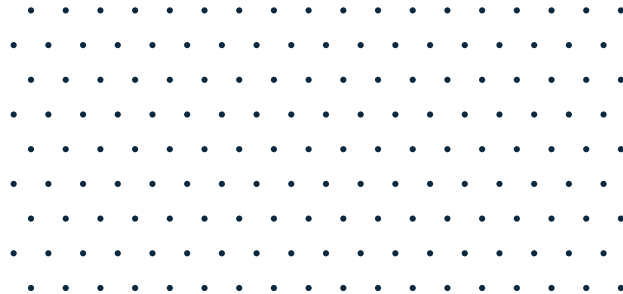


EMBRACE THE
CROSS ANTICIPATE THE
CROWN
SYNOD CONVENTION 2023



**DELEGATE
INFORMATION**



**20
23**



THE CONVENTION

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You have been chosen to serve our Lord and his church as a delegate to our synod's convention. The synod in convention is the legislative body of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). It establishes, reviews, and amends the policies and the direction of WELS as we pursue our mission. You have accepted a high privilege and a solemn responsibility.

THE PURPOSE

The purpose of the synod convention is

- to meet as a delegate synod to carry out the responsibilities of the legislative body of WELS,
- to celebrate God's blessings on our ministry in the past,
- to nurture our faith, and
- to set in motion an agreed-upon plan of ministry for the future.

YOUR ROLE

You are one of about 400 voting delegates who represent our churches, missions, and schools from around the world. You should be an informed decision-maker who learns the views of those you represent and then prayerfully ponders and votes on what WELS should be doing for the Lord.

THE CONVENTION

PRE-CONVENTION PREPARATION: The primary source of the convention's business is the *Book of Reports and Memorials* (BORAM), which contains various departmental reports as well as formal petitions to the synod convention called "memorials." A memorial outlines a particular item of business for consideration by the delegates.

It is essential that you read the BORAM to get the full picture of the synod's work and the issues facing the convention. You will be assigned to a floor committee whose responsibility will be to react and respond to an assigned portion of the BORAM. Carefully study



your committee's section—you may make notes in the BORAM as it is your copy. A printed copy of the BORAM will be sent to you in June before your floor committee meets. The BORAM, along with any additional reports, will be posted online in May at welsconvention.net. Check the website often for updates.

Since you are the representative from your geographical area, you are asked to know the views of those you represent and are responsible to make sure those views get heard. Please attend district, conference, or circuit meetings where the BORAM will be discussed. (Your district president will inform you of the dates.)

We encourage you to bring your BORAM and this delegate information booklet to the convention.

PAPERLESS CONVENTION: In order to save time and money, the synod convention will be almost entirely paperless. PowerPoint presentations and all convention resolutions will be displayed on large screens located at the front of the convention floor. A majority of the convention materials also will be made available electronically prior to and during the convention.

For the best convention experience, we urge you to bring your own personal electronic device (a laptop, notebook, tablet, or smartphone) with WiFi capabilities so that you can access online or digital resources.

Every effort will be made to have adequate power available at the convention. Please clearly label your devices so nothing gets lost.

DELEGATE ORIENTATION: An orientation session for all delegates will begin at 4 p.m., Monday, July 31, in the gymnasium. During this session, Rev. Joel Voss, the synod's second vice president; Mr. Martin Spriggs, WELS' chief technology officer; Mr. Lee Hitter, WELS' communication director; and Rev. Mark Luetzow, Michigan Lutheran Seminary's president, will review the convention flow and explain how delegates can prepare for the rest of the week. Please bring your personal



electronic device to this session so we can help you get online to access convention materials and any other necessary items.

WORSHIP: An opening communion service will be held at 6:30 p.m., Monday, July 31, at St. Paul, Saginaw, Mich. The church is about four blocks from the campus. Bussing will be available between the church and Michigan Lutheran Seminary. Each morning and afternoon will begin with a devotion. The closing service and installation of officers will be held on campus around 11 a.m., Thursday, Aug. 3.

FLOOR COMMITTEES: Committees will meet via video conferencing prior to the convention. Committee chairmen will contact their members via e-mail to set up these meetings and tell members how to join.

Each committee is assigned a section of the BORAM and is asked to evaluate its content and/or recommendations; to react to it; and, in most cases, to present formal resolutions or reports to the convention regarding it. Most resolutions will be prepared before the convention takes place. There will be time set aside for committees to meet while at the convention to continue discussing any necessary items.

Floor committees will also discuss broader issues such as the ministry financial plan, memorials, and bylaw changes. Synodical area of ministry advisors (representatives) are available and willing to attend floor committee meetings to present any necessary information and/or answer questions.

As committees complete their resolutions and reports this summer, they will be posted on the Delegate Online Resource Center. After reports are read and resolutions are voted on at the convention, they will be posted on the WELS convention website for the public to see.

A floor committee list is available at welsconvention.net.



GENERAL SESSIONS: General sessions will begin at 8 a.m., Tuesday, Aug. 1. All general sessions will be held in the Michigan Lutheran Seminary gymnasium. Delegates are assigned a seat on the convention floor according to committee. All certified delegates are eligible to speak and vote on every issue before the convention.

ELECTIONS: An important duty of delegates is to elect synodical officers and board members. Position descriptions and a brief biographical sketch of each nominee are posted online at welsconvention.net. Please read the candidate biographies ahead of time so you are prepared for the elections.

REPORTS: During the convention, you will hear reports about WELS ministry. All of this information will help you in making important decisions about the Lord's work in WELS.

AGENDA: A tentative agenda can be found in this booklet (p. 12) and online at welsconvention.net. Check online for any changes or updates. Activities at the convention include an essay, oral reports, and resolutions.

GUESTS: Guests may watch the proceedings from the mezzanine in the gymnasium. (Only delegates will have access to the convention floor.) Access to the mezzanine is by staircase. A limited number of chairs will be available in the rear of the gym for those who cannot maneuver stairs. Guests may also tune in online via the livestream.

STREAMING THE CONVENTION: The entire convention will be streamed live at welsconvention.net. Those making statements at the microphones during the convention automatically give their permission to stream their comments. Remember that many people may be watching, so phrase your statements clearly and carefully.

THE DIFFERENCE YOU MAKE: Please attend all convention sessions and take an active part in discussions. Remember that the business conducted here establishes the program of the synod for the



next two years and beyond. You help shape the vision and set the direction of our synodical family under God by how you perform as a delegate. When issues are debated and presented for a vote, vote what you feel is best for the Lord's mission based on the input you received. May God bless your efforts.

POST-CONVENTION: We want you, as a representative of your church, school, and district, to take the messages of the convention back to your congregation and your district. Consider giving a presentation in your congregation. You can also contact your congregation's circuit pastor and offer to share your experience with other congregations that you represented from your district. Share what you learned about WELS and its work around the world. Inform fellow WELS members about the important decisions made at the convention and the future direction that you helped shape. Highlight ministry work and how congregations and their members can support it through their gifts and prayers.

WELS Communication Services will help you. The synod convention website, welsconvention.net, will include resolutions, election results, pictures, articles, some presentations, and more. *Together*, the synod's e-newsletter, will highlight important decisions and cover major events at the convention. Social media posts will bring up-to-the-minute updates. A synopsis of all the news will be put into an easy-to-use bulletin format and will be e-mailed to you after the convention, along with information on how to access all post-convention resources. Both the September *WELS Connection* and *Forward in Christ* magazine will report on the convention. If you need further help, contact WELS Communication Services at csc@wels.net.



ON CAMPUS

PLACE: Michigan Lutheran Seminary (MLS)
2777 Hardin St.
Saginaw, MI 48602

Website: mlsem.org
Phone: 989-793-1010
Fax: 989-401-7334

REGISTRATION: All convention delegates must register online. Access the online form at wels.net/registration23. The deadline to register is May 15.

Specific questions regarding the convention should be addressed to Carla Martin at carla.martin@wels.net or 414-256-3202. For technical questions, contact the WELS Help Desk at support@wels.net or 414-259-4357.

REGISTRATION COSTS: The delegate fee of \$275 helps to offset the cost of the convention. It is intended that your congregation will pay this fee. In order to register, you will be required to submit payment via credit card. If using a personal card, please seek reimbursement from your calling body or congregation. The Minnesota and Dakota-Montana Districts have paid the registration fee for all their delegates, so delegates from those two districts will not be required to submit payment in order to register.*

**Minnesota and Dakota-Montana District delegates: Please refer to the registration instructions included in your first informational packet to find the registration fee code you will need to enter in your registration form in lieu of payment.*

ON-CAMPUS CHECK-IN: Upon arrival, you should visit the registration tables in the lobby area outside of the MLS gymnasium.

Check-in hours will be between noon and 4 p.m., Monday, July 31. If you are staying in the dormitory, plan to arrive on campus no later than 3 p.m., so that you have time to settle in before the delegate orientation begins at 4 p.m. If you need to arrive outside of check-in



hours, visit the Hospitality Desk in the gymnasium if you arrive prior to 8 p.m. If you arrive later than 8 p.m., contact Prof. Matthew Prost, prostmat@mlsem.org, 920-342-2940, to make arrangements.

ON-CAMPUS LODGING: Unless you make other arrangements, you will be assigned a room in one of the MLS dormitories. (There is no charge to stay on campus.) We will try to assign you to your own room, but you may be assigned roommates if necessary. You have the option of indicating a preferred roommate on your convention registration form. Confirmation of those staying in the dorms will be included in a June mailing. You will receive your dorm room assignment when you check in on campus.

The dormitory has four floors, each with a communal bathroom. There is one elevator that provides access to all floors—except in cases of emergency.

All linens, blankets, pillows, and towels will be provided. Small refrigeration units will be available in most dorm rooms and are available upon request. You will need to supply all items such as shampoo, soap, clothes hangers, alarm clock, portable radio, and personal items. The MLS dormitory is not air conditioned. If you are traveling by car, please bring a fan. Some fans will be available for those who are flying to the convention.

OFF-CAMPUS LODGING: If you prefer staying off-campus at your own expense, suggested hotels in the Saginaw area are listed on page 13. You will be responsible for making your own reservations as well as paying all off-campus lodging, food and beverage, and transportation costs. Shuttle service will be available every morning and evening between the listed hotels and the MLS campus. Shuttle times will be posted at the convention and included in your materials when you arrive at campus.



PARKING: A campus map showing parking areas will be included in the June mailing, available online at welsconvention.net, and in your on-site materials. Parking space is limited. Those staying in the dormitory will be given preference to on-site parking in the lot adjacent to the campus.

MEALS: Delegates will be provided all meals beginning with Monday dinner and concluding with lunch on Thursday (see the convention agenda for meal times). If you have special dietary needs, please note them on the registration form. No food and beverage expenses will be reimbursed.

REFRESHMENTS: Complimentary snacks and beverages will be available during the convention.

HOSPITALITY DESK: The hospitality desk will be staffed while the convention is in session. It will be located at the back of the convention floor and will be clearly marked.

PHONE CALLS: The MLS switchboard will be staffed during normal office hours, 8 a.m.–4 p.m. (EST). The phone number is 989-793-1010. Fax service is also available. The MLS fax number is 989-401-7334. Please be sure faxes are clearly labeled.

Calls after hours should be directed to the Inter-Dorm Office, 989-793-1010, ext. 250, or to the dorm supervisor in the building. These phone numbers will be provided with your dorm room assignments when you arrive on campus. We assume that you have a cell phone or can borrow one from someone if you need to make a call.

INTERNET ACCESS: You will be able to access WiFi and use your laptop, tablet, or smartphone anywhere on campus. Log-in and access instructions will be provided when you arrive on campus.

DRESS CODE: There is no specific dress code for the convention. Some delegates dress in sport coats and ties, and others wear shorts and sandals. Please dress so that you are comfortable for summer weather in Michigan. The gymnasium where the convention is held is air-conditioned.



SMOKING: Smoking is not allowed in any of the buildings (including dormitories) on the MLS campus. Please smoke outside and properly dispose of the cigarettes.

WHAT TO BRING:

- Your *Book of Reports and Memorials*
- This delegate information booklet
- Electronic device (smartphone, tablet, laptop) and charging accessories
- Comfortable clothing and personal care items

TRAVEL

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE: A reimbursement form is included in your first mailing and is also available online at welsconvention.net. Please remember to keep all of your receipts and attach them to the form when submitting it. Reimbursement forms can be handed in with receipts at the convention Hospitality Desk or mailed after the convention per the instructions on the form.

If you or your congregation wish to donate convention costs, submit a reimbursement request with “donate” printed on it. WELS will provide you with a donation receipt for tax purposes.

The following expenses will be reimbursed:

- Cost of gasoline (with receipts) in lieu of mileage
- Economy air fare to Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport (DTW), MBS International Airport (MBS) in Saginaw, and Bishop International Airport (FNT) in Flint

Any extra or unusual travel expenses other than those listed above must be approved in writing. These requests should be e-mailed to carla.martin@wels.net. If requested, the synod will reimburse air fare prior to the convention, but these funds must be returned to the synod if for any reason you do not attend the convention.



When making travel plans, please proceed as if you were actually paying expenses yourself and exercise good stewardship. Some guidelines to follow:

- Do not drive if flying is more cost-effective.
- If you are not sure which method is more cost-effective, use this calculator to decide: [befrugal.com/tools/fly-or-drive-calculator](https://www.befrugal.com/tools/fly-or-drive-calculator)
- Consider flying out of a larger airport if driving to that airport is less expensive than flying out of an airport closer to home after adding the cost of gas and remote parking to the fare from the larger airport.
- Book your flight six to eight weeks in advance, as the closer to the convention a flight is booked the more expensive it will be.
- If possible, have someone take you to the airport to avoid parking charges. If you must drive, park in the most cost-effective lot.
- Carpool with others when possible.

Thank you for keeping convention expenses to a minimum.

The following expenses will not be reimbursed:

- Food and beverage expenses. Meals are provided once you arrive on campus.
- Off-campus lodging
- Ferries
- Rental cars
- Travel insurance

SHUTTLE SERVICE: MLS will coordinate shuttle service to and from three area airports: Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport (DTW), MBS International Airport (MBS) in Saginaw, and Bishop International Airport (FNT) in Flint. If you require shuttle service from these airports, plan to arrive no later than noon on Monday. The shuttles departing back to the airports will leave at 1 p.m., after the closing service on Thursday. Delegates requesting a shuttle on their



registration form will receive information from MLS in early July that will include a shuttle schedule, pick-up locations, and cell phone contact numbers.

QUESTIONS OR CHANGES

KEEP US INFORMED: If you notice an error in any of the convention information you receive (your name, address, convention arrangements, floor committee assignment, etc.) or if any of the information changes after you have provided it to us, contact Carla Martin (contact information below) so that she can make corrections.

If for any reason you are unable to attend the convention, contact Carla Martin as soon as possible. Do not find your own replacement, as all convention delegates must be certified by their district secretary.

We are available to answer any questions you may have.

FOR CONVENTION INFORMATION:

Carla Martin,
secretary to the WELS president
N16W23377 Stone Ridge Drive
Waukesha, WI 53188

Phone: 414-256-3202
Fax: 262-522-2800
E-mail: carla.martin@wels.net

FOR CAMPUS HOUSING AND AIRPORT SHUTTLE QUESTIONS:

Campus housing
Rev. David Koehler
Cell: 989-239-2570
E-mail: dek@mlsem.org

Airport shuttle
Michelle Gartner
Cell: 507-217-6157
E-mail: gartneml@mlc-wels.edu

Saginaw in-town shuttle
Rev. Karl Schmugge
Cell: 989-274-7742
E-mail: kms@mlsem.org



TENTATIVE AGENDA

MONDAY, JULY 31

Noon-4:00 p.m.	Registration/dormitory check-in
4:00 p.m.	Delegate orientation
5:00 p.m.	Dinner
6:30 p.m.	Opening worship
8:00 p.m.	Floor committees meet
9:00 p.m.	Evening fellowship

TUESDAY, AUGUST 1

8:00 a.m.	Flag presentation followed by opening devotion
12:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m.	Afternoon devotion
5:00 p.m.	Dinner
8:30 p.m.	Evening fellowship

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2

8:00 a.m.	Opening devotion
12:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m.	Afternoon devotion
5:00 p.m.	Dinner
8:30 p.m.	Evening fellowship

THURSDAY, AUGUST 3

8:00 a.m.	Opening devotion
11:00 a.m.	Closing service and installation of officers
12:00 p.m.	Dismissal (lunches to-go)

*This agenda is subject to change.
A more detailed agenda will be included in the June mailing
or on the convention website.*



AREA HOTELS

Blocks of rooms are reserved under “WELS Synod Convention” at the following hotels:

FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON

4960 Towne Centre Rd., Saginaw, MI 48604

Phone: 989-790-5050

- \$109–\$159 plus tax
- Complimentary WiFi
- Free parking
- Indoor pool and hot tub
- Onsite restaurant
- A limited number of rooms are available

SPRINGHILL SUITES BY MARRIOTT SAGINAW

5270 Cardinal Square Blvd., Saginaw, MI 48604

Phone: 989-792-2800

- \$129 plus tax
- Complimentary WiFi
- All suites
- Indoor pool and hot tub
- Hot breakfast

TOWNEPLACE SUITES BY MARRIOTT SAGINAW

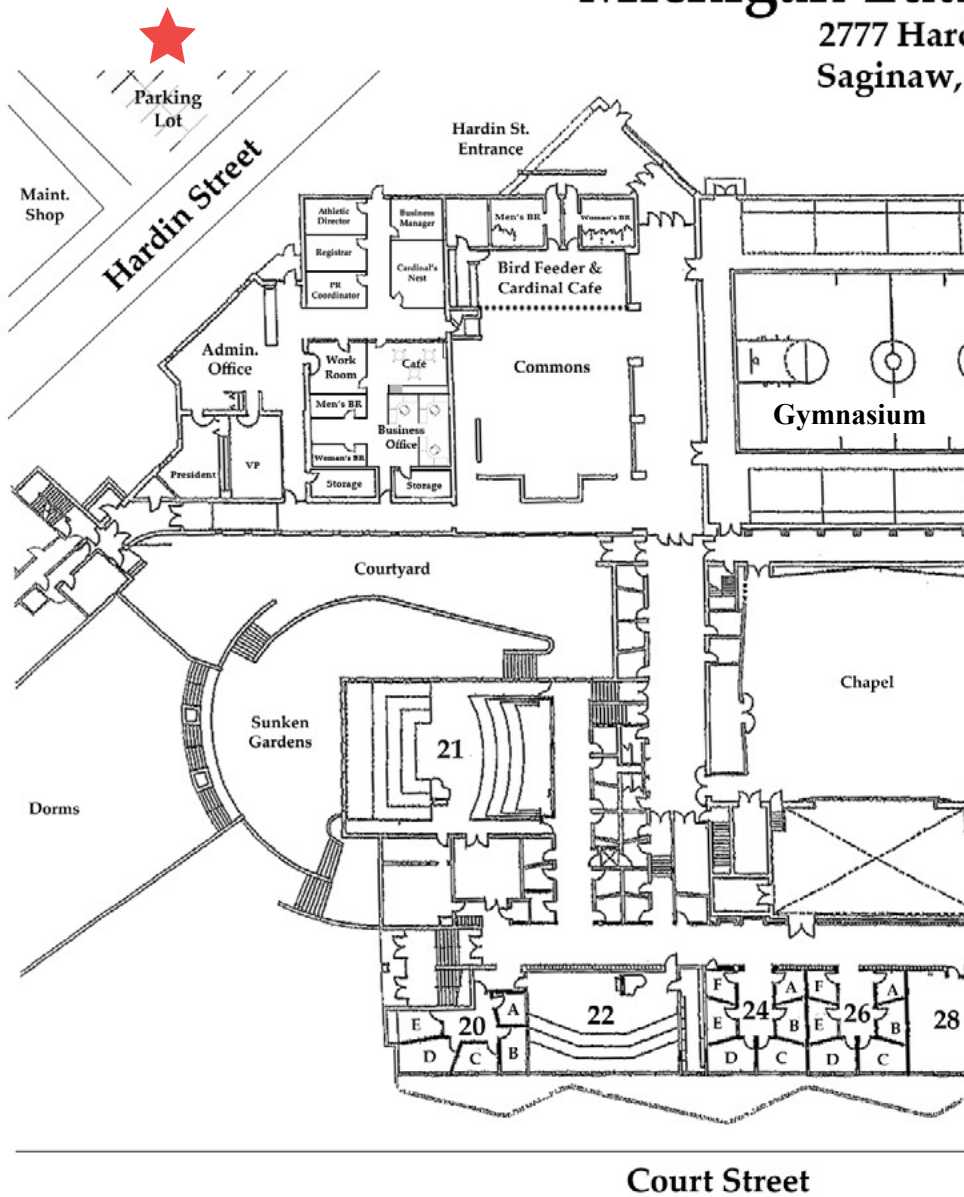
5368 Cardinal Square Blvd., Saginaw, MI 48604

Phone: 989-792-2200

- \$139 plus tax
- Complimentary WiFi
- All suites
- Indoor pool
- Hot breakfast

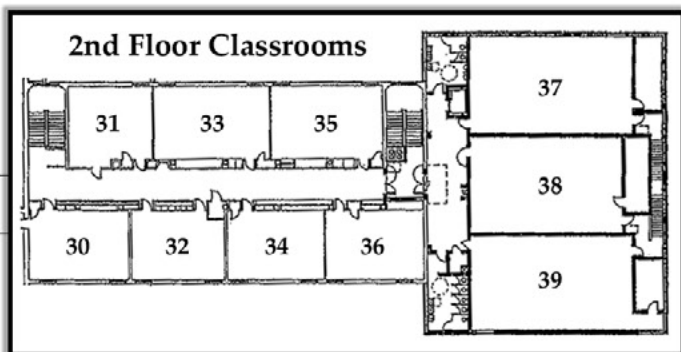
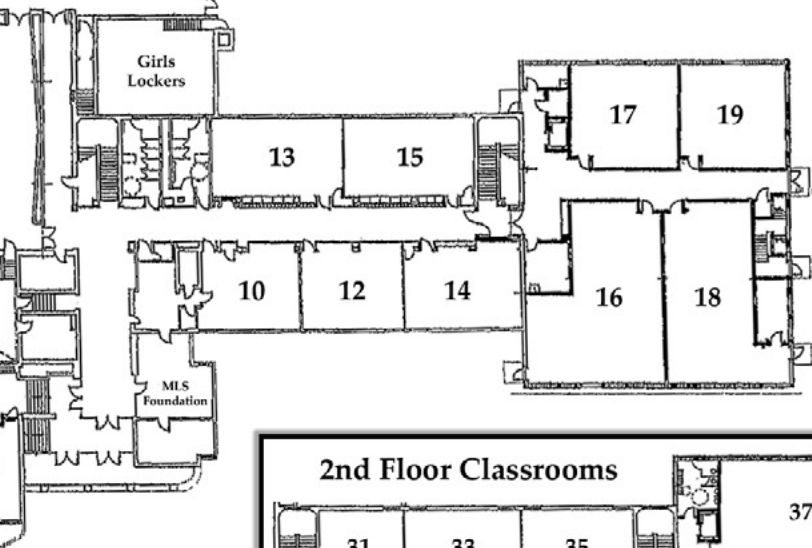
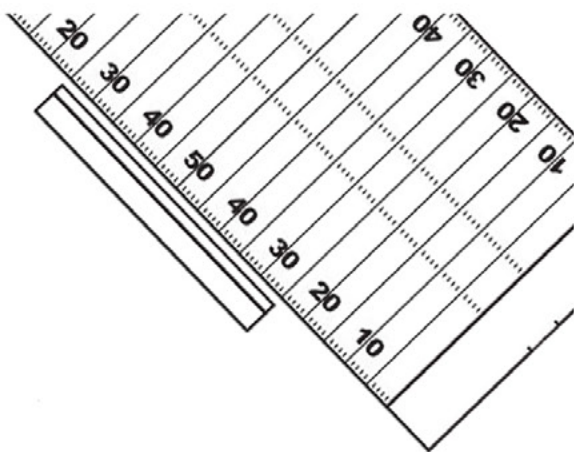
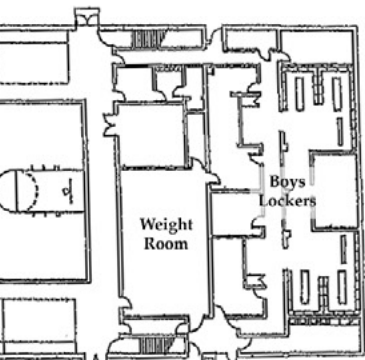
Michigan Lutheran

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67TH BIENNIAL CONVENTION
of the
**WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN SYNOD**



WELS
Christ's Love. Our Calling.

JULY 31–AUGUST 3, 2023

Michigan Lutheran Seminary
Saginaw, Michigan