



Eastern North Dakota Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

March 18, 2020

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Dear Beloved Ones in Christ,

God's grace, mercy and peace be multiplied unto you through Jesus our Savior.

I'm writing to you to report on a special meeting of the Synod Council of our Eastern North Dakota Synod that was held yesterday afternoon, using the Zoom digital platform.

The primary purpose of the meeting was to discuss a recommendation that had been sent to all 65 synods of the ELCA by our ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and ELCA Secretary Susan Rothmeyer. The recommendation concerned the topic of postponing the upcoming round of synod assemblies which begin next month.

So in the spirit of being faithful and attentive to the guidance of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) that large gatherings of 50 or more persons be avoided for a period of eight weeks, your synod council gave careful consideration to the possibility of postponing our upcoming synod assembly—scheduled for June 6-7 at the Holiday Inn of Fargo. Following discussion of the various implications of postponement, **the synod council did vote unanimously to postpone our 2020 synod assembly and reschedule it for a time in August or later this year.** The synod council also authorized the Synod Executive Committee to determine the dates and location of the rescheduled assembly. This information will be shared with the synod as soon as it becomes available.

In the meantime the synod staff and the Bishop Election Committee will be in conversation about implications of the postponement of synod assembly for the bishop election process which has already begun. Specifically, conference deans will be contacted about what the postponement might mean for the series of conference assemblies (to select each conference's top seven nominees for synod bishop) that are already "in process."

As once again we feel the weight of uncertainty that the pandemic has brought into our lives, we lean into the great promises of our gracious God. In the appointed psalm for this coming Sunday (Psalm 23) we read: "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me." (Psalm 23:4-5)

We continue to pray for all of you, and we covet your prayers for our synod, its elected leaders, and its staff.

In the peace of Christ,

Lawrence R. Wohlrabe
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"Jesus Christ calls us to live in love as we serve, equip and challenge God's people."