

# Frequently Asked Questions about the 2024 NE MN Synod WELCA Convention/Summer Gathering

## **When/Where is the Convention/Summer Gathering?**

Monday, June 10 & Tuesday, June 11 at Zion Lutheran Church, 2901 S Highway 169 in Grand Rapids, MN

## **Why should I attend?**

Here are some of the reasons why women enjoy attending our Summer Convention/Gathering: “An educational and uplifting experience; workshop topics are timely and presented by well-informed speakers; sisterhood and shared faith and worship; learn about the things that are going on in the ELCA, Women of the ELCA, our Synod and the world; relationship building; fun, refreshment and renewal of the spirit; networking and fellowship time with other women throughout the Synod.”

## **How do I register for Convention?**

Paper Registration forms can be found 1) on the NE MN Synod Women's website at <https://nemnsynod.org/ne-mn-synod-womens-organization-welca/> 2) in the March Registration mailing, or 3) in the February & May issues of the Northeastern Lights.

## **What is included in my Convention Registration Fee?**

Your registration fee pays for the Workshop presenters, coordination expenses, mailings, printing the Convention Booklet, lodging and meals for board members and other Gathering staff, and other activities and materials (handouts, nametags) associated with hosting the Convention/Summer Gathering.

## **How much is the Registration Fee?**

Prices listed below are for Early Bird registrations postmarked prior to May 17<sup>th</sup>. Starting May 18<sup>th</sup>, a late fee of \$10 is added to the early bird rate. Prices do not include lodging or meals.

- One Day Attendee - \$40 for either Monday or Tuesday
- Two Day Attendee - \$60 for both Monday and Tuesday
- Two Day Attendee - First-Time - \$30 for both Monday and Tuesday

## **First-Time Attendee Discount?**

YES! The Synod Board has also decided to offer a **50% discount on registration to first-time attendees of any age who register to attend both days of the Convention.** This discount also applies to women who have not attended a Summer Convention/Gathering since 2015. Can't remember when you attended last? We were at UMD until 2015, and at Sugar Lake Lodge from 2016-2022. Our previous scholarship program, which was limited to younger women, has been retired.

## **What are the differences between the activities on Monday and Tuesday?**

Monday's activities include welcome and worship, dedication of the convention quilt, in-kind offerings and kits, a report from our Church-wide Representative, plenary sessions, Discovery time workshops, and time to visit the Marketplace for buy it now and silent auction items, the quilt truck, prayer room and exhibits. There is also time to catch up with new and old friends from around the Synod and evening entertainment.

Tuesday's activities include Bible study, an update from the Synod Office staff, Discovery Time workshops, Conference meetings and time to visit the Marketplace, quilt truck, prayer room and exhibits. We'll close with plenary reviews, financial reports on offerings and in-kind gifts, attendance traveling trophies, installation of new Board Members and a closing litany.

## **I'm coming both days and live too far away to Commute. What are my lodging options?**

We have reserved blocks of rooms at several Grand Rapids MN hotels. Information will be included in the March mailing that goes out to each congregation and to 2023 participants. This information is also available here:

- <https://nemnsynod.org/ne-mn-synod-womens-organization-welca/>
- <https://visitgrandrapids.com/travel-packages-and-groups/>

### **Are there other lodging options?**

Absolutely! The Grand Rapids area has lots of options including campgrounds, RV parks, resorts, bed & breakfasts, hotels, motels, vacation rentals and more. Visit <https://visitgrandrapids.com/places-to-stay/> for more information.

### **What about food?**

Lunch on Monday and Tuesday and dinner on Monday are available ala carte for \$15 and \$20 each, respectively.

**Deadline to pre-order is May 22nd.** Menu options are listed on the registration form. Gluten-free and vegetarian options are available. We have hired only one caterer this year, Pinched Catering, who provided the pasta dinner at last year's convention. Details about the menu are on the registration form. You are also welcome to bring your own lunch and/or dinner or visit one of the area restaurants. Breakfast may be available as part of your hotel fee. Some snacks will be available, but you may want to bring your own as well.

### **Will there be coffee available during the Convention?**

Regular and decaf coffee, tea and water will be available during the entire Convention. To help reduce waste, please plan to bring a travel coffee mug or water bottle with you to the Convention.

### **I'm a Voting Member. Can you tell me more about the Convention Committees?**

Here are brief descriptions of each committee: 1) The **Credentials** committee identifies the number of registered voting members present at the beginning of each plenary session and reports it to the Registrar. 2) The **Elections** committee is responsible for counting the ballots. 3) The **Minutes** committee is in charge of equipment used to record the Convention business sessions and makes sure that minutes are kept. They review the day's minutes and bring recommendations for correction and approval. 4) The **Resolutions** committee works with the parliamentarian to properly write resolutions brought to the Convention. They review and verify all Resolutions before they are brought to the floor of the Convention. 5) The **Offerings** committee will collect the Offering baskets and count the Offerings after they are received. The committee will prepare the bank deposits as directed by the Synod Treasurer. If interested in being on one of the committees, please send an email to [anne.laechel@gmail.com](mailto:anne.laechel@gmail.com) or call/text 218-851-2214.

### **What other ways can I volunteer?**

**Deacon/Communion Assistant:** Assist the Chaplain in setting up and serving communion during worship services;

**Lector/Scripture Reader:** Assist the Chaplain in reading scripture or other items as requested during worship services;

**Prayer Room:** Assist the Chaplain in setting up the prayer room, restocking/organizing candles, prayer books, Kleenex and drinking water as needed;

**Quilt Truck:** Receive donations and ensure that every box is properly sealed, labeled and stowed in the truck. Provide information regarding Lutheran World Relief and Global Health Missions. Note: all work is outdoors and required heavy lifting;

**Registration Assistant:** Assist the Registrar with checking in participants as they arrive, answering questions and providing directions to various areas;

**Stage Duties:** Assist in setting up the stage area with tables, decorations, and Conference banners;

**Triennial Marketplace:** Help set up the room with the items for sale, as well as an area to receive payment, man the payment table and provide information as requested regarding items for sale and the Triennial Gathering;

**Ushers:** During worship services, pass out bulletins, song books and collect offering; **Workshop Assistant:** Assist the SWO Board in introducing the workshop presenters at the beginning of their talk, take attendance, fill out the provided evaluation form, thank the presenter at the end of the workshop and assist in keeping time so the presentation doesn't run long. If interested in volunteering, please send an email to [anne.laechel@gmail.com](mailto:anne.laechel@gmail.com) or call/text 218-851-2214.

### **Anything else I should know?**

- This year's theme colors are every shade of Blue.
- The chairs at Zion are not padded, so you may want to bring a cushion. They have a lot more restrooms though!