

Sample Resolution to Dual Roster a Congregation

from LCMC Pastor, Tony Stoutenberg:

The ELCA has come out recently declaring that congregations may not be concurrently rostered in the ELCA and another Lutheran Church body such as LCMC (Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ) or NALC (North American Lutheran Church). However, as you can see from the following sample resolution to dual roster a congregation there is solid reasons and precedence for doing so in spite of recent rulings.

There are at least two times when placing a congregation in dual roster status may be a very good idea. First in the time between the first and second vote for a congregation in the process to disaffiliate with the ELCA it may be wise to decide the direction of the congregation's future affiliation. The second situation is when a congregation is so deeply divided that allowing the members of the congregation to have the affiliation they want for their congregation even shared with the one they don't want may enable the congregation to stay intact.

We commend the following for your examination and use:

Whereas _____ Lutheran Church is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, and

Whereas the ELCA Constitution does not prohibit a congregation being rostered in two different church bodies, and

Whereas the _____ Synod Constitution does not prohibit a congregation being rostered in two different church bodies, and

Whereas ELCA Churchwide Constitution reads in part, "9.30. RESERVATION OF AUTHORITY 9.31. Congregations of this church shall have authority in all matters that are not assigned by the constitution and bylaws of this church to synods and the churchwide organization" and

Whereas an opinion issued by former ELCA Secretary Lowell Almen which stated, "No ELCA constitutional provision exists for the recognition or reception of future dual roster Lutheran church body relationships for congregations in the ELCA" (2001 Report of the Secretary) completely ignores the existence of the Reservation of Authority Clause, and therefore is itself unconstitutional and inapplicable, and

Whereas there have been dual rostered congregations in the ELCA for almost all of its life, there being congregations that were part of the ELCA and the LC-MS from

1988 to 1998 and there being congregations that are part of the ELCA and LCMC since 2001, and,

Whereas former Presiding Bishop H George Anderson stated "dual congregations don't pose a problem for the ELCA" (The Lutheran Magazine, 3/1999 & 4/2000) and

Whereas the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ have a Constitution Statement of Faith that is identical in every material way, so that there is no conflict in the mission of the church by belonging to both,

Therefore, be it resolved that _____ Lutheran Church become a member of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ. *(Optional: while prayerfully considering our future relationship with the ELCA.)*