



NEW DETAILS!

South-Central Synod of Wisconsin
-January, 2018-

Hotel Accommodations

- Our synod is primarily housed at the DoubleTree Hotel – Greenway Plaza with overflow at the Crowne Plaza – River Oaks.
- These two hotels are about a 15 min walk from one another and are in the Greenway Plaza area.
- Both hotels have been recently renovated and our rooms will either have two queen beds or one king/queen bed. Specific room types are allocated by the Gathering based on your requests.
- Rooms at both hotels all have refrigerators, coffee makers, hair dryers, and rooms at the Crowne Plaza also have microwaves.
- Both hotels offer an outdoor pool as well as a restaurant and the DoubleTree has a Starbucks in the lobby of the hotel.

Rooming Arrangements

- Per the Gathering website; All congregations have been assigned official Gathering hotels, with synods being assigned together either in one hotel or neighboring properties. Congregations may request the number and type of rooms, however final housing assignments will be based upon availability, group make-up, and equitable distribution of room types.
- Right now no changes may be made to the number of rooms you requested. On March 15, 2018 room type and number assigned will become available and you will then be able to submit your rooming list and deposit to the hotel.
- **Please note: If you add participants to your group and you think you will need to add another room as a result, you MUST contact gathering@elca.org to check on availability AFTER March 15. Additional rooms are NOT guaranteed in your originally assigned hotel.**

Transportation (For those NOT utilizing the Synod Buses)

- You may opt into Gathering provided transportation by March 1, 2018. Opting in will make sure you have daily round-trip transportation to/from NRG Park, Service Sites, Synod Day, etc.
- If you choose to opt-out you will be responsible to provide your own daily transportation. Note that the hotels do NOT have bus parking and van parking is very limited.
- Parking will be provided at NRG Park for an *anticipated* cost of \$10.00 per in/out.
- Transportation will be provided by the Gathering on our service day for everyone.

Transportation (For those traveling on Synod Buses)

- The bus to which you have been assigned will be the bus you will use throughout the entire week.
- **You will note below that NRG Park is going to be charging buses to enter the property. Our contract will cover the cost to drop off and pick-up our groups at the start and end of each day. If you choose to have your bus pick-up your group for dinner, the fee will be your responsibility.**
- You will have some flexibility with your bus as long as you work with the other congregations on your bus to ensure everyone is where they need to be/desire to be.
 - o On Wednesday each bus group may use their bus to explore Houston on their own between 10:00am and 6:00pm but MUST be at NRG Park for Mass Gathering that begins at 7:30pm.
- Our buses will provide transportation to/from all Gathering events* as follows (subject to change):
 - o Thursday: Our buses will provide late-morning transport to NRG Park for Synod Day. Following our synod day (about 3pm) you may elect to have your bus return to NRG Park to pick up your group for dinner (note, this will result in a \$10.00 fee for pick-up) and then return to NRG for Mass Gathering. Our buses will all return us to the hotels after Mass Gathering ends (about 9:30 p.m.).
 - o Friday: This is our service day, the Gathering will provide transportation as needed all day. Following our service projects, you may elect to have your bus return to NRG Park to pick up your group for dinner (note, this will result in a \$10.00 fee for pick-up) and then return to NRG for Mass Gathering. Our buses will all return us to the hotels after Mass Gathering ends (about 9:30 p.m.).
 - o Saturday: This will be our interactive learning day. Our buses will transport us to NRG Park in the late-morning. In the mid- to late-afternoon you may elect to have your bus return to NRG Park to pick up your group for dinner (note, this will result in a \$10.00 fee for pick-up) and then return to NRG for Mass Gathering. Our buses will all return us to the hotels after Mass Gathering ends (about 9:30 p.m.).
 - o Sunday: Our buses will transport us to NRG Park for closing worship and then will remain at NRG Park until we depart following worship (about 12:00 p.m.).

*Note: If your group is chosen to participate in the Gathering “Mass Cast” or “Communion Server” opportunities and you are on a synod bus please just let me know and we will work with you to get your group when/where you need to be.

Food

- Food is always a challenge at the Gathering simply because there will be 30,000-35,000 people all trying to eat at roughly the same time.
- Food will be readily available (concessions and food trucks) at NRG Park every day beginning Wednesday evening for dinner and then lunch and dinner the remainder of the Gathering. This includes concessions at NRG Stadium prior to the start of each evening Mass Gathering.
- If you are using Gathering transportation you will have plenty of food options at or near NRG Park each day. You may also use the Metrorail light rail system to go from NRG Park all the way to Downtown or the Med Center to find great food as well (Cost is \$2.50 pp per round-trip).
- If you are using your own transportation or the synod buses you will be able to use them to eat at the many great restaurants Houston has to offer. If you are a larger group, try to make reservations ahead of time to make your meals hassle free.
- We are working on POSSIBLY offering a synod dinner (Wednesday) and box lunches on synod day (Thursday) but these details are not available yet and may not end up working out.