

**The American Association of Lutheran Churches (TAALC)  
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS)**

**OPERATING AGREEMENT I**

**THE MOVEMENT OF MEMBERS BETWEEN CHURCH BODIES**

We join in thanking God for the altar and pulpit fellowship declared by our church bodies during their 2007 conventions. We implore the Lord of the Church to continue to strengthen the bond of fellowship and spirit of cooperation that exist among us as our church bodies cooperate in our efforts to proclaim the Gospel of Christ. We anticipate that positive relationships and cooperation will continue to increase as our pastors and laity are invited to participate in conferences and other gatherings of the partner church body (e.g., pastors' conferences, youth gatherings) and as representatives are invited to participate (excluding voting privilege) in common meetings (e.g., boards, commissions, councils).

The Protocol Document signed when fellowship was declared advocates the free movement of ordained ministers between our church bodies to participate in worship services and other activities. Ecclesiastical supervisors (district presidents or regional pastors) should be informed when a pastor of the partner church body has been invited by a congregation or other entity to lead or participate in such events.

The Protocol Document also recognizes that on occasion there will be movement of members between the official rosters of the partner church bodies due to necessity or personal interest. While the movement of large numbers of congregations and/or pastors is not anticipated, this Operating Agreement I will provide good order for such changes of official membership.

To facilitate good order, each church body will make its roster information readily available on an annual basis to the ecclesiastical supervisors of the partner church body, with up-to-date information provided upon request. Both church bodies also will identify those pastors on their rosters who were at one time rostered by the partner church body. In addition, a list of LCMS pastors removed for cause will be maintained by the LCMS Secretary and made available to the TAALC Presiding Pastor, who will also maintain and make available to LCMS ecclesiastical supervisors a list of TAALC pastors removed for cause.

---

MOVEMENT OF  
A CONGREGATION'S MEMBERSHIP  
TO THE PARTNER CHURCH BODY

1. A congregation interested in moving its membership to the partner church body will inform (a) its ecclesiastical supervisor, (b) the president or presiding pastor of its church body, and (c) the president or presiding pastor of the partner church body. Any immediate obstacles to transfer of membership will be addressed at this time.
2. A meeting of the congregation and appropriate ecclesiastical supervisors will be arranged to provide opportunity for consideration of changes that would necessarily accompany change in church body membership.
3. The congregation will submit Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, and Bylaws to the appropriate ecclesiastical supervisor of the receiving partner church body for approval.
4. Upon approval of the documents, reception into membership will follow the process established by the receiving church body for the reception of new congregations.
5. Upon the congregation's formal reception into membership, its new ecclesiastical supervisor will inform the appropriate authorities of both church bodies, which will complete the process for transfer of membership.
6. Movement of pastors serving congregations that transfer membership will be governed by the policies here following.

---

MOVEMENT OF  
AN ORDAINED MINISTER'S MEMBERSHIP  
TO THE PARTNER CHURCH BODY

(A) When a congregation or other calling entity expresses interest in calling a pastor who is on the roster of the partner church body:

1. The congregation will make its interest known to (a) its ecclesiastical supervisor, who will inform (b) his counterpart in the partner church body and (c) the president and (d) the presiding pastor of the national church bodies. Their required approval will take into consideration the pastor's roster

status/category and his record of service, including any former membership and service in the church body of the calling entity. Pastors under discipline will be regarded as not available for consideration until the matter has been resolved.

2. Following approval, the pastor will be informed that a congregation or other calling entity of the partner church body has expressed interest in considering him for a call.
3. If the pastor agrees to allow his name to be considered, his name and accompanying biographical and evaluative information will be provided by his ecclesiastical supervisor to the ecclesiastical supervisor of the calling congregation or entity.
4. If the pastor receives the call, his ecclesiastical supervisor will be expected to discuss with him expectations and responsibilities that would accompany change in roster membership should he accept the call.
5. If the pastor accepts the call, he will inform the ecclesiastical supervisor of the calling congregation or entity of his desire to apply for membership in the receiving church body. The ecclesiastical supervisor will provide a statement for the pastor's signature acknowledging his subscription to the Constitution of the receiving church body and testifying to his willingness to uphold its bylaws and other rules and regulations.
6. Upon receipt of the signed statement, the ecclesiastical supervisor will authorize the installation of the pastor in accordance with the receiving church body's accepted forms and practices and will report the installation to his counterpart in the partner church body.
7. Both ecclesiastical supervisors will provide official reports to their church bodies, which reports will finalize the movement of the pastor's membership from the one partner church body to the other.

(B) When a rostered pastor who is interested in membership in the partner church body wishes to be considered for a call by a congregation or other calling entity of that church body:

1. Pastors under discipline will be regarded as not eligible for this process until all matters at issue have been resolved.
2. A pastor in good standing who is interested in being considered for a call by a congregation or other calling entity of the partner church body must inform his immediate ecclesiastical supervisor, who will obtain from his counterpart in the partner church body any required forms.
3. Upon completion of the forms by the pastor and, as necessary, his ecclesiastical supervisor, the pastor will request an appointment with the partner church ecclesiastical supervisor of the geographical area in which he resides in order to submit his forms.

4. The partner church ecclesiastical supervisor will be responsible for interviewing the pastor and deciding whether and to what extent his name and information will be disseminated in the partner church body. He may discuss questions and concerns with the pastor's current ecclesiastical supervisor. He may obtain counsel from the president and/or presiding pastor of the church bodies.
5. If the ecclesiastical supervisor agrees to make the pastor's name and information available for consideration for a call, he will provide the pastor's name to the congregations of his district or region as appropriate. If requested by the pastor, he will also make the name and accompanying information available to other ecclesiastical supervisors in his church body.
6. Lists created for the purpose of circulating such names will be maintained and monitored by the ecclesiastical supervisors of each partner church body.
7. Congregations who choose to call a name from this list will be required to follow the steps provided in Section (A) above, as appropriate.

(C) When a rostered pastor is the called pastor of a congregation that moves its membership to the partner church body:

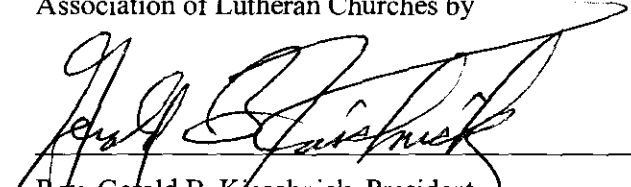
1. A pastor who is the called pastor of a congregation that moves its membership to the partner church body and who is interested in membership in the partner church body will inform his current and the receiving church body's ecclesiastical supervisors who in turn will inform the President and Presiding Pastor of the church bodies. Any obstacles to movement of membership will be attended to at this time.
2. The receiving ecclesiastical supervisor will provide a statement for the pastor's signature acknowledging his subscription to the Constitution of the receiving church body and testifying to his willingness to uphold its bylaws and other rules and regulations.
3. Upon receipt of the signed statement, the ecclesiastical supervisor will report its reception to pastor's former ecclesiastical supervisor in the partner church body. Both ecclesiastical supervisors will provide official reports to their church bodies, which reports will finalize the movement of the pastor's membership from the one partner church body to the other.

(D) Other cases when a rostered pastor is interested in moving his membership:


All other cases in which a pastor is interested in moving his membership to the partner church body will be handled by existing colloquy or reinstatement policies and practices, as appropriate.

---

This agreement signed on behalf of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and The American Association of Lutheran Churches by

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Rev. Gerald B. Kieschnick, President  
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Date: 4/21/09

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Rev. Franklin Hays, Presiding Pastor  
The American Association of Lutheran Churches

Date: 19 April 2009