Conference Gathering Planning Guide

If a congregation did not volunteer to host the upcoming gathering the planning team needs to determine a possible location. The conference coordinator shall contact the congregational unit leader and see if they are willing to host the event. Ask for possible dates that will fit into the congregation’s and conference’s calendar. When this is determined used the following check list to help in your planning.

Planning Team:

1. Set the final day, time, and place for the gathering
2. The coordinator will contact the Synodical Conference Coordinator and provide her with this information. She will pass this along to the VSWO president. The VSWO president will be in contact with the conference coordinator concerning who will represent the board at the gathering.
3. Invite the dean of the conference to bring greetings to the gathering.
4. Contact the host congregation and setup a planning meeting. This should include the planning team, leaders from the host congregation, and the other congregational unit presidents in the conference.
5. Produce and distribute publicity for the gathering
6. Develop a time line for all tasks to be completed

The planning team will meet with the host congregational unit leaders and pastor if they are available. Other unit presidents in the conference maybe invited to attend. At this meeting:

1. Determine the type of refreshments (or lunch) that will be provided. Will there be a cost per person?
2. It is preferred that the worship leader be female (either a lay person or pastor). If the host congregation has a female pastor, work with her on planning the worship service or devotions. If this is not the case you may ask want to ask a female pastor that is in the conference. If the host pastor is not taking part in worship invite them to attend.
3. If the group chooses identify a project or ministry to support with either in kind and/or financial offerings.
4. Determine if workshops or presenters will be part of the gathering.
5. Discuss room requirements for worship, workshops, general meeting, eating, ect.
6. Review any equipment needs-tables, chairs, video, screens, easels, piano, etc.
7. Divide the following responsibilities among the congregational units:
8. Identify an accompanist for worship and/or gathering songs
9. Registration
10. Name Tags
11. Refreshments (and/or) lunch
12. Table decorations
13. Ushers
14. Blessing if a meal is provided
15. Prepare program or bulletin

A portion of the gathering should be devoted to conference business:

1. The conference coordinator should introduce the host church’s unit leader, the VSWO representative, the conference dean, program presenters, and other guests.
2. The host church’s unit leader(s) should make housekeeping announcements, like where restrooms are located, where meal (or refreshments) will be enjoyed, workshop rooms, ect.
3. The conference coordinator (or a planning team member) will ask the congregations present to introduce themselves and give a BREIF overview of some the activities and ministries they are involved in.
4. The nominating committee gives their report.
5. The conference coordinator conducts the elections, asking for nominations from the floor. The nominating committee can be asked to count the votes.
6. The VSWO representative will install the planning team.

After the meeting:

1. Money given in offerings will be distributed and any fees collected for meals or refreshments will be given to the unit that provided them.
2. Offering to be given to the VSWO will be sent to the treasurer using the appropriate form.
3. The conference coordinator will complete a report using the form provided by the synodical conference coordinator. Please complete this within 10 days for the gathering.
4. The planning team is responsible for writing a short article (one or two paragraphs) about the gathering and submitting it to the “Visions” newsletter editor.
5. The planning team should send thank you notes to those taking part in the gathering and that helped in the planning.