

ST JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH TASK FORCE INFORMATION

GOVERNANCE					
AREA OF COMPARISON	ELCA	LCMS	WELS	LCMC	CORE
Constitution	<p>Drafted by congregation for review by ELCA.</p> <p>ELCA has both its own constitution and a model constitution for congregations.</p> <p>NOTE: The ELCA has approved congregational constitutions that differ in substantial respects from the ELCA Model Constitution.</p>	<p>Drafted by congregation for review by LCMS. Guidelines are available on the LCMS website.</p>	<p>WELS has its own constitution and bylaws which are available online.</p>	<p>LCMC has its own constitution and bylaws which are available online. As part of joining LCMC a congregation accepts their master constitution.</p> <p>There is no reference to LCMC approving individual congregational constitutions, so it is believed that congregational constitutions are at the discretion of each individual congregation, as long as they do not conflict with the master LCMC constitution.</p>	<p>Lutheran CORE will present a provisional constitution for the North American Lutheran Church (NALC), a new denomination being formed, at their August 2010 convocatoin.</p>
Process of Affiliation	<p>Not applicable as we are currently ELCA</p> <p>Dual rostering of ordained ministers and congregations is impermissible under the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA.</p>	<p>To apply for membership, a congregation must have an approved cnstitution and bylaws that conforms to the overall mission of LCMS.</p>	<p>Pastors and male teachers desiring membership in the synod submit a written application with the necessary credentials to the president of the District within which they reside.</p> <p>A congregation passes a resoltuion, submits its application in writing and presents a copy of its constitution and bylaws for approval. Regular or special conventions may be held to consider membership.</p>	<p>LCMC is an association, not a Synod or denomination. LCMC is intentionally easy to join and leave. Congregational membership involves completing a 2-page subscription form which includes the Statement of Faith.</p> <p>*According to the legal opinion of the ELCA, LCMC congregations cannot belong to both the ELCA and LCMC."</p>	<p>CORE is an association of congregations who have gathered around a common confession of faith. They are interested in cooperative ministry with all who share the same confession of faith.</p> <p>*According to the legal opinion of the ELCA, CORE congregations cannot belong to both the ELCA and CORE."</p>
Accountability of Pastors	<p>Pastors are governed by two principal documents:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Visions and Expectations for Ordained Ministers b. Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline <p>The first document is aspirational. The second outlines specific misconduct leading to pastoral discipline.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disclosure of confidential information 2. Neglect of duties 3. Misconduct in relationship to family 4. Sexual morality 5. Personal or professional fiscal malfeasance 6. Membership in appropriate organizations 7. Conviction of a felony <p>Dual rostering of ordained ministers and congregations is impermissible under the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA.</p>	<p>Pastors are disciplined first by the congregation, then the District Office of the Synod and finally by LCMS home offices.</p> <p>Pastors are expected to adhere to the doctrine and teachings of the church, without exception.</p>	<p>No concrete information has been found. We are waiting for information from WELS home office in Wisconsin.</p>	<p>All pastors rostered with LCMC must subscribe to the LCMC Statement of Faith, comply with LCMC standards, and be accountable to the LCMC Ministry Ministry Board.</p> <p>As for misconduct, knowledge/disclosure of criminal convictions may warrant removal as a roster LCMC pastor.</p>	<p>The NALC will have the capacity and authority to train, certify, ordain, call, encourage, care for and discipline pastors, encsure faithful preaching and teaching by its clergy, and support, and, as necessary, discipline congregations.</p>

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Representation/Voting	<p>Voting members for the bi-annual Churchwide Assembly are elected at the synod assemblies.</p> <p>Each synod is entitled to elect one voting member for every 5,800 baptized members in the synod and one voting member for every 50 congregations in the synod. Each synod is entitled to at least two voting members.</p> <p>Each congregation may send voting members to the statewide Synod Assembly based on congregational membership.</p>	<p>The Synod convenes every three years for its regular meeting.</p> <p>Synodical meetings are composed of regularly elected and delegated representatives as established by the bylaws.</p> <p>Women may vote and hold offices that are "humanly established offices" such as church council, council president and other elective offices.</p>	<p>Regular conventions of the synod are held in odd numbered years or bi-annually.</p> <p>Special conventions may be held as determined by the presidents and vice-presidents.</p> <p>WELS does not allow women to vote where they might exercise authority over men.</p>	<p>Each congregation is entitled to send two delegates for up to 500 member churches, & one delegate for each 200 thereafter to the annual LCMC convention.</p> <p>A national LCMC decision does not become binding on congregation until it is ratified & approved by a 2/3 vote of all member congregations. In other words, the national body cannot bind local churches without their approval.</p>	<p>The initial organization and governance of each representative group will be determined at the Convocation of Lutheran CORE in August 2010.</p> <p>Congregations joining the NALC will endorse the constitution for the new church body.</p> <p>Will meet in convocation annually, with 1/2 of the clergy and an approximate equal number of lay delegates, including 1 from every congregation, will convene in a single representative decision-making body.</p>
Accountability of Congregation	<p>Congregations are principally accountable to their own constitutions. Congregations can, however, be subject to discipline for the following issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Departing from the faith confessed by the ELCA as set forth in both current & proposed constitutions. 2. Willfully disregarding or violating any of the criteria for recognition as congregations of the ELCA. 3. Willfully disregarding or violating the provisions of the constitution or bylaws of the ELCA. 	<p>Congregations are principally accountable to their own constitution and bylaws, but they must meet the same standards as outlined in the LCMS Synod constitution and bylaws</p>	<p>Congregations are principally accountable to their own constitution and bylaws, but they must meet the same standards as outlined in the WELS Synod constitution and bylaws</p>	<p>Congregations must agree to the basic tenants of LCMC.</p> <p>LCMC may suspend the membership of a church for cause by three-quarters vote of the LCMC board of trustees.</p>	<p>The bishop will provide oversight of the NALC. The deans will embody oversight in a particular geographical region.</p>
Structure/Hierarchy	<p>3 entities -- congregations, synods, churchwide org.</p> <p>Congregations: ELCA is made up of 10,500 congregations in the US, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands.</p> <p>Synods: ELCA congregations are organized into 65 synods who unite the work of congregations within their areas, serving as regional support and guiding pastors/staff candidates through the call process.</p>	<p>3 entities -- congregations, synods, churchwide org.</p>	<p>WELS consists of a Conference of Presidents, a Synodical Council and Districts.</p> <p>The synod will be divided into districts. The synod may create new districts and redivide or dissolve existing districts.</p>	<p>LCMC maintains a flat structure consisting of member congregations and the Board of Trustees.</p> <p>Congregations may form into districts, or groupings formed around geography, theology, values, shared interests, worship styles, etc. Districts govern themselves within the guidelines set by the assn. (LCMC) and have no national legislative authority. Joining a district is not required.</p> <p>Areas are reapportioned each year as new congregations join to keep balanced geographical representation on the Board of Trustees.</p>	<p>Lead by a Steering Committee with representatives from partner reform movements.</p> <p>An Advisory Council of pastor, scholars and church leaders provide advice and direction on various issues.</p> <p>Under the new constitution, NALC will hold an annual or biennial convocation, which will be the primary authority. They will elect the bishop, the secretary and treasurer to serve for prescribed terms. An executive council will make decisions between convocations.</p>

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Pastoral Calls and Ordination Process	<p>All candidates for ordination must receive a letter of call from either the local congregation, local Synod Council, or churchwide organization through the Churchwide Council. These letters must be signed by the candidate, congregational officer and synod bishop. Ordinations must be performed by the Synod bishop or another currently serving bishop within the ELCA. Ordinations occur at the local congregation during a worship service.</p> <p>The 21-step call process involves the congregation, call committee, church council and local synod.</p> <p>Pastoral Rosters maintained by synod. Women allowed on the pastoral roster.</p> <p>Allow ordination of women to Pastoral Office.</p> <p>Only ELCA pastors are maintained on the Pastoral Rosters.</p> <p>Dual rostering of ordained ministers and congregations is impermissible under the ELCA Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA.</p> <p>The final decision of calling a pastor rests with the local congregation. The Synod's role is to provide help in recruiting and screening pastors that meet a local congregation's profile as determined by them. This role is intended to serve as the ELCA's quality assurance mechanism in pastoral calls.</p> <p>In most places, the ELCA mandates that ordained pastors preside at communion. Sometimes pre-consecrated bread and wine is made available; otherwise, congregations without pastors are not to celebrate the Lord's Supper. In the ELCA, the Bishop may authorize someone other than an ordained pastor to administer communion in special circumstances.</p>	<p>Congregations will seek the counsel of the District presidents when calling ordained or commissioned ministers.</p> <p>Congregations that are members of the Synod will only call ordained and commissioned ministers who have been admitted to their ministries in accordance with the rules and regulations set forth in these bylaws and have become members of the Synod.</p> <p>Do not allow ordination of women.</p>	<p>No concrete information has been found. We are waiting for information from WELS home office in Wisconsin.</p> <p>Do not allow ordination of women.</p>	<p>Member churches of LCMC are authorized to call and ordain ministers pursuant to the standards member churches adopt from time to time. Called and ordained LCMC ministers may belong to clergy rosters of another association or church.</p> <p>Congregations may issue a call to whomever they choose, but must follow LCMC Ministry Standards, governing documents, and Statement of Faith. A call packet is available to guide congregations through the process; still due diligence responsibility lies with the congregation.</p> <p>Pastors seeking a call advertise their profiles online, and congregations are free to interview any available pastor. Conversely, congregations can display a call packet online for pastors to search.</p> <p>Allow ordination of women to Pastoral Office.</p> <p>LCMC approval is not needed before placing a call. congregations are free to call pastors regardless of whether they are identified on LCMC list of pastors.</p> <p>LCMC understands that Luther's biblically-based principle of the priesthood of all believers means that a congregation can, if it chooses, to appoint one of their own number to preach, teach and administer the sacraments.</p>	<p>Congregations will call their pastors, decide their mission priorities, determine their benevolence, and select their worship and educational resources.</p> <p>All members will be encouraged to engage in ministry according to individual spiritual gifts.</p> <p>Allow ordination of women to Pastoral Office.</p>

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