

SYNOD NEWS

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

Synod Assembly 2020 **June 4, 5, and 6 - Kalahari Resort - Pocono Manor, PA**



**We Are Church
Together**

NEPA Synod Assembly 2020

It'll be here before you know it - Synod Assembly! Our annual gathering of congregations and ministries, members and ministers, all of us who call the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod our home. It's a special time we get together and get to meet, see and hear from leaders and guests from across our synod, and beyond - ELCA Churchwide representatives, as well as other denominations and faith communities. It's also a great opportunity to learn, to share, to work, and to celebrate and challenge ourselves around our theme: **WE ARE CHURCH TOGETHER.**

Last June our shorter, one-day Assembly was meant to help us all save up resources for this coming year's three-day program - necessary to allow time for the election of a new Bishop. We're returning to the Kalahari Resort, in their

newest, state-of-the-art conference facilities, set to open in early 2020. In many ways it will be the ideal location for conducting God's business, praising the Lord in worship, and taking a little time for a little fun as well.

Voting members, visitors, and their families can stay at a reduced rate - saving the most when the spacious rooms are shared by four people. Anyone staying overnight also gets free admission to the Water Park, and extending your stay can be a great way to tag on some extra fun time. More details about rates and accommodations will be published soon.

For now - we invite congregations and their leaders to spread the word and starting thinking about whom to invite and encourage to attend. All are welcome! For now - save those dates! And watch the Synod News and our synod website for more information as it becomes available, as we count down to June 2020 and declare:

WE ARE CHURCH TOGETHER!

ABOUT THE ASSEMBLY LOGO:

- * The colors are tied to the four colors of the ELCA logo.
- * The circle suggests movement: God is moving in and with us to make us new, but also brings us "full circle" to the things that are everlasting.
- * The circle is also incomplete: the church is a work-in-progress; and God's work in Christ is never done until the day when all can enter in and go out free and well, sharing in God's mercy, grace and peace.
- * The circle and the word "Together" are the color green - symbolizing life and growth, and our care for all creation.
- * The cross marks us as the church of Jesus Christ, the Crucified and Risen One, who died for all and brings life to all.

We Did It!

Always
being made
New.

The Campaign for the ELCA.

Always Being Made New campaign concludes with a total impact of \$250 million.

Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA, has concluded after more than five years with a total impact of \$250 million, including \$195 million in cash gifts and gift commitments, as well as \$55 million for planned gifts to campaign ministries.

"The Campaign began in 2013 with a goal of nearly \$200 million," said the Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, ELCA presiding bishop. "That was a big goal. But with God's help and our members' generous support, we made it. I thank God for what this church has done for the ELCA's ministries – here at home and around the world."

The campaign focused on areas that include growing this church's communities of faith, forming new leaders, welcoming neighbors, overcoming malaria, confronting hunger and poverty, and accompanying our global churches.

For a detailed look at the campaign's impact in its four priority areas, as well as a breakdown of giving, please visit ELCA.org/campaign.

Renew Your Required Background Checks for Employees and Volunteers



At the end of 2014 new laws took effect that require all employees and volunteers working with children to receive background checks. Laws were amended in 2015 that changed the requirement from every three years to every five years and made some of the background checks free for volunteers.

If you completed this process in 2015 it is time to think about renewal of these checks. Our synod website has links and other information you can use to renew these clearances (<http://nepasynod.org/child-safety>).

The laws that came about in 2014 also put into place the new reality that our church volunteers now are mandated reporters if they become aware of or even suspect abuse or neglect toward a child. If your employees and/or volunteers have not been informed or trained in what this requires, now is as good a time as any to make that happen.

Here is a link to a document from the PA Department of Human Services that provides a lot of useful information and answers frequently asked questions: http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/document/C_135249.pdf.

Finally, if your congregation does not already have a policy that outlines how children and youth will be kept safe in your church, you should be working on one. If your insurance carrier has not yet required you to do so, they probably will in the near future. Many insurance websites have resources, or you can browse the internet for "Safe Church Policies."

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View the full color edition online at <http://nepasynod.org>.