



AN AFFILIATE CONGREGATION

A FELLOWSHIP RELATIONSHIP WITH THE
CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN BRETHREN

Church^{of the}
Lutheran
Brethren

God's grace and peace in Jesus Christ.

The Church of the Lutheran Brethren (CLB) is a family of congregations bound together by a common relationship in Jesus Christ and a common understanding of the foundational teachings of Holy Scripture.

We believe the Bible is God's verbally and plenary inspired Word, free from all error as originally given. We believe our union is based on God's gracious salvation obtained for us by Jesus Christ and received through faith in Him.

It is the desire of the CLB to be a home for all who desire to participate in this type of community of congregations.

Some congregations have a similar theology and polity to that of the congregations of the Church of the Lutheran Brethren. Other congregations have been formed in other traditions but now, for a variety of reasons, are interested in affiliating with a different church body, perhaps the CLB. The Church of the Lutheran Brethren is a denomination within the Lutheran and Evangelical Christian tradition.

The following brief statements outline the general invitation that the Church of the Lutheran Brethren extends to congregations looking for a church family. It is a two-step process by which a congregation can align itself with the CLB. The first step is to become an affiliate congregation. It is itself a recognized relationship during which preparations may be taken to become a member congregation of the CLB.

We offer you this outline in the spirit of an introductory conversation and an invitation to consider whether the Lord Christ is leading your congregation to identify with the theology, mission and practices of the Church of the Lutheran Brethren.

Sharing in the Lord's Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joel Egge". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Joel R. Egge, President

Church of the Lutheran Brethren Affiliate Congregation Status

Lutheran congregations may seek affiliate status with the Church of the Lutheran Brethren by their acceptance of the following provisions.

Definition

Affiliate status is an arrangement by which a congregation calls a pastor from the CLB clergy roster, or its current pastor is in the colloquy process, and the congregation accepts a non-binding fellowship relationship with the CLB. Affiliate status is a preliminary step to full membership in the CLB. It is for those circumstances where either the congregation or the denomination deems it wise to take time to explore the implications of membership. Congregational circumstances vary and while it is not required to move from affiliate status to full membership it is expected that the congregation regularly consider full membership.

Criteria

1. The pastor shall be a member of the CLB clergy roster or in the colloquy process.
2. The congregation at an officially called meeting shall vote to become an affiliate congregation and approve a memorandum of understanding authorizing their pastor to preach and teach in harmony with the CLB Statement of Faith.
3. The congregation shall work in harmony with CLB congregations and ministries.

Procedure

1. The congregation shall apply to the Office of the President by letter for acceptance as an affiliate congregation. This letter shall be accompanied by the following:
 - a. The constitution and by-laws of the congregation.
 - b. The minutes of an official meeting indicating endorsement of the stated requirements.
2. The President shall assess the application for affiliation and make recommendation to the Council of Directors.
3. The Council of Directors shall make recommendation for approval at the Biennial Convention.

Privileges

1. Affiliate congregations are encouraged to send two non-voting representatives with speaking rights to the CLB Biennial Convention.
2. Affiliate congregations will be included in mailings of special newsletters, teaching/position papers, reports and other informational materials.
3. Affiliate congregations are welcome to seek the consultation and advice of the Office of the President.
4. Affiliate congregations shall be encouraged to participate in synodically sponsored seminars, conferences, Bible camps, youth conventions, fellowship gatherings and in special projects.
5. Affiliate congregations are welcome to seek the services of youth mission teams, special presentations, and consultation services.

Responsibilities

1. The congregation shall seek to glorify God in all of their ministry activity and conduct and in no way bring disrepute to the body of Christ and to the CLB.
2. The congregation shall fulfill the financial obligations of the pastor's health-benefit and pension program as per the Synodical plan or an equivalent if acceptable.
3. The congregation shall be encouraged to support their pastor in fulfilling the obligations of the pastoral office including such things as attendance at biennial conventions, regional meetings, pastoral in-services and other responsibilities as outlined in the *CLB Ministers of the Gospel Handbook*.
4. The congregation shall be encouraged to pray for, financially support and encourage the various Synodical ministries.
5. The congregation together with the pastor shall provide an Annual Ministry Report as per request from the Office of the President.

Action Steps

1. The affiliating congregation agrees to accept the CLB Statement of Faith and approve the following memorandum of understanding: That _____ Church approves the Statement of Faith of the CLB as the teaching position that will be followed by any CLB pastor serving the congregation.

2. The congregation applies for affiliate status as outlined above.
3. The President or his appointed representative shall explore with the congregation if affiliate status is the appropriate membership category for them and encourage them to explore full membership in the CLB.
4. The Council of Directors receives the constitution of the congregation and reviews it for any items that might be a hindrance to fellowship.
5. The Council of Directors recommends the congregation for affiliate status to the biennial meeting. Upon acceptance by the biennial meeting they are placed on the affiliate congregation listing of the denomination.
6. The President or his appointed representative shall meet with the congregation at least once every five years to discuss the congregation's relationship with the synod and evaluate the possibility of membership.

Note to Existing Affiliates

No congregation accepted as an affiliate under a prior agreement shall be obligated to meet any of the stipulations of this document in order to maintain their affiliate status. They shall however be encouraged to avail themselves of all the opportunities for strengthening their relationship with the synod that this document outlines.

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Approved by Synodical Council 3/03
Revised 5/10