**Frequently Asked Questions**

**For First Time Synod Assembly Voting Members**

**What is the purpose of the Synod Assembly?**

This is the Annual Meeting of the Upstate NY Synod, to allow lay members and clergy the opportunity to make decisions that impact our individual congregations.

**Who is present at the Assembly?**

Anyone is welcome to attend the Assembly. However, mostly, it is the Pastors and lay voting members from the 167 Churches in this Synod who are attending the Assembly. There are also a number of people who come as guests and visitors, often the spouses of voting members or other people who have an interest in seeing what is happening at the assembly. Guests can take part in all Assembly activities, including sitting in the plenary sessions, except for voting.

**What do I do when I first arrive?**

**Check in** at the hotel, **get settled** in your room, and go to the Convention Center to **register**. There is a connecting skyway between the Hyatt and Convention Center, **up one floor** via the parking garage escalator or elevator. After getting to the Convention Center, you take the Convention Center’s escalator **down one flight**. You reach the **Registration Table by walking through the Empire Lounge that is above the** two story lobby space. **Arrows are posted to direct you to these areas.** There, you will **receive a packet of information** with an **agenda** for the assembly, **an ID** to wear indicating your status (i.e. whether you are a voting member, visitor, etc). and a voting device for voting members.

**Can Synod Assembly materials be found on-line?**

Yes. Assembly materials can be found on-line at [https://upstatenysynod.org/resources/#for-congregations-intro](https://nam05.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fr20.rs6.net%2Ftn.jsp%3Ff%3D001awCVV8g6kXOk4eBDZrpbsNmQiyzLqe_1JOOw6M31KqWqW4AiQm7yovwr-BX3SvdotMJ_Zkd4vUkLGi4BddbsJKOmAhCTeEdrROa-ycnDL3fwd3PqrcAEKXo6DrwChRAZJa9agEyX2LlwVtuEYe06I0C5EKrApRSADNd5Dy6odeATBoEJeXE_eJ1i0JaOX3QsdReZCqgRtfsXyX1B9KKAVm6rqcziMrNKaP0DElgQaeaWmvNrigdVWJl_k7ZPaCfregDjmuAQrJTmVZ2dVOtTMoGj0RGl-D8wIxcO2CQHDuQJ4abNZ81iXq-8u_g-sZ_RNlKViZBcCv8ay3Jp2XbXwj6fZloSjd4B2i83CA0WjwecJaJTzo1k_AtfKyX6Am82BO-XW7uMSx1N0bFvmVhd3nLXkrKqQicyvOJqRzRGv0CRtjEksvD-DP1Id9qW5HcI%26c%3DvBr1kP8Vu6JuFbnF449F0s6VUKJknkWNdvEcTDz4aBg8G5lKOl5GMQ%3D%3D%26ch%3DJO3ved-_3uXIBTpMRbyV0Krw55sX6sW7IJ29YihL79OhEVBSs70p7Q%3D%3D&data=02%7C01%7C%7C3be925396a414f2335d708d5c1758d99%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C636627632982150896&sdata=rsmrR66AVmjJsh4PFltV4Pn3WYRel8ctHpiF8QjCMf4%3D&reserved=0) including instructions on how to download the Guidebook App for iOS and Android.

**Where do we meet and where are meals served?**

We will meet for Plenary Sessions in the **Empire North Meeting Space i**n the Convention Center. This space is on the 2nd Floor near the registration table. Meals will be served in the **Lilac Ballroom which is on the 1st Floor of the Convention Center.** There are ramps for accessibility and short stairways to this more elegant, cozy area, closer to the Mission Expo Galleria area, workshops, and Bookstore.

**On the agenda, I see Plenary Sessions. What is a Plenary Session?**

A plenary session is a scheduled time when the entire assembly of voting members will meet, business is conducted, and each session starts and finishes with a brief period of music, prayer, and meditation.

**What am I expected to do as a Synod Delegate?**

You are expected to **attend all plenary sessions** in the main meeting room during which all of the business of the conference is conducted which includes speakers, reports, and voting. On the second day of the Assembly in the afternoon, there will also be several **workshops** available, to provide an enriching experience for you in an area of interest. See the list of workshops from which you can choose in the Workshops and Mission Expo Booklet and in the Guidebook. These workshops are located on the 1st floor under the main meeting space. To get to these rooms, on the 1st floor of the main (two story) lobby, take the corridor to the left (when you are facing the escalator going up). In the main lobby space, (on the 1st floor), you will also find **Mission Expo** which contains tables and displays representing organizations and activities that may be of interest to you. There is time after the workshops to view this area.

**How do I vote?**

This year we are voting through an electronic system. You will be issued an electronic device at registration which you’ll need to return at the end of the assembly. If you need assistance in learning how to use the device, refer to the document tutorial on Guidebook. There will be designated assistants to help you as well on the Plenary Floor. There will be a backup system of red, green and white cards to use if technical difficulties occur (A green card indicates a Yes vote, a red Card indicates a No vote, and a white card indicates an Abstention).

**How do I know what items will come up for a vote?**

The Pre Assembly documents on the Synod Website (website URL above) indicate many of the items but others may be introduced at the Plenary for discussion and decision by vote. That is why it is very important to pay close attention as the business sessions progress.

**Is there a Bookstore?**

Yes. The bookstore is in a room under the main meeting space. If you come down the escalator outside the main meeting room from the 2nd floor to the 1st floor, the bookstore is to your right.

**Will there be time available for fellowship?**

Enjoy meeting people anytime when meetings are not in session but there are also two specific times for fellowship offered. People will be gathering for fellowship immediately following the close of the assembly activities each evening. One event is sponsored by the Women of the ELCA, and another by the Mission Investment Fund along with the United Lutheran Seminary. The Fellowship locations are indicated on the agenda and will also be announced. There is a cash bar at both of these events.

**Will there be a Worship Service?**

Yes, on the second evening is devoted to an inspiring Worship Service with Communion.

**Is there a quiet place to go for prayer?**

Yes, a Prayer Room is available in a room off the main Convention Center Lobby on the 1st floor. Follow the signs.

We welcome **feedback on the evaluation form** at the end of this year’s Synod Assembly regarding your experiences here, any suggestions for improvement, and any participation you would like to make available at future Assemblies. Please feel free to **call us if you have any problems** while here:

Joanne Lembach 585-698-4188

Thank you for coming,

The Synod Assembly Planning Team