



A word about assembly registration fees

In many places throughout our synod, church and family budgets are strained. The Assembly Planning Committee (APC), Synod Council, and synod staff 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.

- The 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 makes our stay comfortable by cleaning between sessions, providing water service, and preparing each meeting room. Your fees also 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 hope to make our time more efficient by renting electronic voting devices for use and striving to be paperless as much as possible.
- 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.
- The Worship Committee, with their unique task of transforming a hotel ballroom into a sacred space, by using fabric to help with this transformation, invite musicians from our synod, ensure instruments used are tuned and obtain licenses. Each of these have costs associated. The Worship Committee works creatively and borrows items from congregations when possible.
- Finally, there are costs associated with the printing and mailing of assembly documents, registration software and credit card fees.

All of this work could not be done without the volunteers who serve on committees and help on-site at assembly. In 2013, over 75 volunteers were involved in planning, staging and assisting onsite with assembly. Partner organizations contributed to the sense of community by providing coffee and refreshments during breaks.

We are grateful for the support in making 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 leaders do not feel held back by financial concerns. If you or your congregation are in need of financial assistance, we urge you to be in conversation with any synod staff member about available funding.