



**LUTHERAN
CHURCH**

OF AUSTRALIA

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA
NORTHERN TERRITORY**

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Being a delegate for District Convention of Synod

What is synod?

Synod is the collective noun for a group of congregations who are spread out all over the District. They have the same beliefs and objects, as outlined in the constitution.

The synod is the highest constitutional authority of the District, with the power to direct those to whom it has entrusted tasks or has delegated authority. (*District Constitution Article VII No 1*)

What is the Convention of Synod?

Convention of Synod is the coming together of all congregations, which is held once per year, normally in May. The purpose of the convention of synod is to gather together for worship, conduct the business of the District, receive, discern and vote on proposals from District Church Council, committees and congregations of the SA-NT District and fellowship with other church members. Proposals as put forward often relate directly to the missional or operational abilities and functions of the District and therefore require the approval of synod prior to implementation. Convention of Synod is effectively the AGM of the LCA SA-NT District Inc.

Who goes to Convention of Synod?

The constitution states:

- Lay delegates - one delegate per 100 communing members
- Lutheran school principals – one delegate for every three principals
- All pastors of the District
- All District Church Council members
- The District Administrator
- Executives of District Lutheran entities

Who can be a Lay Delegate?

Lay delegates are voting members of their congregation who have been elected by their congregation to represent them at convention of synod.

If a congregation would prefer, they can elect a parish representative (at the same ratios) who will represent all congregations in the parish.

Anyone, other than a pastor, can be a lay delegate, and it does not need to be the person who has done it for a significant period of time. In fact, it is good if the role of lay delegate is not held continuously by one person as being a delegate exposes congregation members to more than just their congregation.

The District Church Council is encouraging congregations to elect a delegate who is younger and has an interest in the wider church. Additionally, female representation is encouraged. This increase in diversity hopes to be a better representation of our Church as a whole.

What are the expectations of a Lay Delegate?

Lay delegates are elected for a two year period and are expected to attend a two day and one day convention (held in alternate years), as well as be available via email for an electronic vote between conventions, if required.

All delegates will be provided with an LCA email address and are expected to communicate through this for synodical business.

The electronic Book of Reports is provided to delegates prior to convention and all delegates are expected to read and understand all proposals and reports as these will be discussed and voted on at each convention.

Delegates are encouraged to communicate with their congregation about the proposals prior to convention and to seek their opinions accordingly.

Delegates may be provided with an opportunity to speak during the convention sessions and are asked to be courteous, gracious and respectful of other delegates when doing so. There are rules about how long delegates can speak, so a question or comment needs to be concise and clearly spoken.

Delegates are asked to come to convention with an open mind, as they may be provided with additional or updated information, and they will be hearing from other delegates who may not share the same point of view as themselves. Delegates must respectfully listen and consider what is said and proposed at each convention meeting.

After listening to the proposals and discussion at convention, delegates will then vote on proposals based on the information they have received and on what they believe to be the best interests of the Church.

Delegates should then provide a report to the congregation about convention and the decisions that were made.

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