

Continental Restructuring Task Force Plan

Purpose

The North American Lutheran Church was founded in 2010 and has grown to over 470 congregations and ministries. We remain committed to a lean denominational structure able to provide support and resources for the mission and ministry of NALC congregations. The current structure, designed for a smaller body, is no longer adequate to care for and promote the growth of all aspects of the church's mission. The NALC is at a time when our structure must adapt to effectively pursue the Great Commission of the Church.

The primary purpose of restructuring is to assist the Bishop and Deans in providing discipling relationships of pastoral care, teaching, administration, and accountability for the congregations of the NALC. The plan organizes the NALC into four geographic areas in which *Assistants to the Bishop*, responsible and accountable to the Bishop and the Executive Council, fulfil this purpose.

Job Descriptions of the Assistant to The Bishop In Relation to Those of the Office of the Mission District Dean

Assistant to the Bishop	Mission District Dean
Authority as extension of the bishop	Authority as extension of the assistant
Discipling deans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen/Advise • Care for/prayer with mission district deans • Resource • Foster connections between mission district deans • Establish/maintain communication with mission district • Serve as liaison to the NALC • Retain access to bishop and directors • Teach 	Discipling of pastors/congregations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen/Advise • Care for/prayer with mission district pastors and congregations • Resource • Foster connections between mission district pastors and congregations • Establish/maintain communication with mission district pastors • Serve as liaison to the assistant • retain access to bishop and directors • Teach
Ordinations as requested	Ordinations as requested
Installations if needed	Installations

Create Area Gatherings (can be yearly or biennial off-year from NALC in-person convocation)	Organize and facilitate yearly Mission District Convocations
Facilitate (quarterly or so) regional dean meetings (virtual)	Oversee Mission District Council
Possible Shared Resources/Coordination (Teams may be shared with other mission districts)	
Conflict Resolution – resource and advise the Mission District Dean Share Pastoral Care and Transition (P-CAT) teams	Conflict Resolution – May seek assistance of the Assistant to the Bishop May share Pastoral Care and Transition (P-CAT) team
If needed establish teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission start/planting • Outreach • Discipleship/renewal • Communication 	Establish teams within mission districts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission start/planting • Outreach • Discipleship/renewal • Communication
Seminarian support Financial Aid for 4-5 seminarians	Seminarian support Financial Aid funding for seminarians
Maintain area rosters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission Districts • Rostered personnel • Churches 	Maintain mission district rosters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rostered personnel • Churches • Friends • Pulpit supply list
Other duties as fit the situation	
Interim ministry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify interim ministers • Help deans find interims 	Interim ministry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify interim ministers • Help congregations with interim needs
Work with potential NALC congregations	May work with potential NALC congregations
	Interview certification candidates
Encourage internships	Encourage internships
	Compensation guideline negotiations with church councils for new pastors



NALC CONTINENTAL RESTRUCTURING TASK FORCE — FAQ'S

- 1- **What is the 'mission' of this task force?** **A/** As part of implementing the 2020 Vision, approved during the 2020 Annual Convocation, the mission of the task force has been to propose "a strategy for continental restructuring able to expand with denominational growth."¹
- 2- **What is being proposed?** **A/** The identification and appointment of four *Assistants to the Bishop*...a title descriptive of their ministry in assisting our bishop and denomination in fulfilling Christ's Great Commission.
- 3- **How are the candidates identified and nominated?** **A/** Each mission district is entitled to nominate one candidate, submitting the nomination to our bishop within the time frame identified. This nomination is to be accomplished by each Mission District Council or by the Mission District Convocation.
- 4- **Are these positions appointed?** **A/** Yes, by the bishop, bringing names of four assistants to the bishop to the executive council for its confirmation.
- 5- **What are the criteria for a candidate?**
A/ Active on the roster of ordained NALC pastor
A/ Retired? Yes.
A/ Serving in part-time ministry? Yes.
A/ Considering part-time ministry? Yes.
A/ While serving in full-time ministry? No.

Assistants to the Bishop will be responsible and accountable to the bishop and will provide discipling and pastoral care for the deans and mission districts in their area. They shall work with, and by, the authority of the bishop, conducting similar and supportive functions.
- 6- **How many hours per week?** **A/** 10 ... the four positions equate to one full-time employee.
- 7- **What is the proposed compensation?** **A/** \$20,000 annually, plus expenses.
- 8- **How long will they serve?** **A/** A four-year term. By the bishop's decision, initially two assistants to the bishop will serve a four-year term and two will serve a two-year term to provide continuity and retain institutional 'memory.' Terms will be four years thereafter.
- 9- **Can an Assistant to the Bishop serve a consecutive term?** **A/** Yes, with a two-term limit and at the discretion of the bishop.
- 10- **How many 'areas' are being proposed?** **A/** Four, identified geographically, each with a similar number of mission district deans and congregations.
- 11- **Can a map be provided, indicating the four areas and the number of mission districts, deans, and congregations?** **A/** yes ... we have included a map of the four areas, along with the number of mission districts, deans, and congregations ... averaging 10 deans and 112 congregations per area.
- 12- **Will Assistants to the Bishop be evaluated?** **A/** Yes, annually, by our bishop, the area mission district deans, and a self-evaluation. Completed evaluations will be sent to the bishop's office, with a section to be summarized and sent on to the Long-Range Planning Committee of the Executive Council. Criteria for measuring the effectiveness of the plan will be developed by the task force and be in place upon implementation.

¹ From the 2020 Vision strategic plan

13- When and how will this plan be implemented?

A/ Chronologically,

- Material will be disbursed to mission district deans and pastors initially.
- In mid-July 2021, our Executive Council will create a proposed budget.
- Our August 2021 Mission Convocation will vote to affirm the plan.
- The convocation will vote on the proposed budget, which includes funding for this continental restructuring.
- Promptly following the August 2021 NALC Mission Convocation, our bishop will solicit mission district nominations for assistants to the bishop, with a submission deadline to be established ... perhaps September 30, 2021.
- By October 31, 2021, our bishop will appoint our four assistants to the bishop.
- The *Assistants to the Bishop* will begin their work in January 2022.

14- Will there be orientation and who will provide this? **A/** Yes, and this will occur at, and in coordination with, the November 2021 Deans' meeting.

15- Will these four geographic 'areas' be given names?

A/ Yes...Western, Southern, Midwestern and Eastern

16- Will the nominated/appointed *Assistants to the Bishop* be required to move?

A/ No, as each is nominated by a mission district within the geographical area in which the nominee resides.

17- Who serves on this particular 2020 VISION Task Force?

A/ Pastor Pam Thorson, Pastor Mark Daniels, NALC Executive Council member Scott Kramer, former NALC General Secretary Pastor Mark Chavez (convened through early March 2021) and convened (beginning early March 2021) by Pastor Daniel M. Powell.

18- Does this plan include/involve additional administrative support?

A/ Yes, to work out of and in accordance with the new central office plan and to be shared by the four assistants to the bishop, responsible (but not limited to) such matters as roster updates, record-keeping, correspondence, travel arrangements and overseeing budgets. Details to be established by the Executive Council.

19- Does this plan increase our number of current assistants to the bishop?

A/ These four will be the only assistants to the bishop, as present NALC staff titles will be revised to describe their responsibilities more accurately.

20- How will this plan affect existing Mission Regions?

A/ To be determined by those within the region. ***The NALC currently has Mission Districts and Mission Regions, including Deans and assistants to the Dean, as best suits each region. The proposed *Assistants to the Bishop* will disciple Mission District Deans and assistants to the Dean, where present.

21- Does this plan require a vote at a Convocation?

Our constitution includes only two staff positions, bishop and general secretary, and all subsequent positions have been established through an additional budgetary line item.

A/ No, however, our August 2021 NALC Mission Convocation will vote to affirm the plan.

A/ The convocation will vote on the proposed budget, which includes funding for this continental restructuring.

Proposed Areas

Western 11 [95]¹

Canadian³
 Northwest
 Central Pacific
 Southwest Pacific
 Rocky Mountain
 Western Dakotas-Montana-Wyoming
 Minkota
 Eastern South Dakota

Southern 9 [89]¹

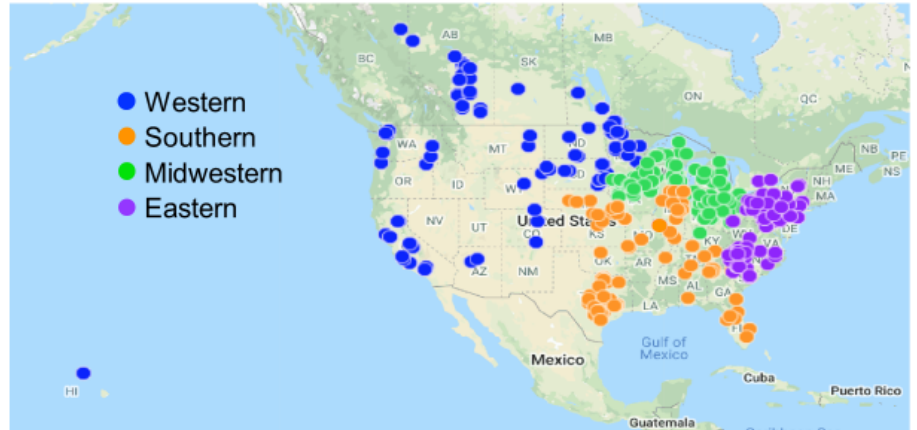
Great Plains West²
 Great Plains East²
 Great Plains South²
 Great Rivers
 North Texas
 Southwest Texas
 Southeast Texas
 Mid-South
 Sunshine

Midwestern 11 [137]¹

Iowa³
 Wisconsin/Upper Michigan
 Heartland
 Michigan
 Southeast Ohio²
 Southwest Ohio²
 Northwest Ohio²
 Northeast Ohio²
 North Central Ohio²

Eastern 9 [126]¹

CMR Southern Piedmont²
 CMR Piedmont-East²
 CMR South Carolina²
 CMR Catawba Valley²
 AMR Central²
 AMR Western²
 AMR Southern²
 AMR Northeast²
 Mid-Northeast³



¹First number is the total number of Deans in the Area, including Mission Region Deans and Assistant Deans; number in brackets is the total number of congregations in the Area

²Mission Regions: Great Plains, Ohio, Carolinas MR (CMR) and Atlantic MR (AMR)

³Mission Districts with Assistant Dean