



Northeastern Minnesota Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Dear Pastors, Deacons, Synod Authorized Ministers, Congregational leaders and Voting Members to the 2020 Synod Assembly,

COVID-19 is impacting all aspects of life – home, work, school, business and congregations. Each day brings new information, warnings, challenges and opportunities. We applaud the workers in the health care field and other essential vocations. We applaud the leaders of the congregations in our synod to carry out worship and ministries in new and creative ways! We are called to the Body of Christ – the Church – in new and powerful ways. Let us be safe; let us be in prayer; let us be people of love for all!

We write you concerning the 2020 Synod Assembly which was scheduled for May 1-3 at the Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center. We will not be able to meet in assembly at that time.

The Synod Assembly Planning Team and the Synod Council have taken steps to postpone this assembly. The ELCA Office of Bishop is recommending all synods consider a fall synod assembly or if possible, wait until 2021. There are some constitutional, Robert's Rules and legal requirements that will need to be followed.

Here are some points to remember, discuss and pray about as we move forward as a synod.

- The plan is to have the assembly later in the summer or fall, it will be an abbreviated synod assembly to elect/call a synod bishop, other elections, approve a synod budget and guidelines and adopt some changes to the synod constitution and bylaws.
- The abbreviated synod assembly will be held at one of our synod congregations.
- If you are already registered for this year's assembly, we will keep your registration; if you haven't registered, please wait for further word. We will keep you informed about the date/time/place of a postponed assembly.

More information will follow regarding the synod assembly. Continue to be people of love and hope. Stay connected with your congregation however that is happening with media and social distancing. Be safe. Be in prayer. Connect with people you know that may be alone, afraid, in need of any assistance; call, text, email – stay in touch.

In Christ our Lord,

+Bishop Thomas Aitken and the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Council