

CONVENTION UPDATE - As you already may be aware the Synod convention originally scheduled for June 11-14, 2021, has been rescheduled to June 10-13, 2022, as a result of the pandemic. The total budgeted cost for the rescheduled Synod Convention is still \$20 per communicant member and is being assessed and collected from congregations in two installments. Our hope is that congregations would include in their annual budgets a plan to save and remit a portion of their assessed amount each year between conventions, rather than trying to come up with the all money in the final year. We believe this will make budget planning for the convention more manageable overall.



2022 SYNOD CONVENTION BUDGET

REVENUE

Congregation Assessments	800,000.00
Other Income	25,000.00

TOTAL **\$825,000.00**

EXPENSES

Travel	260,000.00
Food & Meal Allowances (net of recoveries)	220,000.00
Accommodations	195,000.00
Convention Business/Program	120,000.00
Administration	19,500.00
Post Convention (Handbook and Proceedings)	10,500.00

TOTAL **825,000.00**

The first half of that assessment (\$10 per communicant member) was included on an invoice we sent you in October 2019, with a due date of April 30, 2020. A second invoice was sent in October 2020, for the balance of the assessment, with a due date of December 31, 2021. We are very thankful to the congregations who have already submitted their respective assessment payments.

With the number of people now included in our convention, LCC must choose a convention site 2-3 years in advance of the convention date; this requires us to put down a substantial deposit in order to secure pricing. That is another reason why receiving a portion of the convention assessment in advance is so necessary. Effective budgeting on the part of both LCC team members and individual congregations is key to ensuring costs are contained and that the convention is successful in accomplishing the business of our Synod. The purpose of the following FAQ is to ensure that our communication surrounding the 2022 Convention and Assessment is clear and informative.



gather to conduct elections of officers; receive review and respond to reports through resolutions; and conduct other business as necessary. This happens every four years unless an extraordinary circumstance (such as a pandemic) interferes. In this case, the Board of Directors can delay the convention.

The Convention shall afford an opportunity for worship, nurture, inspiration, fellowship, and the communication of vital information. It is the principal legislative assembly, which approves the amendment of the Statutory Bylaws, Synodical Constitution and Synodical Bylaws, considers and takes action on reports and overtures, and handles appropriate appeals. It establishes general synodical positions and policies, provides overall program direction and priorities, and evaluates all such positions, programs, policies, directions, and priorities in order to provide responsible service for and on behalf of its members.

“Why is LCC holding a convention?”

To comply with federal legislation governing non-profit organizations, Lutheran Church–Canada (LCC) must provide the opportunity for members (pastors, deacons, and congregations) to

“What is the purpose of the convention?”

The LCC Handbook to which all members subscribe, and which governs the corporate and ecclesiastical life of the church describes the convention function:

“Why in person?”

In 2020 the Board of Directors determined that the best way to fulfill the convention mandate as described in the Handbook is to gather members of LCC in person providing such a gathering complies with provincially and locally mandated health and safety precautions should the COVID-19 pandemic still be a factor.

“What are the benefits of a Synod Convention?”

LCC is a small church body with congregations stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific coasts. For many in smaller communities, opportunities to gather with others are few. Prior to 2017 the former districts would hold regional conventions to which each congregation would send delegates. Now the convention is national in scope and includes delegates from every congregation rather than representatives from each circuit. The Edmonton convention in 2022 is the first time every LCC congregation will be represented at a Synodical Convention.

Most importantly, a synod-wide convention gathers the national church around Word and Sacrament ministry—receiving together God’s gifts strengthening our faith to continue in His mission in Canada.

It also allows for a national discussion about LCC’s mission and ministry. Delegates may discover their local circumstances may be shared with other congregations and can discuss common issues and challenges.

The convention will also feature practical workshops and inspiring speakers that will encourage attendees as they seek ways to serve their parish and communities.

For Lutheran Church–Canada, the Convention is the highest governing authority other than God’s Word. The direction of God’s mission to Canada through LCC is determined by the decisions made by the convention delegates through elections and resolutions. It is the primary vehicle for every member’s voice to be heard.

“Where will the 2022 Synod Convention be held?”

After assessing a number of potential sites, the Board of Directors decided on Edmonton, Alberta, from June 11-14, 2022.

“How does LCC decide where to hold its conventions?”

LCC has chosen the Edmonton South Conference Centre (Delta and Radisson Hotels) as the site for the 2022 Convention, based on the following criteria:

1. Transportation access (e.g., good national air service, potential for car-pooling).
2. Ability to seat nearly 600 people at tables in a single venue.
3. Available smaller rooms for meetings and breakouts.
4. Size of local volunteer base to assist with the event.
5. Reasonable accommodation rates and flexibility with catering costs.

“How big is the 2022 convention?”

We estimate about 580 persons will be officially involved with the business of the convention including more than 500 voting delegates from across Canada. For comparison, in 2017, the Synod convention included 109 voting delegates.

“What is the convention budget?”

The net cost to congregations for funding the 2022 convention is estimated to be \$800,000. The greatest portion of the cost is for travel, accommodation, and food. Convention planners are conscientious about ensuring every aspect of the event is cost-effective.

“How was the assessment calculated?”

According to LCC’s Synodical Bylaws, the expense for a Synodical Convention is to be borne by member congregations as part of the work we do together as a Synod. We assist each other to accomplish common goals, such as:

1. Missions
2. Seminary Education
3. Conventions

Assessments are based on the number of communicant members congregations last reported in the annual statistical report. LCC staff creates a budget for the convention, and estimates the amount of revenue from other non-congregational sources that can help offset the expense. The balance of the expense is divided by the number of communicant members to calculate a per-communicant member assessment.

“How does LCC determine the number of communicant members on the invoice?”

Every year LCC asks member congregations to submit a statistical report which includes the number of communicant members. The figure on the invoice is based on the most recent report. Unfortunately, about one-third of congregations fail to submit an annual report so some membership numbers may not be current.

“Are there any alternative methods the Synod is considering for financing future conventions?”

The current assessment method is part of LCC’s Synodical Bylaws agreed to by an overwhelming majority of member congregations. It is hoped that congregations are following-up regularly with members who are not communing as part of their ongoing mission and ministry. The annual statistical report provides an opportunity to provide updated information. Any change in the way conventions are funded would require a change to section 2.35 of the Synodical Bylaws.

expenses but rather donating the amount to LCC and thereby receiving a charitable gift credit receipt.

“What about the savings based on the new Synod structure?”

We are confident that there will be long term savings by reducing the number of conventions (from four down to one) and reducing the frequency (from every three years to every four years). In addition, the amount of staff time involved in planning and executing one event as opposed to four events is greatly reduced.

“Will there be any consideration of rebating congregations if the actual cost of the Synod Convention is significantly less than the estimated budget?”

In prior years, in the rare case a convention was under the estimated budget, the Board of Directors has reserved the funds to help defray the costs for un-budgeted convention actions such as the creation of task forces or ad hoc committees. If there are still funds remaining, they are placed against the expenses of the next convention thereby possibly reducing the required assessment.

“Are assessments from congregations the sole funding source for conventions?”

While most funding comes from congregations who are the immediate beneficiaries of convention activities, increasingly planners are seeking sponsors whose gifts offset some of the costs. Additional revenue also comes from exhibitors and delegates who choose not to share a room and personally pay for half the cost of the room. Delegates also have the option of not claiming personal travel

“Will the annual assessment go down once congregations have four years to pay?”

The goal is to collect the Synod convention assessments over a four-year period, as opposed to a single amount in the convention year, to assist congregations with their budget planning and cash-flow. After the 2022 convention, delegates will have the opportunity to provide an evaluation and LCC staff will analyze the costs to identify areas for future cost efficiencies.

“Our District just held a convention in 2018, so why is there a Synod (National) Convention taking place only four years later, in 2022?”

The new structure established a four-year cycle beginning in 2017 for a single national convention. The new structure also resulted in Synod assuming domestic mission and ecclesiastical service mandates that were formerly done by the Districts. The Districts still needed to hold their own conventions in 2018—year two of the national cycle—to initiate the process of winding down or amending their corporate activity to facilitate the new structure.

QUESTIONS?

Please direct any further questions to Christine Bradley, Accounting Manager:

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