

Structural Reasons

1. The power of the church.

The NALC is structured for the power to reside in congregations, and every church will be represented by its pastors and at least one lay member at national convocations. Changes to the constitution and church statements will have to be ratified by a vote of congregations.

The ELCA is structured for the power in the national Church Council and Bishop. The delegates to the Church Wide Assemble are instructed that they are not representatives, but are elected to vote their own mind. At the 2009 CWA the Church Council rejected the advice of the Council of Bishops (the 65 synod bishops), in spite of a warning that their actions would split the church. There is no ratification process for the decisions of the CWA delegates.

2. Property ownership.

The NALC states that the ownership of property stays with the congregation.

The ELCA has several holds on property ownership. The synod may even take property away from congregations in certain circumstances.

3. Constitution.

The NALC allows a congregation to produce its own constitution.

The ELCA has a “Model Constitution” which it requires. Most of the ELCA constitution is unalterable by congregations.

Mission

NALC- to make disciples and spread the Gospel. The NALC started with two mission congregations and has plans to start several more this year.

ELCA – to make a better society through social change. The ELCA has started few mission churches in its 20 years of existence and the majority of those have failed. The ELCA recently made budget cuts to funding missions while continuing to fund social statements. The average social statement and study costs the ELCA 1.5 million dollars.

Cost

The NALC will partner with existing ministries and organizations to keep cost on the national level low. Examples are Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Disaster Response, Lutheran Social Services, Youth Encounter. Congregations will be encouraged to decide how to support missions beyond themselves, and to send that support directly. The budget for the first year was \$300,000.

The ELCA has an extensive staff and office building. Its staff raises funds and sends them to other organizations as those stated above. The budget for 2010 for the ELCA was \$62,500,000.

Vote to end relationship with the ELCA

Why now?

1. When we voted to join the North American Lutheran Church last July, we said that we would hold dual membership until the NALC was officially formed and showed that it could be a viable church. The NALC was formed in August with 17 congregations and has now grown to 85 congregations in six months. This is far ahead of the predicted schedule. Letters of call were issued and accepted for a General Secretary and a Director of Missions. A main office has been established at Upper Arlington Lutheran Church. All has been done in line with the vision that was established at the founding of the church.
2. The ELCA has continued and even gotten bolder in moving forward with their agenda.
3. The ELCA has proposed amendments to the constitution to make it harder for a congregation to leave the ELCA. These amendments taking the decision of the process away from the congregation and giving that power to the bishop.
4. Having finality to this process and a loyalty to one church body will allow St. John's focus on our ministry here.

Why end our relationship with the ELCA?

Theological reasons:

1. Salvation.

The NALC teaches that faith in Jesus and His redemptive act is the only way that one is saved. (John 14:6 “no one comes to the Father but through me.”)

The ELCA in its recent study Bible said that many will be saved without ever believing in or even knowing Jesus. While these words were later changed in the study Bible, the person who wrote them still teaches in an ELCA seminary. This teaching comes from Liberation Theology, and is a belief that one is not saved by a personal belief, but by a “collective salvation” through social action to make a better society.

2. Authority of the Bible

The NALC teaches that the Bible is God's Word and authoritative in all matters of faith and life.

The ELCA states this same doctrine, but they teach that the Bible must be reinterpreted in light of the beliefs of society. This is known as the revisionist approach to scripture.

3. Trinity

The NALC believes in the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These are the Biblical names for the persons of the Trinity and have been used by Christians for 2000 years.

The ELCA has pushed for alternative names that would be more “politically correct” ever since the ELCA was formed. In the past few years the ELCA has allowed this to include prayer to the “goddess who is within us” as well as other feminine references to a goddess. These were at officially sanctioned events led by ELCA bishops.

4. The NALC is known as a centralist church. It is not on the extreme of liberalism or fundamentalism. It has found a solid middle ground between the extremes where it can be centered on Christ with a traditional Lutheran theology.