

NW District Annual Gathering 2026

April 23-26 @ Camp Lutherhaven



The Gathering Committee and District Council have been diligently discussing plans for the upcoming 2026 Annual NW District Annual Gathering. An update on our planning is provided below.

When: Thursday April 23rd to Sunday April 26th

Where: The gathering will be held at Camp Lutherhaven. The camp is located on the shores of beautiful Lake Coeur d' Alene. The camp is near the city of Coeur d' Alene, Idaho.

Accommodations: Accommodations will be offered at the camp in Good Earth Lodge (shared), West Side Cabins (shared), East Side Cabins (shared), and the Retreat Center (shared). The nearby city of Coeur d' Alene (11 miles from the camp) offers hotels for those who seek alternate accommodations. A partial list of hotels will be made available.

Registration fees: Registration fees have not been finalized and will be disclosed as soon as the District Council approves them.

SCHEDULE:

Thursday April 23 - 3:00 to 9:00 PM: This partial day begins with check-in, followed by settling in, supper, and ends with singing around the campfire.

Friday April 24 - 8:30 AM to 9:00 PM: This full day includes worship, singing, our annual meeting, group Bible Study, Keynote Presentation #1, meals, free time and ends with singing around the campfire.

Saturday April 25 - 8:00 AM to 9:00 PM: This full day includes worship, singing, our annual elections and other business, Keynote Presentation #2, a Q&A session with our speakers, closing worship with Holy Communion, meals and ends with singing around the campfire.

Sunday April 24 - 9:00 AM to Noon: This partial day begins with breakfast, followed by worship and check-out by noon. Pastor Ed Backell of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church of Spokane Valley, Washington, will lead worship and preach. The congregation will join us for worship at the camp!

Free Time: Those attending will be able to participate in camp activities or enjoy free time from 3:30 to 6:00 PM on Friday and from 2:00 to 4:00 PM on Saturday. This year free time could include activities other than just enjoying the amenities offered by the camp. Sessions may be offered that will allow participants to engage our keynote speakers in deeper discussions and other structured activities.

Online Participation. The gathering will be a hybrid event for the first time. Folks will be able to join us by ZOOM call during worship, meetings and keynote presentations.

Gathering Theme: The theme for the Gathering is “From Saul to Paul.” The theme verse from scripture is 1 Peter 3:15-16: *But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.*

Keynote Speakers: Keynote speakers will include Molly Wilmington from ZoeCare, Duan Walker from Mid-Valley Fellowship, and Pastor Julie Smith, LCMC Service Coordinator.

ZoeCare is a pregnancy and sexual health clinic located in Bozemen, Montana, offering free compassionate medical care. They are staffed by three doctors, three nurses, a social worker, and other professionals and volunteers. Their mission is to serve and answer questions clients may have about pregnancy, abortion procedures, adoption, parenting, and sexually transmitted infections. ZoeCare does not perform or refer for abortions. Molly will reveal how teaching about marriage, and the bodies God gave us, lead youth and adults to choose healthier lifestyles and grow closer to God (or for the 1st time) and desire a church community.

Mid-Valley Fellowship is local Christian organization helping individuals obtain sexual and relational wholeness in the midst of a broken and confused world. Mid-Valley is a non-profit, interdenominational ministry, serving the Central Willamette Valley (Albany, Corvallis, Eugene, and Salem). Duan will show us the power of personal testimonies, trained lay counseling, Biblical instruction, and Christ-centered accountability groups on the path to wholeness.

In addition to sharing updates from national office, Pastor Julie Smith will lead us in a group Bible Study and preach and preside at the closing worship service on Saturday.

District Council encourages pastors to attend the entire weekend as a retreat. To help congregations in this regard, our chair Pastor Ed Skutshek will post (on the District's website) a manuscript and a video of a sermon that can be used for Sunday April 26th.

Watch for upcoming editions of the e-connector for more information on the 2026 NW District annual gathering.

