



January 5, 2019

A WORD ABOUT ASSEMBLY REGISTRATION FEES

In many places throughout our synod, church and family budgets are strained. The **Assembly Planning Committee (APC)** and **Synod Council** are aware of these financial realities. We take seriously the responsibility of planning Synod Assemblies that are within an appropriate financial level. The APC carefully gathers multiple quotes from vendors and weighs the options available for contracted services. We also take seriously the evaluations and feedback we receive from voting members, visitors and guests at previous assemblies, striving to make continual improvements.

APC works closely with the hotel site to offer the lowest possible rate for ballroom and breakout rooms. *One way we keep costs low is by ensuring that there will be a minimum amount of food and beverage purchased, and overnight reservations.* Your registration fees pay for the hotel staff who make our stay comfortable by cleaning between sessions, providing water service, and preparing each meeting room. Your fees pay for kitchen and wait staff during meals, front desk and housekeeping.

We contract with an audio-visual team that provides lighting, computers, screens, projectors and sound so that participants can see and hear during plenary sessions with more ease. We arrange for Wi-Fi in the ballroom to effectuate a paperless Assembly. *Another way we keep costs low is by producing and translating all the AV content and digital materials in our offices.*

We contract with a parliamentarian to ensure our business is conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order and a keynote speaker to enrich our time. We make our time more efficient by renting electronic voting devices. *This also contributes to financial savings.*

The Worship Committee uses creative liturgical art to transform the hotel ballroom into a sacred space. Artists are secured, instruments are properly tuned, and licenses obtained. Each of these have costs associated.

Finally, there are several administration costs associated with the Assembly, including registration software and financial transaction fees.

All of this work could not be done without the volunteers who serve on committees and help onsite at assembly. In 2018, over 75 volunteers were involved in planning, staging and assisting onsite. Partner organizations contributed to the sense of community by providing coffee and refreshments during breaks.

We are grateful for the support in making our assembly encompass more than an annual business meeting. We value our ability to gather and our time together at Synod Assembly.

We want to ensure congregations and rostered ministers do not feel restricted by financial concerns. If you or your congregation are in need of financial assistance, please contact **María Rodas** at mrodas@mnys.org, about available funding.