

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – December 21, 2011

Contact: Bishop John Bradosky 614-684-8484 - jbradosky@thenalc.org

Pastor Mark Chavez 717-898-0801 - generalsecretary@thenalc.org

Pastor Donald Allman - dallman@stjohnsgc.org

Pastor Victor C. Langford III - faithvcl3@aol.com

Canadian Commission is working on legal issues for congregations in Canada becoming a part of NALC

The NALC's Canadian Commission met Dec. 6-7 in Edmonton, Alberta.

The NALC Executive Council has appointed the commission to work on legal issues necessary to assist congregations in Canada in joining the NALC and for those congregations to have an ongoing relationship with the NALC.

Two congregations in Canada have voted to join the NALC, and additional congregations are expressing interest in being a part of the NALC.

“In forming the NALC there was a vision of uniting faithful and orthodox Lutherans across the entire North American continent. That vision is moving forward as Lutheran churches in Canada are voting to join the NALC. But the unity in ministry sometimes is challenged by legal issues as we work across national borders,” said Pastor Donald Allman, chair of the NALC's Canadian Commission.

“The commission was formed to find ways to maintain our oneness while meeting the legal requirements of two nations,” Pastor Allman said.

“Using Ephesians 4 as our devotional and discussion text, we found a solid bond in faith. From our shared center in Christ and commitment to the four fundamental values of the NALC, we went to work on overcoming the legal obstacles that stand in our path,” he said.

“Many of the things already established in the U.S.A. now need to be established in Canada,” Pastor Allman explained. “We need to assure charitable tax status and licensing to perform marriages. Pension funds and medical benefits will not work across borders. Contributions that cross the border create a legal issue. Mobility of pastors, seminary training, military chaplains, and mission district connections are all concerns to be addressed.

“Many of the items are now in place thanks to the foresight of our Canadian pastors on the commission. Proposals were sent to the Executive Council regarding legal counsel to work out incorporation in Canada. We are also very grateful to the Lutheran Church Canada (sister church of the LCMS) for their offers to help us get established in Canada,” he said.

“The highlights of the time together were the two meetings lead by Bishop Bradosky introducing the NALC to several hundred people representing more than a dozen congregations,” Pastor Allman said. “The discussion and questions at those meetings showed that we deal with the same concerns on both sides of the border. Similar tactics are used by bishops and the denominations to create fear and force congregations to stay in the ELCA and the ELCIC. People wanted assurances that the NALC would not go down the same path as the ELCA and ELCIC.

“Bishop Bradosky outlined how those bodies got to where they are and how building on a different foundation with a different set of values will keep us from repeating their errors. He encouraged them to lean into the race set before them and leave the past behind. The meetings ended with great enthusiasm as we move forward together,” he said.

The Canadian Commission consists of three American pastors and three Canadian pastors:

Pastor Donald Allman – chair
St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church,
Grove City, OH

Pastor Mark C. Chavez
NALC General Secretary
Landisville, PA

Pastor Victor C. Langford III
St. Mark’s Lutheran Church
Seattle, WA

Pastor Phil Gagnon
St. Albert Evangelical Lutheran
Church, St. Albert, AB

Pastor Karl Johnsen
Calvary Lutheran Church
Edmonton, AB

Pastor K. Glen Johnson
Ascension Lutheran Church
Calgary, AB

NALC leaders are also consulting with leaders of the Anglican Church in North America as to how they have handled cross-border issues in their church.

Many congregations are considering leaving the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada which, like the ELCA in the United States, has moved away from traditional Christian teaching and practice.

Like those leaving the ELCA, those leaving the ELCIC believe that the Bible no longer norms the faith and practice of their previous church body.

* * * * *