

DATE: December 2014

TO: Ordained Ministers, Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses, Diaconal Ministers, Congregations and Visitors

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

SUBJECT: **2015 Delaware-Maryland Synod Assembly**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus:

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

This will serve as your official notification of the 28th annual Assembly of the Delaware-Maryland Synod which will be held **Thursday, May 28, through Saturday, May 30, 2015, at the Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, Md.** The assembly begins on May 28 at 11 a.m. and closes on May 30 at 12:30 p.m. The Synod Council has approved a return to a three-day format because we are having an unusually large number of elections and because we have heard from many of you who missed the workshops and multiple worship opportunities a longer assembly affords.

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

Assembly theme and special guests

In 2012, we began a multi-year emphasis on our synod theme: “Walking Together in Christ: Evangelism. Leadership. Mission.” This year, we are completing this series by focusing on how what we do as church is directed outward and by celebrating the myriad ways in which we serve a hurting world through global mission, campus ministry, social services, advocacy, education, and a host of ministry partners. Our theme is *“Walking Together in Christ: For the Sake of the World.”*

To help us in this emphasis, we are pleased to announce a number of special speakers, presenters and guests:

- Our keynote speaker is The Rev. Dr. John Nunes, the Emil and Elfriede Jochum University Chair for Christian Values and Public Life at Valparaiso University in Indiana and former president of Lutheran World Relief (LWR).

- The “ELCA Glocal Mission Team” will be with us, offering workshops, presenting a Mission Festival and providing music with an international flavor for our worship services. The team reminds us of the link between “local” and “global” mission.
- A joint delegation from two of our global companion churches in Finland and Estonia is expected to attend the assembly. This will include the bishop of the Tampere Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Bishop Matti Repo, and the newly elected Archbishop of the Estonian Lutheran Church, Urmas Viilma
- We hope to hear from our global partners in the Mara Diocese of the Lutheran Church in Tanzania and from Bishop Michael Adam via video.
- Our bible study leader will be The Hon. Yolanda Tanner who is completing her service as our synod’s vice president after two terms.

New this year: A mission festival and a reception

On Friday evening, May 29, 2015, a Mission Festival will be held from 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. to celebrate our many ministry partners, such as Mar-Lu-Ridge Camp, Gettysburg Seminary, campus ministries, human services organizations and many others. The festival will be followed by a reception courtesy of National Lutheran Homes and Communities, Rockville, in celebration of their 125th anniversary.

A word about 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 enclosed information sheet (on lime green cardstock) indicates the number of voting members to which your congregation is entitled.**

All ordained ministers on the roster of this synod, all certified Associates in Ministry (AIM), all Deaconesses, all Diaconal Ministers (DM), all retired leaders 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 active 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, 2015, explaining the circumstances and asking to be excused.**

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 28, 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.

A special housing block for youth and young adults is available at the Comfort Inn Gold Coast at assembly rates. Additionally, materials for high school youth to apply for service learning hours from their school are available as a model for your own application.

Please refer to the information sheet enclosed in the Synod Assembly Packet mailed to your congregation for more details. If you have any further questions contact Pastor Ed Kay at ekay@demdsynod.org or 410-230-2863.

All materials are on the website New this year: 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 for your review prior to the assembly. There will not be a second general mailing sent to voting members. **In our efforts to become increasingly green, 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 wish to receive a paper copy of materials at registration, please indicate so when you register.**

Registration is open from January 20 – April 15, 2015

Registration for the 2015 Synod Assembly opens on January 20 and closes on April 15, 2015. **The primary mode for registration will be ONLINE through the synod website.** Please note that your e-mail 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 **January 20, 2015:** www.demdsynod.org
- Click on the 2015 Synod Assembly registration link under the Synod Assembly tab.
- On-line payments are to be made by credit card. This is a secure site for registration.
- If you prefer to pay by check, **please print out a copy of your on-line registration and send with the check to:**
 - Ms. Geneva Wallace, Assembly Registrar
Delaware-Maryland Synod, ELCA
575 South Charles Street, Suite 202
Baltimore, MD 21201-2482
- Multiple registrations may be completed by one person. No password is needed.

If you are unable to register online, a mail-in registration form is included with this letter. You may register by returning the form **before April 15, 2015** to:

Ms. Geneva Wallace, Assembly Registrar
Delaware-Maryland Synod, ELCA
575 South Charles Street, Suite 202
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2482

If you are a volunteer and/or your registration is paid by the synod, please contact Cindy VanVliet, after January 20, 2015, for a code that links to your on-line registration: SARegistrar@demdsynod.org or 410-230-2860.

Help wanted... seeking Assembly volunteers!

Volunteers are needed to serve on committees, assist with worship services at the Assembly, and help with childcare in the Assembly Daycare Room. If you are interested in serving, please contact **Cindy VanVliet, Synod Assembly Coordinator, 410-230-2861** or cvanvliet@demdsynod.org

Registration fees

The 2000 Synod Assembly approved a resolution to make the Synod Assembly self-sustaining. While we were able to lower registration fees dramatically in the last few years, mostly because we offered shorter two-day assemblies, fees are rising this year due to increased costs for a three-day format. Many of our fixed costs for convention center rental, technology and wi-fi have also increased over the past years. In addition, we will spend extra money in order to provide a worship space separate from the convention hall; this space, too, has to be outfitted with the proper sound and video equipment at an additional cost.

All this explains why the registration fees set by the Synod Council at its meeting on November 15, 2014, are higher than before. They are:

Ordained Ministers	\$185.00	Retired Ordained Ministers	\$ 75.00
Lay Voting Members	\$185.00	Retired Associates in Ministry	\$ 75.00
Youth/Young Adult Voting Members	\$185.00	Retired Deaconesses	\$ 75.00
Associates in Ministry	\$185.00	Retired Diaconal Ministers	\$ 75.00
Deaconesses	\$185.00	Visitors	\$ 75.00
Diaconal Ministers	\$185.00	One Day Visitors' Pass	\$ 50.00

Optional meals at the Convention Center

Lunch on Thursday, May 28 (for \$20) and Friday, May 29 (for \$20) will be available for purchase. Dinner will be on your own on Thursday, May 28 and Friday, May 29. Breakfast is on your own. **Meals must be ordered and paid for during registration. This will be the only opportunity to purchase them.**

Childcare at the Assembly

Childcare will be available for children **ages 2-8 years** during the **business sessions only**. **Childcare will be free of charge**. Please sign-up for childcare through your registration **by the deadline which is April 15, 2015**.

Worship at the Assembly

There will be three main worship services during the 2015 Synod Assembly. The Synod Worship Action Team under the leadership of Pastor Tim Jahn is working hard to provide worship opportunities that are faithful to our tradition and that model different styles of music.

There will be three main worship services of Word and Sacrament:

- Thursday, May 28, 2015, 11 a.m. Opening Service (ELW Setting 4)
- Friday, May 29, 2015, 11 a.m. Assembly Worship (international music)
- Saturday, May 30, 2015, 11 a.m. Closing Worship (with ordinations/consecrations/commissionings, if any, and installation of synod officers, council members and conference deans and secretaries)

In addition to the three main worship services, morning prayer will be offered on Friday and Saturday, May 29 and 30, from 8:30 – 8:50 a.m. in the Convention Center Amphitheater.

Hotel information

We are offering several new hotel options this year.

Reservations at one of the Assembly hotels must be made **by April 27, 2015** in order to receive the group rate. **Reservations received after April 27, 2015 will be provided on a space available basis at prevailing rates.**

- Make your reservations early to get the hotel of your choice.
- Indicate any special accommodations needed when you call.

Hotel Contact Info	Room Rate – 5/27/15 & 5/28/15	Rates – 5/29/15 & 5/30/15
Dunes Manor Hotel 2800 Baltimore Avenue Ocean City, MD 21842 (410) 289-1100	<u>Wednesday, 5/27/15:</u> Standard Room \$61.00/night <i>(Single Occupancy rates)</i>	<u>Friday, 5/29/15:</u> Standard Room \$98.00/night <i>(Single Occupancy rates)</i>
	Standard Room \$108.00/night <i>(Double Occupancy rates)</i>	Standard Room \$181.00/night <i>(Double Occupancy rates)</i>
	<i>Room rate includes one hot Breakfast (including drinks) per person, per night.</i>	<i>Room rate includes one hot Breakfast (including drinks) per person, per night</i>
	<u>Thursday, 5/28/15:</u> Standard Room \$98.00/night <i>(Single Occupancy rates)</i>	<u>5/30/15:</u> Standard Room \$159.00/night <i>(Single or Double Occupancy rates)</i>
	Standard Room \$181.00/night <i>(Double Occupancy rates)</i>	<i>Room rate DOES NOT include Breakfast on Saturday.</i>
	<i>Room rate includes one hot Breakfast (including drinks) per person, per night.</i>	

<p>Dunes Manor Hotel has all oceanfront rooms, each with a private balcony, complimentary wi-fi, new in-room safes and upgraded H2O bath amenities. Complimentary coffee every morning from 6:00 – 10:00 a.m. in the lobby. Each room offers a refrigerator, Starbucks coffee and coffee maker, microwave, hair dryer and iron. Starbucks Espresso and frozen drinks offered in the lounge. There's a heated indoor /outdoor pool, Jacuzzi and sundeck, exercise room and rocking chairs on the verandah for relaxing and watching the ocean.</p>		
Hotel Contact Info	Room Rate – 5/27/15 & 5/28/15	Rates – 5/29/15 & 5/30/15
<p>Comfort Inn Gold Coast 11201 Coastal Highway Ocean City, MD 21842 (410) 524-3010</p>	<p>Standard Room (choice of 2 double beds or 1 king with pull-out sofa) \$69.00/night</p> <p><i>Room rate DOES NOT include Breakfast</i></p>	<p>Standard Room (choice of 2 double beds or 1 king with pull-out sofa) \$79.00/night</p> <p><i>Room rate DOES NOT include Breakfast</i></p>
<p>The Comfort Inn Gold Coast is located at 112th Street & Coastal Hwy (72 blocks from Convention Center) on the bayside. Each room has microwave, refrigerator, coffee maker, ironing board, hair dryer, free HBO & High Speed Wireless Internet Access. Although there are no complimentary breakfast vouchers with these rooms, there is a 24 hour Denny's Restaurant on-site. The hotel is at the Gold Coast Mall where Three Brothers Italian Restaurant is located as well.</p>		
Hotel Contact Info	Room Rate – 5/27/15 & 5/28/15	Rates – 5/29/15 & 5/30/15
<p>Hampton Inn & Suites 4301 Coastal Highway Ocean City, MD 21842 (410) 524-6263</p>	<p>Standard Room \$119.00/night <i>(Single and Double Occupancy rates)</i></p> <p><i>Room rate includes one hot Breakfast (including drinks) per person, per night</i></p>	<p>Standard Room \$199.00/night <i>(Single and Double Occupancy rates)</i></p> <p><i>Room rate includes one hot Breakfast (including drinks) per person, per night</i></p>
<p>Each room has free Wi-Fi, a refrigerator, microwave and flat-screen TV. Select a studio suite for a more spacious work area and extra space to spread out on a sleeper sofa. There is a private balcony with each room, a fitness center and outdoor & indoor pool. Free hot breakfast in the dining area. If you're in a hurry, grab a free Hampton On the Run® Breakfast Bag on your way out the door Monday through Friday. Complimentary coffee, tea and hot chocolate available 24 hours a day in lobby. Light snacks and sandwiches for purchase at the seasonal tiki bar and restaurant.</p>		
Hotel Contact Info	Room Rate – 5/27/15 & 5/28/15	Rates – 5/29/15 & 5/30/15
<p>The Holiday Inn 6600 Coastal Highway Ocean City, MD 21842 (410) 524-1600</p>	<p>Standard Room \$84.00/night <i>(Single and Double Occupancy rates)</i></p> <p><i>Room rate DOES NOT INCLUDE Breakfast .</i></p>	<p>Standard Room \$189.00/night <i>(Single and Double Occupancy rates)</i></p> <p><i>Room rate DOES NOT INCLUDE Breakfast .</i></p>
<p>Holiday Inn features a new lobby, carpeting, linen packages and bath products from Bath and Body Works. The hotel offers many conveniences such as a business center, free high speed internet in all rooms, indoor and outdoor pools, 2 hot tubs, fitness room, tanning bed, game room and authentic Italian cuisine at Touch of Italy. Each standard room feature a sitting area with a lounge chair and pullout sofa bed, full efficiency kitchen, cable television, hair dryer, coffee maker, iron and ironing board.</p>		
Hotel Contact Info	Room Rate – 5/27/15 & 5/28/15	Rates – 5/29/15 & 5/30/15
<p>The Flagship Hotel 26th Street & Oceanside Ocean City, MD 21842 (410) 289-3384</p>	<p>Standard Room \$49.00-\$69.00/night <i>(Single and Double Occupancy rates)</i></p> <p><i>Room rate DOES NOT INCLUDE Breakfast .</i></p>	<p>Standard Room \$139.00/night <i>(Single and Double Occupancy rates)</i></p> <p><i>Room rate DOES NOT INCLUDE Breakfast .</i></p>
<p>The Flagship Hotel is a more moderate, family-style hotel. The indoor pool was newly remodeled in 2013, with a kiddie pool and hot tub too. The inner courtyard features a children's playground, shuffle board and picnic areas, surrounded by juniper and palm trees & quiet places to sit and enjoy an ocean breeze. There is an oceanfront pool and sun deck with a pool side bar and lunch stand. The hotel features: free wireless internet throughout, complimentary morning paper, fruit, coffee, tea & hot chocolate, an exercise room, tanning bed, complimentary guest laundry facilities, free guest parking (1 car per room), and is 100% non-smoking with no pets allowed. The hotel is attached to Jonah and the Whale all-you-can-eat seafood restaurant.</p>		

