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2025

**CHRIST
THROUGH US**

SYNOD CONVENTION

DELEGATE INFORMATION



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THE CONVENTION

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 1 of about 400 voting delegates who represent our churches, missions, and schools from around the world. You help shape the vision and set the direction of our synodical family under God by how you perform as a delegate. 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.

Your role and responsibilities don't end when the convention concludes. 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.



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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 provide up-to-the-minute updates. A synopsis of all the news will be put into an easy-to-use bulletin format that will be e-mailed to you after the convention along with information on how to access all post-convention resources. The August *WELS Connection* and September *Forward in Christ* magazine will report on the convention. If you need further help, contact WELS Communication Services at csc@wels.net.

PREPARING FOR THE CONVENTION:

Book of Reports and Memorials: 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.

A printed copy of BORAM will be sent to all delegates and congregations in May, arriving before districts meet in June. It, along with any additional reports, will be posted online in early May at welsconvention.net.

It is essential that you read BORAM to get the big 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 BORAM. When you know your committee assignment, carefully study your committee's section—you may make notes in BORAM as it is your copy. We encourage you to bring your BORAM to the convention.

District meetings: 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.



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CONVENTION BUSINESS:

Delegate orientation: An orientation session will begin at 4 p.m., Monday, July 21, in the Luther Student Center. During this session, Rev. Joel Voss, the synod's second vice president; Mr. Martin Spriggs, WELS' chief technology officer; Mr. Dan Nommensen, WELS' communication director; and Rev. Richard Gurgel, Martin Luther College's president, will review the convention flow, explain how elections will take place, show delegates how to access online convention materials, and detail how delegates can prepare for the rest of the week.

Worship: An opening communion service will be held at 6:30 p.m., Monday, July 21, in the Chapel of the Christ on the Martin Luther College campus. Each morning's sessions will open with a devotion in the Luther Student Center. The closing service and installation of officers will be held on Thursday, July 24, in the Chapel of the Christ.

To thank the Lord Jesus for his gracious blessings to and through our church body, there will be opportunities to honor him with special gifts during the convention. Offerings from the opening worship service will go toward the synod's 175th Anniversary Fund to support worker training and North American and international ministry. A collection will also be gathered during the convention for the Africa Mission Evangelism Church (AMEC) in Tanzania as delegates vote on declaring fellowship with this African church body.

General sessions: General sessions will begin at 8 a.m., Tuesday, July 22. All general sessions will be held in the Luther Student Center. Delegates are assigned a seat on the convention floor according to committee.

During these sessions, delegates will hear an address from WELS President Mark Schroeder on the state of the synod, an update on the ministry financial plan, and reports from WELS ministries. A convention essayist will highlight God's grace to WELS for 175 years. Floor committees will then present reports and resolutions for delegates to consider and vote on, including a new synodical ten-year plan. All certified delegates are eligible to speak and vote on every issue before the convention.



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Floor committees: Every committee but the Elections and Steering Committees is assigned a section of 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. 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.

There will be time set aside for committees to meet while at the convention. Committees also will have the option to 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.

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.

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.

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. 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.



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ON CAMPUS

ON CAMPUS

LOCATION: Martin Luther College (MLC)
1995 Luther Court
New Ulm, MN 56073

Website: mlc-wels.edu
Phone: 507-354-8221
Fax: 507-354-8225

REGISTRATION:

Deadline: All convention delegates must register online. Access the form at wels.net/registration25. 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.

Cost: 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 outside of the Luther Student Center gymnasium.



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Check-in hours will be between noon and 4 p.m., Monday, July 21. 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 delegate orientation begins at 4 p.m. If you need to arrive outside of check-in hours, visit the Help Desk in the gymnasium upon your arrival (if prior to 8 p.m.). If you arrive later than 8 p.m., contact Beth Scharf, 920-757-5606, to make arrangements.

LODGING:

On campus: Unless you make other arrangements, you will be assigned a room in one of the MLC dormitories. There is no charge to stay on campus. We will try to assign you to your own room, but you may be assigned a roommate if necessary. You have the option of indicating a preferred roommate on your convention registration form. You will receive your dorm room assignment when you check in on campus.

MLC dormitories have four floors, each with a communal bathroom. Even though the campus as a whole is handicapped accessible, not all dorms are equipped with elevators. If you need first-floor housing, check the appropriate box on the registration form. All other concerns or special requests should be made by including a comment on the registration form.

All linens, blankets, and towels will be provided. A pillow will not be provided unless you indicate you need one on the registration form. If you are driving, you can help us keep costs down by bringing your own. You will need to supply all items such as shampoo, soap, clothes hangers, alarm clock, and personal items. MLC dormitories are not air conditioned, so bring a fan if possible. Some fans will be available for those who are flying to the convention.

Off campus: If you prefer staying off campus at your own expense, suggested hotels are listed on page 14. You will be responsible for making your own reservations as well as paying all off-campus lodging, food and beverage, and transportation costs.



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ON CAMPUS

MLC is not able to accommodate RV parking on campus. However, Flandrau State Park does have camping. See page 14 for contact information.

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 Minnesota. The gymnasium where the convention is held is air-conditioned.

Helpful tip: For added comfort, bring a seat cushion to the convention!

GUESTS: Guests may watch the proceedings from the balcony in the gymnasium. (Only delegates will have access to the convention floor.) Access to the balcony is by staircase only. 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.

MEALS: Delegates will be provided all meals beginning with dinner on Monday 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 while the convention is in session will be reimbursed. Guests and visitors may purchase meal tickets at the cafeteria entrance.

REFRESHMENTS: Complimentary beverages will be available during the convention.

INTERNET ACCESS: For the best convention experience, bring your own personal electronic device (a laptop, notebook, tablet, or smartphone) with Wi-Fi capabilities so that you can access online or digital resources. A majority of the convention materials will be made available electronically during the convention. PowerPoint presentations and all convention resolutions also will be displayed on large screens located at the front of the convention floor.



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

You won't have access to power at your table on the convention floor for your devices while the convention is in session. Multiple dedicated charging stations are available throughout the campus for you to use during breaks. Please clearly label your devices so nothing gets lost. Limited outlet access is available in the classrooms during committee meetings.

PHONE CALLS: The MLC switchboard will be staffed during normal office hours, 8 a.m.–4 p.m. The phone number is 507-354-8221. Calls after hours or in an emergency should be directed to the dorm supervisor in the building to which you are assigned. These phone numbers will be provided with your dorm room assignments when you arrive on campus.

SMOKING: Smoking is not allowed in any of the buildings (including dormitories) on the MLC campus. Smoking is only allowed in outdoor parking lots. Please properly dispose of the cigarettes.

FITNESS: MLC has a fitness center located in the lower level of the Luther Student Center. Hours of operation will be provided with your on-site materials.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE: Martin Luther College enjoys the services of a registered nurse, Mrs. Kelsey Horn, who will be available for delegates in person at her office in the Luther Student Center and by phone at 507-441-1372.



TRAVEL

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE: A reimbursement form is included in this 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 prefer to submit a reimbursement request electronically, e-mail your reimbursement form with copies of receipts to carla.martin@wels.net.

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 Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport
- Costs of meals while en route to/from the convention
- Baggage fees
- Airport parking

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



- 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.

Note: The following expenses will not be reimbursed:

- Food and beverage expenses while the convention is in session (all meals are provided at MLC)
- Off-campus lodging
- Ferries
- Rental cars
- Travel insurance
- Airplane early boarding or seat upgrade fees

SHUTTLE SERVICE: MLC will coordinate shuttle service to and from the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport (MSP). If you require shuttle service from the airport, plan to arrive no later than 2 p.m., on Monday, July 21. This will help with the shuttle coordination. If it is not possible for you to arrive by this time and/or you require housing on Sunday night due to your travel plans, contact Beth Scharf, events@mlc-wels.edu. Please note your travel plans on your registration form.

At the close of the convention, a shuttle returning to the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport will leave no later than 1 p.m., Thursday, July 24. Please allow at least an hour and 45 minutes for the trip to the airport when you make your travel arrangements.

MLC will contact those who need shuttle service with more information.



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. Please 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

Phone: 414-256-3202

E-mail: carla.martin@wels.net

For campus housing and airport shuttle questions:

Beth Scharf, MLC event coordinator

Phone: 507-354-8221, ext. 241

Cell: 920-757-5606

E-mail: events@mlc-wels.edu



TENTATIVE AGENDA

MONDAY, JULY 21

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 service in the Chapel of the Christ
8:00 p.m.	Floor committees meet
9:00 p.m.	Evening fellowship

TUESDAY, JULY 22

8:00 a.m.	Flag presentation followed by opening devotion
12:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:15 p.m.	Afternoon session begins
5:00 p.m.	Dinner
6:00 p.m.	Floor committees meet
7:00 p.m.	WELS 175th anniversary presentation: The history of Martin Luther College
8:30 p.m.	Floor committees meet if needed and evening fellowship

WEDNESDAY, JULY 23

8:00 a.m.	Opening devotion
12:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:15 p.m.	Afternoon session begins
5:00 p.m.	Dinner
6:30 p.m.	Mission presentations
8:30 p.m.	Floor committees meet if needed and evening fellowship

THURSDAY, JULY 24

8:00 a.m.	Opening devotion
11:00 a.m.	Closing service and installation of officers
12:00 p.m.	Lunch onsite or to go

*This agenda is subject to change.
A more detailed agenda will be available in June.*



AREA LODGING

Blocks of rooms are reserved at the following hotels:

BEST WESTERN PLUS

2101 S Broadway Street
507-359-2941

- Complimentary Wi-Fi
- Full hot breakfast
- Free parking
- Indoor pool
- Onsite restaurant

A limited number of rooms are available at \$119 plus tax. A direct link to book online is on the convention website, welsconvention.net.

HARMONY INN

1901 S Broadway Street
507-359-2400

- Complimentary Wi-Fi
- Complimentary coffee
- Free parking

A limited number of double rooms or king rooms are available at \$90 plus tax. Call the hotel directly to book.

FLANDRAU STATE PARK

1300 Summit Avenue
507-233-1260
flandrau.statepark@state.mn.us

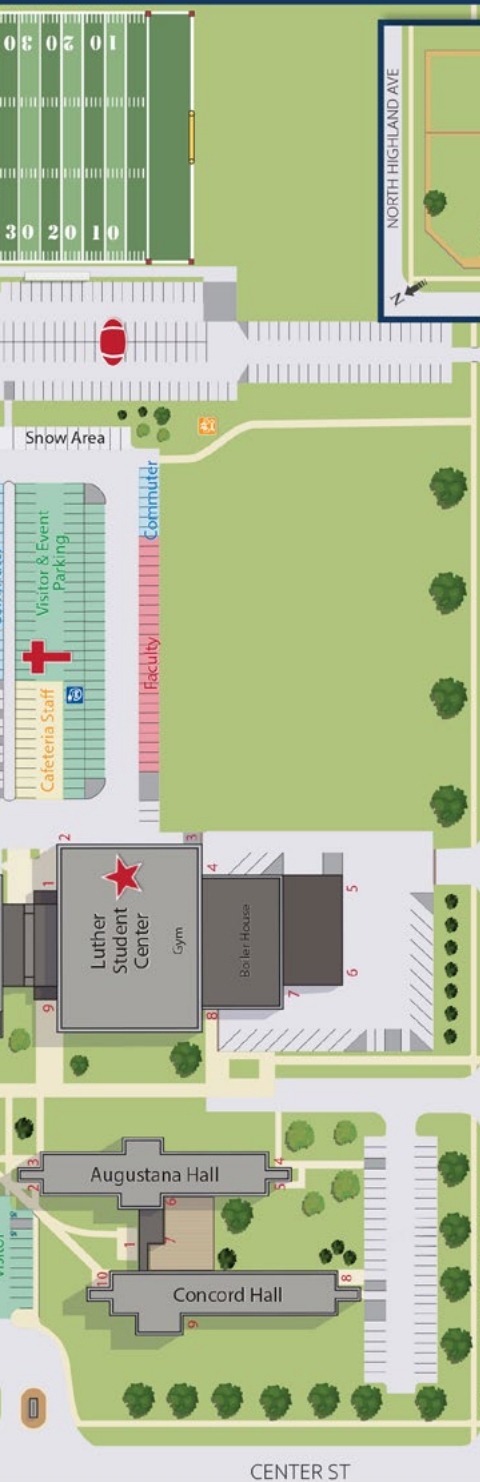
CAMPUS MAP

SUMMIT AVE



WALDHEIM DR

CENTER ST



SOUTH HIGHLAND AVE

0.4 Miles to BKF & Athletic Fields
0.5 Miles to ECLC

CENTER ST



0.5 Miles to LITES →



Betty Kohn Fieldhouse (BKF) & Athletic Fields

1800 Boettger Rd New Ulm MN 56073



Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC)

405 N Highland New Ulm MN 56073



1995 Luther Court
New Ulm MN 56073
507.354.8221



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68TH BIENNIAL CONVENTION
of the
**WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN SYNOD**



JULY 21–24, 2025

Martin Luther College
New Ulm, Minnesota