



The Eastern Synod Lutheran Leaders' Edition

April 2016

74 Weber St. West
Kitchener, ON
N2H 3Z3

Phone: 519-743-1461
Toll Free 1-877-373-5242
Fax: 519-743-4291

A Church in Mission for Others

Our vision:

- * We will practice Spirit-ed Discipleship.
- * We will pursue Com- passionate Justice.
- * We will strive to be a Healthy Synod.
- * We will build Effective Partnerships.

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Synod Assembly Registration

Clergy, Lay Delegates and Visitors must register online by May 1st in order to take advantage of the **early bird fees**. Payment can be made either by credit card or by cheque made payable to Eastern Synod of ELCIC.

Bulletin of Reports will be available online for download free of charge. If a

paper copy is needed it will be available at a cost of \$25.00 each, and requested on the registration form.

<http://www.easternsynod.org/content/assembly-2016>

As of April 13, 2016 149 delegates and visitors have registered.

Synod Assembly

Have you signed up for the Synod Assembly yet? It takes place from June the 23rd to 26th in Toronto. The deadline for registering online May 1.

It is going to be a wonderful time of worship, learn-

ing, and truly serving together. We will have as our special guest Bishop Munib Younan of the Lutheran World Federation. We will be voting for a new vice chairperson, we will be talking about our ministry,

Rev. Douglas Reble

and asking you to help us truly be the church in Mission for Others. Please, register and register now!

See Pastor Doug's video on [Facebook](#).



Report of the Treasurer (To March 31st, 2016)

At the end of the first quarter of 2016, offerings remitted to the synod office for Benevolence, Canadian Lutheran World Relief and The ELCIC Praise Appeal are all running ahead of remittances for the same period in 2015. For details refer to [The Report of the Treasurer](#) or go to <http://www.easternsynod.org/> and click the Treasurers/Financial Info button.



Tax Reporting Requirements & Refugee Sponsorship by Keith Myra

The [January, 2016 issue of Leaders' Edition](#) included an article "Mitigating The Financial Risks of Refugee Sponsorship" that provided a number of practical suggestions and best practices to help those congregations that are sponsoring refugee families deal with various regulatory matters and other financial risks.

These best practices included 1) ensuring that the congregation has a "Child Protection and Other Vulnerable Persons Policy" in place, 2) checking with the congregation's insurer to ensure that its policy covers these spon-

sorship activities, 3) being aware of financial implications to the congregation if a refugee family applies on their own for government social assistance programs, and 4) ensuring that fund raising and receipting processes are handled correctly.

In addition to these items, it is important for sponsoring congregations to be aware of CRA's tax reporting requirements. For those refugees who are classified as "Protected Persons" under Canada's "Immigration and Refugee Protection Act", there is no requirement for the con-

gregation to issue a T5007 tax slip as could be the case for other individuals receiving financial assistance from a congregation. If CLWR is acting as the Sponsorship Agreement Holder for refugees sponsored by your congregations, these refugees will have "Protected Person" status.

One final note - if a congregation provides employment to a refugee, the congregation is required to issue a T4. This is no different than the requirement for any other congregational employee earning more than \$500/year.



Accessibility And the Church

The article below deals with accessibility standards in Ontario only. For information in Quebec, please refer to [The RBQ and the disabled persons](#). For information in New Brunswick, please refer to [Government of New Brunswick](#). For information in Nova Scotia, please refer to [Nova Scotia Accessibility Legislation](#).

In 2005, the Ontario government passed the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 \(AODA\)](#). This Act sets the process for developing and enforcing accessibility standards. Accessibility standards are laws that government, businesses, non-profits and public sector organizations must follow. This includes churches and organizations with as few as one employee. Please refer to this link for information on the Ontario government website: [Accessibility Rules for Business and Non-Profits](#)

The accessibility standards are designed to create a barrier-free and accessible Ontario by 2025. They are intended to improve accessibility for people with disabilities in five areas of daily life: Customer

Service, Information & Communication, Transportation, Employment and Design of Public Spaces.

In 2008, the first law that sets standards was passed: [Accessibility Standards for Customer Service \(O.Reg.429/07\)](#). In 2011, the second law was passed: [Integrated Accessibility Standards \(O.Reg.191/11\)](#).

So what does this mean to congregations? It means there are several things that should have already happened and several more to do in the coming years:

By January 1, 2012:

1. provide accessible customer service
2. provide accessible emergency and public safety information
3. provide accessible emergency information to staff

By January 1, 2015:

1. create accessibility policies

By January 1, 2016:

1. train staff on Ontario's accessibility law
2. make it easy for people with disabilities to provide feedback when asked

by Linda Grainger

By January 1, 2017:

1. make your public information accessible when asked
2. make your employment practices accessible

By January 1, 2018:

1. make new or redeveloped spaces accessible

“Customer service” Should be understood as how we interact with those who come through our doors – members, visitors, community groups, etc. It may also include those who are seeking Religious services – weddings, funerals, baptisms – and how we are able to provide those services.

In a nutshell, congregations are required to do the following:

1. Establish policies, practices and procedures.
2. Establish a training program and train staff and volunteers.
3. Establish a feedback process.

Are you compliant? Here's a helpful link to help you through this process:

[How to Comply with the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service](#)



Linda Grainger is the Vice Chair of the Synod

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THE COUNTDOWN IS ON!

April 23 is the deadline for submission of nomination forms for those desiring to be on the ballot for election to the 2017 ELCIC National Convention.

Keep the following in mind:

- No signature is required for an endorsement (a contact number of the endorser **is** required, however).
- Each congregation may NOMINATE one person (in addition to a youth delegate, if applicable)
- an individual may ENDORSE more than one nominee
- One does **not** need to be a delegate to this year's Synod Assembly in order to be eligible for election to be a National Convention delegate. **All members of Eastern Synod congregations are eligible.**
- **The Eastern Synod will bear the cost of delegate fees etc;** the congregation does not need to take care of them.
- There are two forms to fill out and return:
 - The Endorsement form must have 10 names of congregational members, and those 10 people must be from at least 3 different synodical congregations.
 - The Endorsement form must also indicate that the nominee has been approved by a congregational council meeting or annual meeting in which the nominee is a member.
 - Make sure your congregation has only endorsed one person - lay or rostered (not one of each).
 - The Biographical form must be completed; note that this form's information will be displayed online so that synod assembly delegates can review them in order to make their decision for electing.
- **There will be no nominations from the floor at synod assembly; therefore, the ballot will only consist of those names submitted by April 23.**
- Synod Assembly will elect 3 youth, 24 lay, and 17 active rostered persons.
- After the Assembly, Synod Council will be responsible for completing the delegate list in order to reach the synod's complement of 54 delegates.

Submitted as of April 8: 1 youth - 2 lay - 7 rostered.

Please announce this information to congregations and forward the forms to interested people. Be proactive: ask potential nominees; help them complete their forms. Make sure it's placed on the agenda of your council's next meeting (before April 23).

Any questions? Please contact Rev. Wendell Grahlman, Secretary of the Synod.