., moving to Zion City Hall Plaza at 7:45pm, with last stop at Christ Inner Harbor at 8:30 pm (\$15.00)
- Beer & Hymns at the hotel from 8:30 pm – 10:00 pm (\$15.00 plus cash bar).

You must sign up for evening activities during registration. This will be the only opportunity to do so.

PLEASE NOTE: The deadline to sign up for a ticket to the Orioles game is May 8, 2018 – no exceptions, per to the Orioles reservations office.

Beginning May 1, 2018, the opportunity to sign up for an evening activity will be open to those in our synod who are NOT Assembly attendees, so make sure to register early – especially if you'd like to secure an Orioles ticket. We have a limited quantity of tickets!

Help wanted... seeking Assembly volunteers!

Volunteers are needed to serve on committees, as Pages during business sessions, to assist with worship services at the Assembly, and to help with childcare in the Assembly Daycare Room. If you are interested in serving, contact **Cindy VanVliet, Associate for Community, 410-230-2860** or cvanvliet@demdsynod.org

Optional meals at the Hotel & Options Nearby

A Boxed Lunch on Thursday, May 31 and Friday, June 1 will be available for purchase. The Delta Hotel's catering service charges \$23 each for these lunches. Dinner will be on your own on Thursday, May 31 and Friday, June 1. **Meals must be ordered and paid for during registration. This will be the only opportunity to purchase them.**

Our new venue's location offers lots of places to eat! Across the street from our Assembly venue and within walking distance (0.5 miles), are choices from fast food to sit down restaurants if you'd like options other than the boxed lunch choice. There is plenty of parking across the street if you are unable to walk there.

Childcare at the Assembly

Childcare will be available, free of charge, for children **ages 2-8 years** during the **business sessions and workshops only**. Please sign up for childcare through online registration **by the May 15, 2018 deadline**. If you do not have access to online registration, contact **Cindy VanVliet** at **410-230-2860** or cvanvliet@demdsynod.org

Worship at the Assembly

There will be a daily service of Holy Communion at the 2018 Assembly, consistent with our Synod's continuing resolutions.

- Thursday, May 31, 2018, 10:30 a.m. - Opening Worship and Communion with the Reading of the Necrology
- Friday, June 1, 2018, 10:30 a.m. – Worship and Communion with Recognition of Congregation & Ministerial Anniversaries

- Saturday, June 2, 2018, 11:30 a.m. - Closing Worship and Communion with the Recognition of New Congregations and Commissioning of all those who will attend the ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston this summer – participants, leaders, staff and volunteers.

The communion services will be held in the Hunt Valley Ballroom.

In keeping with our Assembly theme, *“Beyond the Reformation: What’s Next?”* one third of worship offerings will go toward New & Renewing Congregations in our synod, one third will be designated as seed money for Local Congregations starting new neighborhood ministries and mission work, and one third will go to New & Renewing Congregations in churchwide.

The Third Noisy Change Offering

Our Delaware-Maryland Synod Hunger Task Force will host **“The Third Noisy Change Offering”** during Assembly this year. Our Hunger Task Force invites all Delaware-Maryland Synod congregations to pick the Sunday that is best for the congregation prior to the Assembly to host a **Noisy Change Sunday**.

All the proceeds from this offering will go to national and global ministries of the ELCA World Hunger Program. This includes Domestic Hunger Projects in our synod. All gifts collected are part of your congregation’s contribution to the *ELCA Campaign*, and our synod’s *Forward in Faith Campaign*. **Our Synod Hunger Task Force asks that you count the coins locally and bring no more than \$20.00 in coins to the Assembly.** A letter is appended to this mailing about the offering, please share it with those who care for Stewardship and Social Ministry in your congregation. *“Come and inherit the Kingdom of God, for I was hungry and you gave me food.”* (Matthew 25:34-35)

Hotel information

Reservations at the Delta Hotels Baltimore Hunt Valley must be made **by April 30, 2018** in order to receive our group rate.

Reservations received after April 30, 2018 will be provided on a space-available basis at prevailing rates. Indicate any special accommodations when you call.

Hotel Contact Info	Rates – 5/31/18 - 6/2/18	
Delta Hotels Baltimore Hunt Valley 245 Shawan Road, Hunt Valley, MD 21031	Standard 1 King Bed	\$129.00/night
	Standard 2 Queen Beds	\$129.00/night
Reservations for the Event will be made by individual attendees directly with Marriott reservations at 1-888-236-2427 or (410) 785-7000.		
Each room has complimentary Wi-Fi access, in-room Starbucks coffee, free bottled water, 42” HDTV, ergonomic desk chair, floor-to-ceiling windows, original artwork, and luxurious bedding.		