**2023 NJ Synod Assembly Recap**

On Saturday, May 13, 2023, close to 400 people from across the synod gathered at Grounds for Sculpture in Hamilton for a day of worship, learning, fellowship, and inspiration. The agenda was crafted around the 4 parts of our Lutheran worship: gather, word, meal, and sending. Thanks to the voting members and visitors for coming with a spirit of joy in being together so we were able to live our theme and *Lead with Love.*

**Elections:** The following people were elected to serve in leadership positions in the synod:

Vice-president - Arundel Clarke

Secretary – The Rev. Blake Scalet

Synod Council – The Rev. Jose Escalara (Delaware Mission District), The Rev. Pamela Werner (Shore Mission District), The Rev. Miles Hopgood (Middle Mission District), Patricia Espejo (Gateway Mission District), The Rev. Lisa Holliday (Northern Mission District), Robert Bowden (Western Mission District), Grant Lefchak (Youth).

**Resolution:** The assembly adopted one resolution designating the synod as a Stigma-Free Zone in regard to mental illness and encouraging congregations to do the same. Resources from NAMI on what this means can be found at [nami.org/Get-Involved/Pledge-to-Be-StigmaFree](https://nami.org/Get-Involved/Pledge-to-Be-StigmaFree) the full resolution can be found on the [assembly page](https://www.njsynod.org/assembly).

**2024 Spending Plan:** The assembly unanimously adopted the 2024 spending plan which you can find [here.](https://www.njsynod.org/bulletin-of-reports)

**The Assembly Offering,** designated for Lutheran Disaster Response, totaled $3,676.00. THANK YOU!!

In addition to the above items of business, we celebrated with rostered ministers new to the synod, recently retired leaders, and with congregations celebrating significant anniversaries. [You can view those videos here.](http://www.njsynod.org/assembly) Please feel free to share them with your congregation.

The Rev. Dr. Christa Compton led the assembly in a reading of God’s Holy Darkness followed by table discussions on bias and discrimination in our language. The Rev. Sara Lilja led the assembly in an active listening Bible study on 1 Corinthians 13.

The Rev. Amy Reumann, Senior Director of Witness in Society for the ELCA, served as our churchwide representative. Pastor Reumann highlighted the work we do together across the whole church and thanked the NJ Synod for its part in it.

Our *“Go and…!”* evangelism team shared stories and ideas for congregations to engage their communities with God’s love in Jesus Christ. The team is available to come to your congregation. Resources from *Go and …!* can be found on our [website](https://www.njsynod.org/assembly).

Our house band led us in robust singing throughout the assembly. The band included Peter Melz and Pastors Jay Unzaga, Kathryn Irwin, Carmine Pernini, and Raymond Kolison. Thank you for making such beautiful music!

Displays from our mission teams and ministry partners filled the West Gallery offering information and opportunities to become involved in our ministries.

We thank all of those who helped make this assembly such a joy-filled time of being church together. The livestream of our whole day is on the synod website. The NJ Synod Assembly 2024 is scheduled for Saturday, May 11, 2024 at Grounds for Sculpture – mark your calendar.