

A Survey of Small Lutheran Groups in the United States

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Introduction

As Northern European immigrants settled in the New World, they brought with them customs from the Old World. German, Swedish, Finnish and Norwegian towns sprung up across what is now known as the United States of America. Many of these towns were isolated and independent. Out of necessity each town had its own local bakery, blacksmith and, of course, brewery. The result was a colorful landscape of Old World culture in a newly settled land. Travelers crossing the Midwest could sample a different brewer's creation every night. Through the mid-nineteenth century there were hundreds of breweries that dotted America's map.

However, as with most trades, this quaint economic scene soon changed. Second, third and fourth generations took advantages of their freedom, leaving behind their Old World heritage for better jobs. Faster transportation made it easier for entrepreneurs to corner markets, driving the little guy out of business. Slowly those hundreds of breweries were bought out and consolidated into bigger companies. Eventually a few big families took over. With the advent of refrigerated horse-drawn carts and train cars, the sky was the only limit for such tycoons as Adolphus Busch and Adolph Coors. Eventually there were only three big breweries and only a handful of smaller companies holding on by their fingernails. Sadly, this was the case for many years.

Then came the microbrewery. In typical American fashion, beer drinkers became disenchanted with the big bully on the block. Sick of generic, mass-produced lagers, the American beer-drinker thirsted for something new and refreshing. An explosion of microbreweries changed the industry in a matter of a few years. The beer cooler at the local liquor store now started to look like the wine isle. Connoisseurs now paced up and down the tiled floor thinking and rethinking their choice. Again, hundreds of breweries dot America's map.

A similar pattern can be found in the Church. Lutheran historians need only pull out their complicated chart of Lutheran synods to see the colorful landscape of nineteenth century American Lutheranism. There were German, Norwegian, Swedish, Danish and Finnish churches all with different customs and languages. There were confessional and unionistic churches. At one point, it seemed like half the states in the union had their own Lutheran synods. As the country became fuller and future generations became more American, consolidations occurred. The number of Lutheran groups became smaller and three big "families" emerged, the Synodical Conference, the American Lutheran Church (ALC) and the Lutheran Church in America (LCA). Of course, a few smaller groups continued to remain independent of these mergers.

However, just like in the brewery industry, a bit of an explosion changed the landscape of American Lutheranism. As the ALC, LCA and others discussed a merger into what is now the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), disenchanted Lutherans formed new synods, associations and federations. Today, another chart could be drawn up rivaling the complicated one found in history books. Thirty-six different groups call themselves Lutheran in the United States today.

This is a survey of small Lutheran groups in the United States. Excluded from this list are the "big three", the ELCA, the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LC-MS) and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). The Evangelical Lutheran

Synod (ELS), although small and unique enough to be mentioned, will not be considered because of its close affiliation with the WELS.¹ Also missing from this survey will be the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Latvian Lutheran Church and the Lithuanian Evangelical Lutheran Church in Diaspora because of their close ties with their home countries. That leaves twenty-nine small and relatively unknown groups.

Before this list begins, mention should also be made of our brothers to the north. Three groups in the United States have sister synods in Canada that are independent of their American counterparts. The Association of Free Lutheran Congregations in Canada is affiliated with the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. The Luther Church – Canada is affiliated with the LC-MS. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada is affiliated with the ELCA. There is one completely independent Lutheran church body in Canada. The Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations, a group of three congregations, does not have a sister synod south of the boarder.²

As would be expected, there is wide variety within the twenty-nine small Lutheran groups in the United States. Some have held on to their pietistic roots and remain anti-Roman Catholic while others have moved toward reconciliation with Rome and have been installed in the historic episcopate. For some, fellowship principles or the exclusive use of the King James Version have led to their independence while others are calling for change and reform. Some have fought for their independence against controlling bureaucracy while others maintain that the bishop controls the church. What are common to most of these groups are a high view of Scripture and a strong conviction of the autonomous nature of the individual congregation.

There are two groups that do not consider themselves “synods” in the usual way. They are pan-Lutheran and would describe themselves as movements rather than synods. Their memberships include both individuals (lay or clergy) and congregations.

Alliance of Renewal Churches

The Alliance of Renewal Churches (ARC) is a decentralized network of churches and individuals. Its membership includes ELCA congregations. An individual or a congregation does not have to leave its former synod in order to join. It does not consider itself a denomination, but “a new wineskin for a new day”.³ They see themselves as an alternative to the old synods but not necessarily a replacement. The alliance is small and has put an emphasis on congregational autonomy.

There are a few synodical aspects that remain. It supports its own seminary and its “Leadership Team” reserves the right, although reluctantly, to be the final judge on “serious issues... such as financial impropriety moral failure, or theological issues”.⁴

¹ All four of these synods will be listed in the addendum.

² *Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations Website*. (Kamloops, BC, 2004, last assessed on September 5, 2004.) Available from <http://www.calc.ca>; internet.

³ *Alliance of Renewal Churches Website*. (Roseville, MN, 2004, last assessed on October 6, 2004.) Available from <http://www.allianceofrenewalchurches.org>; internet.

Throughout this survey all information is taken from the particular's group website unless otherwise noted.

⁴ *Alliance of Renewal Churches Website*.

The ARC runs a seminary called the Master's Institute. It was founded in the same year as the Alliance, 2002. Rev. Mike Bradley is the current director and dean of students. The current enrollment is twenty-two.

The ARC has a two-fold purpose, congregational transformation and church planting. It carries out the first part of their ministry with retreats, conferences, workshops and seminars. Concerning its second objective, the alliance does not plant churches itself like a home mission board of a larger synod. Rather, it supports and encourages individual congregations to start daughter congregations. This may mean monetary help, but is not specifically stated. They speak highly of this process although one would imagine that with more resources independent missions would be started also.

The ARC seems to have a church-growth mindset. Certainly some in this Lutheran group would object to many theological conclusions made by many church-growth gurus, but many ARC congregations practice church-growth principles. There is an emphasis on individual ministry and spiritual gifts.

Their doctrinal statements are ambiguous. Although they profess the Bible as the infallible word of God, they only confess to the three ecumenical creeds and not to the Book of Concord. They also leave the door wide open for a Reformed view on the sacraments by not claiming them as means of grace.

Word Alone Network

In response to the proposed Concordat of Agreement with the Episcopal Church USA (EC-USA), a group of ELCA laymen and clergy founded the Word Alone Network (WAN) in 1996. It started as an e-mail list and has developed into a "virtual renewal community".⁵ It now includes 218 member congregations and over 110,000 members. These congregations have remained in the ELCA but are committed to reform. 117 congregations, not all members of WAN, have redirected their benevolence to WAN. Eighty-six congregations, not all members of Word Alone, have made formal protests against the ELCA. In 2001 the WAN "gave birth"⁶ to a group named Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC). LCMC is now a separate and independent entity that numbers 122 congregations.

The major dispute concerning the Concordat was over the issue of ordination. In order to be in communion with the EC-USA, the ELCA had to install all of its clergy into the historic episcopate and promise to have all new clergy ordained by a bishop. Future members of the WAN objected to this concession.

After about four years of electronic communication, a meeting at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Mahtomedi, MN was called. Over 200 people attended including former ALC president Dr. David Preus and former LCA president Dr. Robert Marshall. Later in 1999 a subsequent meeting was called at Roseville Lutheran Church in Roseville, MN. 300 attended this meeting that solidified the WAN as a renewing movement inside the ELCA. In February of the following year, eighteen WAN and ELCA leaders met in Milwaukee, including future ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson. After a vote of seventeen to one, the Milwaukee Common Ground Resolution

⁵ *Word Alone Network Website*. (New Brighton, MN, 2004, last assessed on October 1, 2004.) Available from <http://www.wordalone.org>; internet.

⁶ Sullivan, Bill. Personal e-mail, September 8, 2004.

was adopted. This resolution called on ELCA leaders to allow Lutheran ordination to continue as it did before the Concordat with the EC-USA. The WAN and the majority of ELCA members in their Synod Assemblies accepted the resolution. However, the leadership of the ELCA refused to acknowledge the resolution.

Although ordination into the historic episcopate is the main issue on which the WAN stands, it has also taken up several other causes. As its title indicates, it wants to reaffirm the Holy Scriptures as the only source for true doctrine within the ELCA. It is also concerned with the power that the ELCA leadership has accumulated. The WAN is calling for a representative government. It is also concerned with evangelism and the empowerment of the royal priesthood of all believers.

The WAN governs itself by an annual convention, a board of directors and a president. The current president is Rev. Jaynan Clark Eglund. The current chairman of the Board of Directors is former Minnesota governor and U.S. Representative Al Quie.

Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ

At a WAN meeting at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Mahtomedi, MN, a board was assigned to form an independent association of congregations unwilling to remain in the ELCA in the aftermath of the Called to Common Mission of the ELCA and EC-USA. One year later, at the second annual WAN convention in March of 2001, the constitution of the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC) was adopted. At this Phoenix, AZ convention twenty-five congregations became members of the LCMC.

At the second National Convention of the LCMC, held at the same time and place as the third annual convention of the WAN, the LCMC decided to become independent of WAN. The 2003 convention, the first as independent, was held at St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Canton, MI. This congregation continues to be the headquarters for the LCMC.

The LCMC has expanded to 122 congregations in twenty-six states. The LCMC also includes three Mexican congregations and fourteen congregations in Vietnam. The LCMC has grown rapidly enough and has enough "inquires"⁷ to support two full-time positions. The National Service Coordinator and the Director of Operations/Financial Secretary work out of St. Michael's in Canton, MI. The LCMC holds an annual convention and has a Board of Trustees.

Although the vast majority of LCMC congregations have left the ELCA, some remain affiliated. The LCMC works with the World Mission Prayer League and have "developed a working relationship with the Lutheran Church in Haiti".⁸ The LCMC does not support its own seminary at the present although it is "developing relationships with a number of seminaries across the country".⁹

Within the LCMC there are six districts. These districts are not necessarily based on geography. They may be formed on the basis of like-minded goals or emphases. They are described as "flexible partnerships between congregations".¹⁰ An individual

⁷ *Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ Website*. (Canton, MI, 2004, last assessed on November 17, 2004.) Available from <http://www.lcmc.net>; internet.

⁸ Sullivan.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ *Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ Website*.

congregation may belong to more than one district. One of the districts is the Augsburg Lutheran Churches. This group may be seen as its own entity because LCMC districts do not function in the traditional sense of a district of a synod. It has started to develop its own "house of studies"¹¹ in Chicago that may some day serve as a seminary for the LCMC.

Fellowship of Confessing Lutheran Churches

Another virtual community within the American Lutheran scene is the New Lutheran Fellowship. This is purely a discussion website with no membership or official organization unlike the Word Alone Network. However it is affiliated with the Fellowship of Confessing Lutheran Churches (FCLC).

The FCLC is a loose fellowship of Lutheran individuals and congregations. To date there are only two congregations and nine individual members that belong to the FCLC. Both congregations are located in New York but the FCLC headquarters is in Dearborn Heights, MI presumably under the care of Rev. Dr. Harold S. Schlachtenhaufen, an associate FCLC member. Rev. Kristian Baudler of St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Bay Shore, NY is the chairman of the Board of Trustees. The late Rev. Prof. James M. Kittelson is the honorary president of the FCLC. Although not in affiliation with any other group, the FCLC shares a pension and an insurance plan with the Word Alone Network and the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ. They are also working on getting involved in the ELCA's pension plan.

It is fairly difficult to pinpoint the exact doctrinal positions of the above groups because they do not function as a synod, per say. Some churches may be affiliated with a synod and one of these movements at the same time. In fact some churches may belong to one or more of these groups at the same time. St. Michael's in Canton, MI is a member of the ARC and is the flagship church for the LCMC.

Three groups were formed before the ELCA merger of 1988. Most of the congregations left the ALC and the LCA because of different reasons, the most important and common was the doctrine of Scripture. Since then, another group broke from one of the three.

Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

The Association of Free Lutheran Congregations (AFLC) is by far the largest of the small Lutheran groups in the United States, in fact they sometimes refer to themselves as the "larger of the smaller".¹² Their membership includes about 40,000 souls in 260 congregations. They can be found in twenty-seven different states and three Canadian provinces. They support missions in Brazil, Mexico and India. They run their own seminary, The Association of Free Lutheran Theological Seminary. It has a current enrollment of thirty-one students, twenty-five of which are full-time. The AFLC produces the *Lutheran Ambassador* magazine, its own Sunday-School curriculum, *The Ambassador Series* and their own hymnal, *The Ambassador Hymnal*.

¹¹ Sullivan.

¹² Lee, Robert L. Personal e-mail, September 7, 2004.

The AFLC was formed in October 1962 when forty congregations left the Lutheran Free Church (LFC) when it decided to merge with the ALC. Not only were they concerned with the doctrinal compromises of this move, but they were also committed to the independent concept of the LFC, which broke from the United Norwegian Lutheran Church in America in 1897 because of differences concerning congregational autonomy. They maintain “that Christian unity is a spiritual concept, not a man-made organization such as the World Council of Churches or the National Council of Churches” and that “the congregation is the right form of the Kingdom of God on earth, with no authority above it but the Word and the Spirit of God”.¹³ They are fiercely independent and do not like the label “synod”.

The AFLC is governed by the Coordinating Committee, which consists of seven members from the congregations. Under the supervision of this committee, the Schools Corporation and the Missions Corporation perform their functions. Each of these corporations has fifty members. The Schools Corporation oversees the seminary and Bible school, which is located on the same campus in Plymouth, MN. The Missions Corporation divides itself into a Home Missions Committee and World Missions Committee.

The AFLC considers itself conservative. They hold to a high view of scripture and take a *quia* subscription to the confessions. Many in the ALFC follow their family tree to Norway. They consider the Norwegian-American, Georg Sverdrup, as one of their theological fathers. A couple more notable things about the AFLC are an encouragement to simplicity in worship and the promotion of autonomous congregations.

Conservative Lutheran Association

In 1965 a group of Lutheran pastors and laymen started the Lutherans Alert National (LAN). This organization was formed in response to the growing liberalism in the ALC, especially concerning the Scriptures. Some of the members of the LAN were then excommunicated by the ALC for their “stand on Scripture”¹⁴ in 1979. In 1980 the Conservative Lutheran Association (CLA) was formed consolidating conservative congregations that believed in the inerrancy of Scripture. It continues to put an emphasis on promoting this doctrine.

Today the CLA has five congregations, twenty-six clergy members and 1,267 members. The CLA’s headquarters is in Tacoma, WA. Its congregations are located in Washington and California. The CLA does not consider itself a synod but rather a loose association. It has a president and calls conventions periodically.

The LAN decided to start a conservative seminary in 1968. Faith Lutheran Seminary (FLS) opened the following year in Tacoma. Most clergy of the CLA were trained at FLS. However, FLS is a much bigger institution. Currently it has over 200 students and over fifty full and part-time professors, eleven of which boast the title doctor. It describes itself as a “inter denominational”¹⁵ school, which trains both men and

¹³ *Association of Free Lutheran Congregations in Canada Website*. (Calgary, 2004, last assessed on October 12, 2004.) Available from <http://www.aflc.ca>; internet.

¹⁴ Moore, Pomeroy. Personal letter, September 10, 2004.

¹⁵ *Faith Evangelical Lutheran Seminary*. (Tacoma, WA, last assessed November 15, 2004.) Available from <http://www.faithseminary.edu>; internet.

women. It is very mission minded. It started a graduate program in the Kingdom of Tonga in 1993 and has a Korean division on its home campus in which all classes are taught in Korean. FLS not only wants to spread the gospel but also “thwart the spread of liberal theology”¹⁶ around the world.

American Association of Lutheran Churches

The American Association of Lutheran Churches (AALC) is one of the larger small Lutheran groups in the United States. Its membership includes over 15,000 souls in eighty-four congregations. It was formed “as an alternative for those who did not want to be a part of the merger of Lutheran Churches which formed”¹⁷ the ELCA. It was organized in November 1987 by pastors and laity of the former ALC and LCA.

The AALC considers “itself in the conservative middle of Lutheranism in America”.¹⁸ The residing Pastor, Rev. Thomas Aaland, lists five things in his welcome message that illustrate its claim of middle conservative. The AALC is pro-life, considers homosexuality a sin, ordains only women, rejects all Pentecostalism and does not belong to any association that teaches anything contrary to their confession. Rev. Aaland also sites four main emphases of the AALC. The AALC believes that the Bible is the inerrant and infallible Word of God and that the Lutheran Confessions are a “true interpretation of Scripture”.¹⁹ They also put a strong emphasis on evangelism and hold to the “authority of the local congregation as the basic unit of the church”.²⁰

The AALC is not affiliated with any other group but “are in conversation with [the] LC-MS in regard to ‘altar and pulpit fellowship’”.²¹ It is governed by a Presiding Pastor, an executive committee, ten regional pastors and their Joint Council, which consists of three members of each of its ten regions. It started its own seminary in 1993, the American Lutheran Theological Seminary, in Edina, MN. The AALC supports mission work in Madagascar, Mexico, Guatemala, Estonia, Latvia, Russia and India.

Lutheran Ministerium and Synod-USA

The Lutheran Ministerium and Synod-USA (LMS-USA) was formed out of disgruntled congregations that broke from the American Association of Lutheran Churches (AALC) in 1995. It began with three pastors and two congregations. Presently it has twenty-six pastors but only nine congregations and 500 members. The LMS-USA has congregations located in Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Indiana, Illinois and Ohio. It is currently working on being affiliated with the International Lutheran Council. It does not, at this time, support its own seminary. It is working on an apprentice-type program that would mirror that of Muhlenburg’s early work in the United States. Currently it works with candidates in a mentor program and helps the candidate choose a seminary.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ *American Association of Lutheran Churches Website*. (Minneapolis, 2004, last assessed on October 12, 2004.) Available from <http://www.taalc.com>; internet.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid. They make a point in their statement of beliefs to take a *quia* subscription.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Aaland, Thomas. Personal e-mail, November 3, 2004.

The beginnings of the LMS-USA start almost as soon as the beginning of the AALC (1987). From the beginning of the AALC there were concerns about the theological leanings of some people in the AALC. Pastors John Erickson of Chetek, WI and Ralph Spears of Indianapolis began to meet and discuss these issues. They “had been told”²² that the direction in which the AALC was headed “was to be a continuation of the best of the former American Lutheran Church”.²³ However, these two pastors and others saw a Pentecostal influence in both the leadership of the AALC and newly joining congregations. Two events stood out in the minds of these men as proof of a deeper problem: a ‘contemporary’ service in the 1990 annual meeting of the AALC that “was not so much ‘contemporary’ as it was Pentecostal”²⁴ and the elevation of certain men to seminary professors at the newly formed American Lutheran Theological Seminary in Edina, MN.

In October of 1993 a group of concerned AALC clergy met in Janesville, WI. Rev. Erickson delivered a paper “that the AALC grand experiment of forming a church body bringing together Orthodox, Evangelical, and Charismatic Lutherans under one roof, was not working”.²⁵ Meanwhile a candidate for a seminary professorship was presented to the AALC. Rev. Donald Thorson took offense at this because the candidate believed in the “three fold Lutheranism under one tent theory” and held to a neo-Orthodox view of Scripture. In 1999 Pastors Spears and Erickson along with Rev. Roy Steward of Altoona, PA and Rev. Richard Hueter of McAllister, WI formed the AALC Forum. They supported Rev. Thorson’s objection and hoped “to be an instrument to bring about reform within the Association”.²⁶

After the AALC annual meeting later that year, the Forum realized that there was no hope of reform. Rev. Steward and his congregation, Faith Lutheran left the AALC. Rev. Erickson and Rev. Spears soon followed by pulling out their congregations. The three men quickly met and “decided that a Moderate/ Middle Conservative, Confessional, Liturgical and non Hierarchical Lutheran Church body was needed within the spectrum of Lutheran Church options”.²⁷ The LMS-USA was officially formed in 1995. Rev. Hueter and Rev. Thorson and their congregations, although both members of the Forum, did not join the LMS-USA.

The previous four groups find their beginnings before the 1988 ELCA merger. The next three groups formed after the merger.

Lutheran Confessional Synod

In 1994 Christ Lutheran Church of Decatur, IL “placed itself *in statu confessionis* with the ELCA”.²⁸ Rev. R.L. DeJaynes and his congregation were concerned with the

²² *Lutheran Ministerium and Synod – USA Website*. (Indianapolis, IN, 2004, last assessed on November 16, 2004.) Available from <http://www.lmsusa.org>; internet.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ *Lutheran Confessional Synod Website*. (Decatur, IL, 2004, last assessed on November 15, 2004.) Available from <http://hstrial.rdejaynes.homestead.com>; internet.

fellowship practices of the ELCA. In October of the same year, the Lutheran Confessional Synod (LCS) was formed. It consists of three congregations, Christ Lutheran Church, St. Stephen Lutheran Church in Big Rapids, MI and Concordia Lutheran Church in Salmon Arm, British Columbia. It also has a mission congregation in Crystal Mountain, MI. There are five ordained pastors in the LCS. Rev. R.L. DeJaynes retired when he ordained his son Christopher in 2000 at Christ Lutheran Church. He still serves as Bishop of the LCS.

After it left the ELCA the LCS contacted the WELS and ELS. Their brief fellowship ended when they were accused of fixing the moment of the real presence. They also disagreed with the WELS and ELS doctrine of ministry. The LCS believes that the real presence occurs “during the Words of Institution”²⁹ and they do not consider the day-school teacher as a part of the Holy Ministry. The LCS also disagrees with the stated and practiced doctrine of ministry in the LC-MS.

The LCS holds to, but does not demand, the practice of bishop only ordination. It promotes, but does not demand, a healthy sacramental piety. It holds a high view of the Scriptures, takes a *quia* subscription to the Lutheran Confessions and is concerned with liturgical practices.

Christ Lutheran Church had been engrossed in a legal battle over the property their church building stood. After a long fight, the property was returned to the group in the congregation that started the LCS. Since then it has been sold. The congregation is worshipping in rented quarters until it “can again be self-sustaining”.³⁰

Augustana Orthodox and Evangelical Synod

In 1860 a group of mostly Swedish immigrants formed the Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod in North America. It had been a part of the Northern Illinois Synod. It survived a few break offs and a few name changes until it became part of the LCA in 1962.

Before the merger a mission congregation was started in Roseville, MN. Advent Lutheran Church was started in 1953 and has had only one pastor, Thomas Basich. The members of Advent Lutheran Church and their pastor hold on to that which was the “best of the Augustana Synod”.³¹ The congregation reluctantly went with the LCA merger. It had concerns with the LCA constitution, which had stated that LCA congregations would participate in any successor churches. Advent Lutheran Church added provisions into their own constitution disputing this but went ahead with the LCA merger.

In 1988 they again reluctantly went along with a merger, this time into the ELCA. After a decade of membership in the ELCA the church decided to leave. They had become concerned with the “theological and moral”³² decline in the ELCA. It has also accused the ELCA leadership of corrupt dealings with the ELCA pension fund. According to Rev. Basich, some had used the pension fund as “socio-political weapons”.

In 1997 Advent Lutheran Church left and reorganized the Augustana Synod. They readopted the original constitution and became a legal entity in the state of

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Basich, Thomas. Personal phone conversation, December 10, 2004.

³² Ibid.

Minnesota. They added the words “Orthodox” and “Evangelical” to their name. They did this to connect itself to the “historic church that traces itself back to Jesus Christ”.³³

The Augustana Orthodox and Evangelical Synod (AOES) does not have affiliations with any other group, but do fellowship with other individual congregations. “Having been burned so badly” by the LCA and ELCA mergers, the AOES is not likely to merge with any other organized group in the near future. Advent Lutheran Church is the only congregation. Rev. Basich and his son Rev. Michael Basich both serve the church and are the only pastors in the synod.

The AEOS believes that the Scriptures are “inerrant, infallible and immutable”. They also take a *quia* subscription to the full Book of Concord. Some of the congregations they fellowship with are Evangelical and Baptist.

Evangelical Lutheran Conference and Ministerium

The Evangelical Lutheran Conference and Ministerium (ELCM) has its roots both in the LCA and the ELCA. Disappointed with the ELCA’s diminishing doctrine of Scripture and its hierarchical polity, future ELCM congregations began to leave in January of 1992. Events in the late eighties and early nineties at ELCA Assemblies in Denver and Philadelphia convinced this small group to leave the ELCA. At that point they had one pastor and 125 members.

Since then they have been on a self-described sojourn looking for a truly centrist Lutheran group to join. They were “hoping that some of [their] relation from the Muhlenberg/General Council/Augustana/Suomi/United Synod of the South Lutheran tradition might join [them] (or we might join them) in forming a genuinely centrist, moderate to middle conservative in range of views Evangelical Lutheran Synodical federation, fellowship or association”.³⁴ To this point they have been unsuccessful. Trial membership in the AALC and the LMS-USA did not work. They felt that these groups, which had mostly ALC roots, were not centrist enough. In their opinion, groups that had left the ELCA were pulled to the conservative spectrum of Lutheranism and had not held to a centrist position.

In 1999 now boasting 350 souls and one pastor, this group decided to form the ELCM. Today the ELCM has about 1,250 members served by fourteen pastors in five states. Their global affiliations raise those numbers to about 3,750 souls and seventy-five pastors. The ELCM does not support its own seminary but conducts a sort of mentoring system at the present.

The ELCM is anti-Church Growth and social gospel. It also takes offense to a hierarchical approach to church government. It points to the closed call system of the ELCA, the forced dependency of congregations to bishops and the “gerrymandering polity system substituting sociological categories for representation from congregations and pastors”³⁵ in the ELCA. It holds to the inerrancy of Scripture but allows for allegorical interpretations. It takes a *quia* subscription to the Book of Concord, but does not list the Formula of Concord as one of its confessions.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ *Evangelical Lutheran Conference and Ministerium Website*. (Altoona, PA, 2004, last assessed on November 22, 2004.) Available from <http://www.elcm.org>; internet.

³⁵ Ibid.

The LCA, ALC and ELCA are not the only ones to have small groups break from their fellowship. The LC-MS, WELS and ELS have also all felt the pain of losing congregations. Over the years, two groups were formed primarily from former LC-MS congregations and three primarily from WELS congregations. One of these groups has spawned two other groups. The ELS has also lost congregations to some of these groups.

Concordia Lutheran Conference

The Concordia Lutheran Conference (CoLC)³⁶ traces its beginnings to 1929. That was the year that the Triennial Missouri Synod Convention declared the Chicago Intersynodical Theses as inadequate. However many in the Synodical Conference were displeased with the handling of these Theses and particularly the actions of the Iowa Synod. Upset by a number of issues, chief being the move towards ALCALC-MS fellowship, study groups of concerned LC-MS clergy began to meet. The most notable one was held in St. Louis, MO. In 1950 The Common Confession was accepted by both the LC-MS and the ALC. This was the final straw for some in the St. Louis group and others spread out across the Midwest. A meeting was called for September 15-16, 1951 in Okabena, MN. Twenty-two men attended this meeting, the most prominent being Rev. Dr. P.E. Kretzmann. Although the group did not necessarily meet in order to form a new synod, it ended up starting the Orthodox Lutheran Conference (OLC). In a short manner of time a seminary was founded in Minneapolis and publication of *The Orthodox Lutheran* began. Most charter members of the OLC were from Missouri but one, Rev. E. Hallstein and his congregation, joined the OLC after he was ousted from the WELS for speaking against what is described as the WELS's unionistic character.

After a brief four-year period of peace, controversy once again descended upon the people of the OLC. Prof. Kretzmann mentioned in class that he would have no problem preaching for Rev. Gervasius Fischer, a Mankato, MN pastor who was sympathetic towards the OLC cause but was not in a state of confession against his synod. After less than a year of wrangling, seven pastors took a stance against Prof. Kretzmann with a confession named *Our Declaration*. In January of 1956 they started their own Orthodox Lutheran Conference and began publishing their own periodical of the same name. A few months later they changed the name to The Concordia Lutheran Conference and their periodical to *The Concordia Lutheran* to avoid confusion. The original OLC disbanded in 1963. Some congregations joined the WELS.

In June 2003 the Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations (FLC) joined the CoLC. The FLC had broken from the Lutheran Churches of the Reformation in 1979. Presently, the CoLC has seven member congregations with roughly 400 souls. Although the number of congregations is the same as when they began, the CoLC has seen some growth. However, this has been offset by the four congregations that have been expelled during the last half-century, including Rev. Hallstein's church in South Dakota.

³⁶ Many refer to the Concordia Lutheran Conference as CoLC so as not to confuse it with the Church of the Lutheran Confession (abbreviated CLC). Those with closer ties to the Concordia Lutheran Conference abbreviate the Church of the Lutheran Confession as CoLC so as not to be confused with their Conference. The battle continues.

The CoLC began the Concordia Theological Seminary in 1959. It disbanded in 1962 but reopened in 1969. It currently has no students but one is planning to begin studies in 2005. In the recent past, the seminary's location was in Peace Lutheran Church in Oak Forest, IL, the home congregation of the CoLC president. However, since its last student a new president has been elected, Rev. Robert Lietz of Oak Park, IL. The CoLC has seven missions, one Russian mission church and six Nigerian missions, which were inherited through the FLC.

Lutheran Churches of the Reformation

In 1964 a group of Missouri Synod congregations broke from its synod and formed the Lutheran Churches of the Reformation (LCR). Charter members of the LCR were originally a part of concerned groups within the LC-MS. Among these groups were the State of the Church, the Chicago Study Club and the Confessional Lutheran Publicity Bureau.

The LCR believes that the congregation is "the only divinely sanctioned and instituted functioning unit of the Holy Christian Church is the visible local congregation". Therefore it guards congregational autonomy. It is a decentralized federation of congregations. They make this conviction very clear through its name, Lutheran Churches of the Reformation. It holds to all the teachings of "the old" Missouri Synod and "the old"³⁷ Synodical Conference including the Brief Statement.

LCR congregations "exclusively" use the King James Bible, the 1943 Missouri Synod Catechism and The Lutheran Hymnal of 1941. It has supported a seminary since the beginning of the federation. The Martin Luther Institute of Sacred Studies has had three different homes and now is located at Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church in Decatur, IN. Rev. Kenneth K. Miller is the Dean and a professor at the Institute. Rev. Jonathan M. Neipp is an instructor. Currently it has no students enrolled but has received three applications.

Anchor Publications, "an independent affiliate of the LCR",³⁸ produces a monthly devotional magazine *One Accord* and the theological quarterly *The Faithful Word*. The LCR supports one foreign mission in Nigeria. The sixteen LCR congregations can be found in ten states and in Ontario. There are also two independent congregations in fellowship with the LCR, one in Ridgecrest, CA and the other in Munice, IN.

Protes'tant Conference

The Protes'tant Conference (PC) is a group of about 1,000 Lutherans in seven congregations located in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan and California. It publishes *Faith-Life*, a periodical issued bimonthly out of La Crosse, WI. It currently does not have its own seminary nor does it have any foreign missions. Eight men fill out their clergy roles. It is governed by a president and three annual conventions.

The PC broke from the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and other States (which would become the WELS) in 1928. Two controversies led to this split, the

³⁷ *Lutheran Churches of the Reformation Website*. (Decatur, IN, 2004, last assessed on November 4, 2004.) Available from <http://www.lcrusa.org>; internet.

³⁸ Ibid.

so-called Watertown problem and Fort Atkinson Case. The Watertown case involved a student thievery ring at the WELS run Northwestern College (NWC) in 1924. The faculty of NWC disciplined the guilty students. However, these punishments were later overruled by the college's board of control. Professors Karl Koehler and Herbert Parisius objected to the board's decisions and the undermining of faculty authority. Both resigned.

The Fort Atkinson Case involved two teachers at the parish school. Elizabeth Reuter and Gerda Koch had disciplined students on matters that the church council and pastor considered adiaphora. In retaliation, the two women spoke against the pastor calling him a "false prophet".³⁹ The schoolteachers were disciplined but not released from the congregation. A neighboring parish in Marshfield, WI called the two women to their parish school. The ensuing actions, or lack of action, by the Western Wisconsin District of the WELS was seen as unsatisfactory by both the Fort Atkinson and Marshfield congregations.

Seventeen voting members of the Wisconsin District and a professor at the WELS's seminary backed the cause of the NWC faculty and the two teachers. Some were for the actual people involved others were against the actions of the District and Synod. Prof. Gerhardt Reudiger spoke against the synod and was eventually asked to step down from his position at the seminary.

In the meantime Rev. William Beitz delivered a paper criticizing the synod. The Wauwatosa Seminary then released a theological evaluation of Beitz's paper called a Gutachen. Prof. J.P. Koehler, who had minimal input, signed it with the reservation that he would meet Beitz face-to-face. Unfortunately, the Gutachen reached Beitz before Koehler met with him. Koehler withdrew his signature and began to speak against the Gutachen. He was eventually relieved of his duties at the new Thiensville, WI seminary campus in 1930, a campus which he helped design.

The seventeen voting members who had sided against their district officially protested the district's actions in 1926. They met in Wilton, WI later that year. The District eventually suspended Rev. Beitz and others. In December of 1927 the PC was officially formed and firmly decided not to deal with their former synod unless the actions of both the Watertown and Fort Atkinson cases were rescinded. After consideration the actions were upheld by the district in 1933.

Church of the Lutheran Confession

The Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC) was formed in response to the Synodical Conference debates in the 1950's. It considers itself the "true spiritual descendant of the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference".⁴⁰ Congregations from the LC-MS, WELS and ELS broke at various times and joined the CLC.

These congregations left their synods as they saw the LC-MS turn from classic Synodical Conference positions. Those from Missouri left because of its synod's stance

³⁹ Korthals, James. *Lutheranism in America*. (Class notes for CH 3031.) Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary: Mequon, WI, 2004. Page 67.

⁴⁰ *Church of the Lutheran Confession Website*. (Eau Claire, WI, 2004, last assessed on October 28, 2004.) Available from <http://www.clclutheran.org>; internet.

on a variety of issues such as chaplaincy, fellowship, Scouting and Scripture. Those from the ELS and WELS left because of their synods' slow response to Missouri.

The key issue was and is fellowship. The CLC puts forth the Brief Statement of 1932 as a true confession of the scriptural doctrine of fellowship. This statement quotes various biblical passages to prove that Christians are "required by God to discriminate between orthodox and heterodox church bodies"⁴¹ in every facet of a church's existence. The CLC therefore vehemently disagrees with the LC-MS's doctrine of levels of fellowship.

Along with other passages, the CLC points to the Romans 16:17-18 as the true way to deal with erring Christians. The CLC believes that once a false doctrine is ascertained Paul's command to "avoid" is binding. They therefore disagree with the WELS's and ELS's handling of Missouri. The ELS broke fellowship with the LC-MS in 1955. The WELS broke in 1961. For many, this was too late. The CLC points to this lack of action as a misinterpretation of the above passage from Romans.

We reject any interpretation of Rom. 16:17-18 which, in the name of Christian love, would make the avoiding of causers of divisions and offenses contingent upon the subjective judgment that admonition is of no further avail and that an impasse has been reached.⁴²

Congregations started leaving the WELS in 1953. More left after WELS conventions in 1955, 1956 and 1957 failed to terminate fellowship with the LC-MS. After a few free conferences, a 1959 conference in Red Wing, MN appointed a committee to draft a constitution for a new Lutheran group. The CLC was officially founded the next year. It began with thirty-four congregations and sixty-seven clergy. The first official conference resolved to take over a mission in Japan that had left the WELS. Although that mission has since left the CLC, the Conference now supports missions in India and Nigeria.

The 1960 conference also resolved to support Immanuel Lutheran College, which was founded in the fall of 1959 in Mankato, MN. It was founded by Immanuel Lutheran Church, which called the first faculty members. Provisions were made that students would take secular classes at Mankato State University and religious classes at Immanuel. In 1961, after the formation of the CLC, a permanent site was bought in Eau Claire, WI. Today, there is a high school, college and seminary on one campus.

Lutheran Conference of Confessional Fellowship

The Lutheran Conference of Confessional Fellowship (LCCF) finds its beginnings in the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC). They were a part of the CLC's dissatisfaction with the fellowship practices of the WELS and ELS in the 1950's and 60's. The LCCF continues to hold to a strict doctrine of fellowship including the condemnation of fraternal membership as sin. During the 1970's and 80's as the CLC debated the question of fellowship and membership in fraternal organizations such as Aid Association for Lutherans and Lutheran Brotherhood, future members of the LCCF

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

became concerned. The CLC did determine that membership in such groups is wrong but it did not practice this strictly. They chose to “encourage” those who had such memberships instead of “admonishing” or “disciplining”⁴³ them. This led to the formation of the LCCF in 1983. Three house churches left as early as 1980.⁴⁴

Today, there are two small congregations in the LCCF along with four preaching stations. The two congregations are in Mankato and Sanborn, MN. Two groups meet in South Dakota, one in Florida and one in Arizona.⁴⁵ The total membership is between 150 and 200. The LCCF has only two ordained pastors. Rev. Robert Mehlretter is the president of the LCCF and is involved in a tent-making ministry.⁴⁶

Reformation Lutheran Conference

In 1998 two CLC congregations, St. Mark’s Evangelical Lutheran Church of Onalaska, WI and St. Luke’s Evangelical Lutheran Church of Stoddard, WI, became independent. These congregations were originally in the WELS and had been charter members of the CLC. The members of these churches and their pastor Egbert Albrecht were concerned with the CLC’s practice of fellowship. The CLC had not fully condemned, at least in practice, membership in veteran’s organizations. They were also disappointed in the lack of concern shown for their request to have a manual warning about organizations such as Scouting, lodges and fraternal insurance companies.⁴⁷ Several other events proved to these congregations that the CLC was not practicing Biblical fellowship. Some children of CLC churches were attending non-CLC day schools. A non-CLC organist played at a CLC church. A CLC pastor buried a man knowing that he was a member of a lodge. These two congregations remained independent until 2000.

In the early 1980’s St. Peter’s Evangelical Lutheran Church of Rochester, MN (now located in Austin, MN) and Grace Lutheran Church of Sanborn/New Ulm, MN also left the CLC. Rev. Gilbert Sydow of St. Peter’s left the CLC because of its practice of communing those who had not yet canceled membership in fraternal organizations. Rev. Marvin Eibs of Grace Lutheran Church left later that same year of 1981 for similar reasons. Both of these congregations were charter members of the LCCF.

In 1998 Pastor R.E. Wehrwein was expelled from the LCCF. Since 1995 he had been embroiled in a controversy at Grace Congregation of which he was pastor. The constitution of the congregation had the term self-excommunication in it. Rev. Wehrwein stated that this word was “unacceptable”⁴⁸ because it did not make sense nor did it fit the teachings of the catechism. By a vote of 12-0⁴⁹ the congregation decided to

⁴³ *Lutheran Conference of Confessional Fellowship Website*. (New Ulm, MN, 2004, last assessed on November 4, 2004.) Available from <http://home.mn.rr.com/lccf>; internet.

⁴⁴ Mehlretter, Robert. Personal e-mail, November 11, 2004.

⁴⁵ Mehlretter.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Wehrwein, R.E. *The Birth of a New Fellowship*. Grace and St. Peter’s Evangelical Lutheran Churches: New Ulm, MN, 2000. Page 4.

⁴⁸ Wehrwein, R.E. *Is This “Confessional” “Fellowship”?* Grace and St. Peter’s Evangelical Lutheran Churches: New Ulm, MN, 1999. Page, 3.

⁴⁹ Ibid, page 3.

draft a new constitution because the wording was in an unalterable section of the original constitution. Later an elder left the congregation because of the situation. Most of the congregation soon followed and submitted a letter of protest to the LCCF in 1998. Rev. Wehrwein was dismissed from the LCCF later that year for “false teaching on the issue of the wording”.⁵⁰ His call was terminated by Grace Lutheran Church soon after. A small group left the congregation and is still being served by Rev. Wehrwein. St. Peter’s Lutheran Church now in Austin left the LCCF in protest of the dismissal of Rev. Wehrwein.

These four congregations eventually formed the Reformation Lutheran Conference in 2000. Pastor Robert Dommer came out of retirement to serve both St. Mark’s and St. Luke’s Lutheran Churches. Layman Randy Fossum serves St. Peter’s Lutheran Church. They meet a few times a year but do not have official offices. A proposed seminary curriculum has been worked out but there are no candidates for ministry as of the present.

Illinois Lutheran Conference

The Illinois Lutheran Conference (ILC) was founded in response from the WELS’s move away from the King James Version of the Bible to the New International Version. In 1970 two WELS pastors were suspended from their speaking duties on the radio show, *The Lutheran Heritage Hour*, “for publicly upholding the integrity of King James Version (1611) of the Bible over against various modern erring translations”.⁵¹

One of these pastors, Rev. Wayne A. Popp, resigned from the WELS ministerium in 1971. His congregation, St. Mark’s of Sauk Village, IL, left with him. Three years later, the other former radio speaker, Rev. Richard W. Shekner, was suspended by the WELS. His congregation, Gloria Dei of Tinley Park, IL, also left with their pastor. Soon a third congregation was added. Our Savior’s of Morris, IL was formed in 1971. It had been a mission project of Gloria Dei. The ILC has grown to include seven congregations in Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Missouri and Illinois. Four pastors serve these congregations.

In 1977 The Lutheran Theological Studies Center was started. It was originally located in Tinley Park but now has no permanent home. A congregation’s pastor takes up the work of training future pastors. Presently there are no students although one candidate is currently on a leave of absence.⁵²

After the suspension of Pastors Popp and Shekner from *The Lutheran Heritage Hour*, *The Lutheran Reformation Hour* was launched. It was independently supported by the Haemker brothers of Crete, IL. It remains a separate entity from the ILC. Its listeners live in the Midwest, the west coast and Europe.

⁵⁰ Wehrwein, R.E. *The Birth of a New Fellowship*. Grace and St. Peter’s Evangelical Lutheran Churches: New Ulm, MN, 2000. Page, 3

⁵¹ *Illinois Lutheran Conference Website*. (Arbor Vitae, WI, 2004, last assessed on October 21, 2004.) Available from <http://www.illinoislutheranconference.org>; internet.

⁵² Yeomans, Dave. Personal e-mail, September 9, 2004.

There are four small groups that some would say lean toward the Roman Catholic Church. All four take the historic liturgy, the Holy Ministry and apostolic succession very seriously.

Association of Independent Evangelical Lutheran Congregations

The Association of Independent Evangelical Lutheran Churches is an association with only one church in America, St. Peter's and Paul's in Astoria, New York. It is a part of a "Concordat"⁵³ that reaches to the ends of the earth, although mostly in Latin and South America. It is affiliated with the Argentinean Independent Lutheran Charismatic Church, the Mission Evangelique Lutheriene d'Haiti, the Little Bible of Salvation of Lutheran Ministry, the Athanasian Catholic Church of the Augsburg Confession, the Lutheran Orthodox Church, the Evangelical Community Church Lutheran, the Independent Lutheran Church in Scotland and the Christian National Church of Pakistan. Other congregations/denominations who have begun the "affiliation process"⁵⁴ include the Independent Lutheran Church of Colombia, the Federation of Lutheran Churches of Ecuador Guayaquil Committee, the Independent Lutheran Church of Chile and the Augsburg Confession Church Alliance Puerto Rico. In all, there are about 100 congregations and 20,000 members.⁵⁵

The AIELC was started in 1992 but wasn't officially registered until 2001. It does not currently have a seminary program but are in the planning stage of one now. It most likely would not be on American soil.⁵⁶

The AIELC believes that the Bible is the inerrant and infallible Word of God and "base"⁵⁷ their doctrine on the Confessions. However, neither a *quia* nor a *quatenus* subscription are specifically mentioned and the Formula of Concord is missing from their list of confessions. Most in the AIELC have a high view of the liturgy and consider apostolic succession necessary. Considering their affiliations, the AIELC promotes, or at least, has no problem with charismatic tendencies, infant communion or ecumenical endeavors.

Evangelical Community Church – Lutheran

In 1997 a small group broke from the LC-MS. They were upset with the "Protestant direction"⁵⁸ that President A.L. Barry took the LC-MS during his term. They also came to "the realization that the LC-MS had become strongly crypto-Calvinist".⁵⁹ In order to combat this move left and to preserve the catholicity of Lutheranism, they formed The Evangelical Community Church – Lutheran (ECC-L).

⁵³ Association of Independent Evangelical Lutheran Congregations Website. (Astoria, NY, 2004, last assessed on November 22, 2004.) Available from <http://www.associationofindependentevangelicallutheranchurches.org>; internet.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Bravo-Guzman, Pedro. Personal e-mail, September 5, 2004.

⁵⁶ Bravo-Guzman.

⁵⁷ Association of Independent Evangelical Lutheran Congregations Website.

⁵⁸ Gladfelter, Irl. Personal e-mail, November 3, 2004.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

The ECC-L considers itself a “pre-Uniate Lutheran Church”.⁶⁰ In late October 2004 the ECC-L began formal negotiations with the Roman Catholic Church “with the goal of returning to Rome as the nucleus of a new *sui juris* Uniate Lutheran Rite Catholic Church”.⁶¹ The ECC-L realizes that the Lutheran Church is under the umbrella of the term “catholic” and practices all of the ancient liturgies and customs of the church unless specifically spoken against by the Lutheran Church. They hold to a *quia* subscription to the Book of Concord except the Formula of Concord. They specifically take a *quatenus* subscription to the Formula along with the first Seven Ecumenical Creeds and the 1999 Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification.

The ECC-L is very concerned about apostolic succession. All bishops and clergy are considered valid by the Vatican “through several lineages including the Duarte-Costa lineage of the Rebiban (or Vatican) Succession among others”.⁶² They consider the pope the *de facto* spokesman for the Western Church but do not consider him infallible nor do they feel that they are under his authority.

They do not consider the congregation as the basic element of the church. All authority lies with the bishop. A local congregation cannot call or rescind a call. However, local parish’s call committees are consulted in this process and they do own their own property.⁶³

The ECC-L is made up of five congregations in Georgia, New York and Missouri but is organized in nine states. It has five clergy members and supports the Wittenberg Lutheran Seminary in Kansas City, MO.

Athanasian Catholic Church of the Augsburg Confession

The Athanasian Catholic Church of the Augsburg Confession (ACCAC) is a part of “a growing Lutheran movement to reclaim the fullness of Lutheranism’s Catholic faith and heritage”.⁶⁴ As most movements within the church catholic, there are varying degrees. The ACCAC is on the more zealous side of this movement. Its mission statement says that its purpose is “to encourage reunification of the holy catholic faith of our Lord Jesus Christ”.⁶⁵ It considers itself a “bridge between Lutheran and Catholics under the banner of the Holy Catholic Church”.⁶⁶ They are joined by their close affiliate, the Evangelical Community Church – Lutheran (ECC-L), in this conviction.

It also has ties on the other side of Christendom’s spectrum. It is affiliated with the Lutheran Evangelical Protestant Church (LEPC). The LEPC has some unionistic roots but seems to be moving towards ecumenical endeavors. A part of the LEPC is the Lutheran Orthodox Church, a church body of the same mindset as the ACCAC and ECC-L. The ACCAC wants to be a bridge, not only between Lutherans and Catholics, but also on a smaller level “between the ECC-L and the LEPC”.⁶⁷

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ *Athanasian Catholic Church of the Augsburg Confession Website*. (West Chester, PA, 2004, last assessed on December 2, 2004.) Available from <http://www.athanasian.org>; internet.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Copp, Raymond. Personal phone conversation, December 9, 2004.

The name of this church shows its Lutheran and Catholic convictions. The word "Athanasian" shows its allegiance to the catholic faith and the words "Augsburg Confession" shows its support for the reform of the church. Its worship resembles that of pre-Vatican II Roman Catholicism and makes use of the many devotional aids to worship of the catholic faith. However, it does not require these ceremonies and devotional aids and will speak against them when necessary. It also makes a distinction between the two sacraments and the five sacramental rites of the catholic tradition. It makes use of the Oxford movement's *Tracks for the Times*. While it holds to the Augsburg Confession and Luther's two Catechisms, it does not list the Formula of Concord as one of its confessions.

The ACCAC does not support its own seminary. It uses the Concordia Theologica of Biblical Studies of the LEPC and the Wittenberg Lutheran Seminary of the ECC-L. At the moment it does not accept or ordain female clergy. However this issue is "under discussion"⁶⁸ and all female applicants are referred to the LEPC.

The ACCAC was formed in 2003. It consists of only two congregations, about fifty souls and one pastor, Rev. Raymond Copp. Resurrection Lutheran Church of York, PA was a part of the ELCA until it joined the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. The other ACCAC congregation is the newly started Hashbridge Lutheran Church of West Chester, PA.⁶⁹

Evangelical Catholic Church

The Evangelical Catholic Church (ECC) is a group of mission churches served by men in tent-making ministries. It started in 1976 and is headquartered in Scottsdale, AZ. The ECC is too small to run its own seminary. Its polity includes a Primate, General Synod, Archdiocese and Dioceses. The ECC is in an intercommunion relationship with the Episcopal Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of America.

The ECC is different than other Lutheran groups that emphasize the catholicity of the Lutheran Church. They remain strong in upholding the Formula of Concord, they are not in active pursuit of ecumenical endeavors that include Rome and they uphold the maleness of the pastoral office. The ECC is similar to these other groups by taking apostolic succession seriously, retaining sacramental piety and making use of private confession/absolution.

The ECC has reacted to American Lutheranism's move towards Protestantism and therefore seeks to carry out the mission of the church

not by appealing to the latest theological gimmickry, not through liturgical buffoonery or relying upon ecclesiastical bureaucracies, not even by continuing in the numbing banality of so much of what passes under the name *Lutheran* in the U.S. -- but by seeking something so old that it has become new.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Copp.

⁷⁰ *Evangelical Catholic Church Website*. (Scottsdale, AZ, 2004, last assessed on December 3, 2004.) Available from <http://members.aol.com/evcathch/index.html>; internet.

There are four groups that trace their roots to Scandinavian revivalistic movements. All three have stood independent from the major mergers of the twentieth century.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – Eielsen Synod

The oldest and smallest Lutheran church body in this survey is the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – Eielsen Synod. Elling Eielsen started the synod that bears his name in 1846 in Jefferson Prairie, WI. He was a revivalistic lay preacher who emphasized conversion, repentance and lay involvement. He was against vestments, clerical authority, formal worship and ritualism. He came to America from Norway in 1839 and settled among Haugean Christians.

A group left the Eielsen Synod and formed the Hauge Synod in 1875. Before the split, the Eielsen Synod had over 7,500 members in fifty-nine congregations. The Haugean Synod joined the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America but the Eielsen Synod remained independent. The membership of the Eielsen Synod has rapidly declined since then. It had about 1,500 members in 1953 but now has only twenty-five in one congregation.

Immanuel Lutheran Church in French Lake Township, MN is the only remaining congregation of the Eielsen Synod. Rev. Johan O. Blanness was the first resident pastor at Immanuel and served there for fifty-two years until 1968. Rev. Thore Larson took over until 1982. His son Truman served Immanuel and Stall Norwegian Lutheran Church in Jackson, MN. Stall Lutheran Church closed its doors in 1986. Rev. Larson, who is the only ordained pastor in the Eielsen Synod, continues to drive to Immanuel to conduct services once a month. Today, most pastoral duties fall upon Lay Preacher Edwin Erickson. Rev. Lee Shelton of Willmar, MN also conducts services monthly at Immanuel.

Apostolic Lutheran Church of America

The Apostolic Lutheran Church of America (ALCA) has its roots in the Laestadian movement. Some Finnish Americans followed Lars Laestadian, a Swedish and Suomi speaking pastor in northern Finland. After nineteen years of service he “was helped into living faith by a woman named Milla Clementsdotter”.⁷¹ These Lutherans put an emphasis on lay-preachers, revivals and individual confession/absolution performed by fellow Christians through the laying on of hands.

The Laestadian movement spawned a few different groups in America. The Apostolic Lutheran Church of America and the Laestadian Lutheran Church are the two remaining groups with congregations in the United States.

In 1908 a group of these Finnish Lutherans began to gather in “Big Meetings”.⁷² They officially organized as a legal corporation in Michigan in September 1928. Their constitution and bylaws were approved at their annual meeting in June of 1929 in Oregon.

⁷¹ *Laestadian Lutheran Church Website*. (Plymouth, MN, 2004, last assessed on October 22, 2004.) Available from <http://www.laestadianlutheran.org>; internet.

⁷² Seppala, Ivan. Personal e-mail, September 21, 2004.

The ALCA is a loose federation of congregations. It does not have a strong central organization. Its limited government includes an elected President and Secretary, but its main governance comes from its annual meeting, during which each individual congregation has one vote. Statistics are hard to come by because many congregations feel that it is inappropriate to take a census based on David's sin of counting his men in 2 Samuel 24. Professor E.C. Fredrich puts the ALCA's membership at 9,384 in his 1983 paper. His numbers include thirty-six pastors and sixty-four churches.⁷³ As of September 21, 2004, the ALCA has officially sixty congregations and at least seventy-six pastors.⁷⁴ Although the number of congregations has decreased by four, the clergy roster has almost doubled. This is surprising since the ALCA does not have its own seminary. This fluctuation, or discrepancy, is probably due to its emphasis on lay-ministers who don't go through an extended educational program and its lack of organized records.

Although most of the ALCA's congregations are in the Midwest, especially in Michigan, it reaches from Washington State to North Carolina and is found in thirteen states. It also supports mission work in Nigeria, India, Guatemala, Finland, Latvia, Norway, Sweden and Russia.

Laestadian Lutheran Church

The first organized Laestadian congregations were formed in Cokato, MN and Calumet, MI in 1872 and 1872 respectively. After numerous divisions, the Association of American Laestadian Churches (AALC) was formed in 1973. The major disputes that led to the founding of the AALC were over justification, church and the sacraments. In 1994, the AALC was renamed the Laestadian Lutheran Church (LLC) in order to "better convey its spiritual heritage".⁷⁵

Today the LLC has twenty-nine congregations in eleven states and three provinces. The most populated being Minnesota. It holds to a high view of the Scriptures. Their teachings are "based on the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions".⁷⁶ Besides the Laestadian emphases listed above, the LLC puts a high value on faith. It teaches that both baptism and Holy Communion require faith before reception.

Church of the Lutheran Brethren of America

The Church of the Lutheran Brethren of America (CLB) got its start in spiritual revivals among Norwegian-American Lutherans. It split from the United Norwegian Lutheran Church in America in 1900 to form a pure church of truly converted members. It still remains pietistic. There is an emphasis on conversion and the ministry of the priesthood of all believers. It has a high view of the Bible but does not consider the Formula of Concord as one of its confessional books.

⁷³ Fredrich, E. C. *A Little Lecture on Little Little-Know Lutheran Synods*. Metropolitan North Pastoral Conference (WELS): Milwaukee, WI, 1983. Page 3.

Fredrich says that these are the latest numbers but does not provide a date.

⁷⁴ Seppala.

⁷⁵ *Laestadian Lutheran Church Website*.

⁷⁶ *Laestadian Lutheran Church Website*.

The CLB has a tremendous zeal for missions. In the first fifty years of its existence, it spent over fifty percent of its denominational funds on foreign missions. Today, it boasts over 1,500 daughter congregations in Cameroon, Chad, Japan and Taiwan.

CLB congregations can be found in twenty-one states and three Canadian provinces. It started its own seminary, Lutheran Brethren Seminary, in 1903. Currently the enrollment is at twenty students. It also runs a thriving two-year junior high school and four-year boarding senior high school on a beautiful Fergus Falls, MN campus called Hillcrest Academy.

There are two groups that have their foundation in the union churches of the eighteenth century, the Lutheran Evangelical Protestant Church and the Augsburg Orthodox Church Archdiocese.

Lutheran Evangelical Protestant Church

The Lutheran Evangelical Protestant Church (LEPC) traces its roots to German American immigrants in the eighteenth century. In 1782 Rev. John William Weber was commissioned to serve a group of about 100 German families that had settled into the Ohio Valley and around Philadelphia. In 1812 the first union congregation in the United States was founded. First German Evangelical Protestant Church of Pittsburgh was a mixture of Lutheran and Reformed Christians. Other unionistic groups organized themselves across the Midwest and as far south as Texas in the nineteenth century. In 1851 the Evangelical Protestant Church⁷⁷ was formed in Iowa.

In September of 1885 pastors from Pittsburgh and Cincinnati met as First Evangelical Protestant Church in Pittsburgh laying the groundwork for what would become the Evangelical Protestant Church of North America (EPCNA). A constitution was formally adopted in 1912 at Mount Washington Evangelical Protestant Church in Pittsburgh.

For various reasons, not the least being a lack of seminary education, Evangelical Protestants declined and merged with other church bodies throughout the first part of the twentieth century. In 1925 many congregations of EPCNA joined the Congregational Christian Churches to form the Evangelical Protestant Conference of Congregational Churches. Other congregations joined the United Church of Christ, various Lutheran and Reformed churches and others church bodies.

In response to liberal theology, particularly concerning the inerrancy of Scripture, remnants of the EPCNA reorganized into the General Conference of Evangelical Protestant Churches in 2000. In the years since then it has changed its name twice. It first became the Evangelical Protestant Church, a name that is still used. It then officially changed to the Lutheran Evangelical Protestant Church when it adopted the Book of Concord.

The LEPC started its own seminary in the same year that it was founded. The Concordia Theologica of Biblical Studies has twelve instructors and is located in Neffs, PA.

⁷⁷ Not a direct predecessor of the LEPC.

Lutheran Orthodox Church

A group of Lutheran churches concerned with apostolic succession within the LEPC started the Lutheran Orthodox Church (LOC). They were given the opportunity to be consecrated as bishops in valid apostolic succession in 2004. On July 11, 2004 Rev. Sam Guido and Rev. Raymond Copp, among others, were consecrated in New York City. "The main consecrator, Archbishop Betel Person, Primate of the Order of Corporate Reunion, and Presiding Bishop of the Church of Sweden (Lutheran) flew in from Sweden to conduct the ceremony".⁷⁸ Among the other officiants was the Most Rev. Irl Gladfelter of the Evangelical Community Church – Lutheran (ECC-L). The line of apostolic succession that was extended to the LEPC and LOC is through the "Order of Corporate Reunion, a holy order established by Pope Pius in the late 1800's".⁷⁹ The clergy of the LOC can trace their apostolic lineage to St. Peter, St. James, St. Mark, St. Paul, St. John and St. Andrew.

Rev. Guido became the Most Rev. Guido as he was elevated to the Primate of the LOC. The LOC is governed by the Council of Bishops but individual congregations retain much of their independence, especially concerning property. The LOC is still affiliated with the LEPC. It also is affiliated with the ECC-L, The American Independent Evangelical Lutheran Churches and the Athanasian Catholic Church of the Augsburg Confession. The LOC considers itself a conservative and orthodox Lutheran church body in the catholic tradition. It has stated that it will work towards reconciliation with Rome.

Finally, there is one group that does not fit any of the above categories.

Lutheran Churches of Calvary Grace

The most interesting of the small Lutheran groups in the United States is the Lutheran Churches of Calvary Grace (LCCG). Its founder is Rev. Dr. Roger Eyman who is now the Senior Pastor Emeritus of the LCCG. Dr. Eyman started an underground mission through a first aid station outside of Amman, Jordan in 1978. He continued to set up missions throughout the world, including more on the Middle East, Siberia and Costa Rica.

Dr. Eyman reached out into the United States in 1980 with his work on the Papago reservation in Arizona. In that same year he began work in Mexico. The following year he went to Alaska. From his base in Alaska, he started work in the bush country of the arctic. He set up twenty-four missions in Alaska, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

There are now twenty-six missions in Alaska, one in the Yukon, one in the Northwest Territories, four in Mexico and one in Singapore. The mission in Singapore has recruited two candidates for mission work in Malaysia and Indonesia.⁸⁰ The LCCG trains pastors through a two-year program under the professorship of Dr. Eyman and the supervision of established pastors.

⁷⁸ *Lutheran Orthodox Church Website*. (Neffs, PA, 2004, last assessed on December 1, 2004.) Available from <http://www.orgsites.com/pa/lutheranorthodox/>; internet.

⁷⁹ *Lutheran Orthodox Church Website*.

⁸⁰ Eyman, Roger A. personal e-mail, September 6, 2004.

The LCCG has always been its own entity but was in communion with the LCA until the ELCA merger, which it considered too liberal. The LCCG holds to the inerrancy of Scripture and takes a *quia* subscription to the Augsburg Confession and the Apology but does not list the Formula of Concord as one of its confessions. The LCCG is highly motivated to do work among poor, especially the homeless. It also has an unmatched zeal for mission work.

Conclusion

As one surveys the American Lutheran scene in 2004, a few trends stand out. First, the American spirit is a live and well among American Lutherans. There are plenty of Lutheran groups who have left their synods, at least in part, for political independence. One wonders if this is really the driving force behind many of these rebellions against the ELCA. The inerrancy of Scripture is pointed to as “the” reason for independence, but why did these groups not leave earlier? Why did they not leave with the first or the second group that broke from the LCA ALC or ELCA? Many of their histories and mission statements specifically state congregational autonomy as a reason they left, some giving detailed accusations against the ELCA. Synodical leadership, no matter their church’s doctrine of the church, would be wise to never forget what country they live in and tread lightly when governing.

A second trend is similar to the Oxford Movement of nineteenth century England. There is definitely a liturgical and sacramental movement within Lutheranism, but unlike the Oxford Movement, it is unorganized. There is also as many differences between those inside the movement as there is between the movement and the rest of Lutheranism. Many Lutherans would gladly be labeled as part of the liturgical and sacramental movement if one title were added, confessional. Of the groups that have become independent, only the Evangelical Catholic Church and the Lutheran Confessional Synod deserve this label, the rest do not even subscribe to the Formula of Concord. For most liturgical and confessional minded Lutherans, reunification with Rome isn’t even a dream, but for many liturgical minded Lutherans it is becoming a reality.

A third trend finds it home on the other side of the spectrum of Western Christianity. Whereas the liturgical movement finds ecumenical endeavors within sacramental piety, those on the other side see the sacraments as a hindrance to their move towards generic Christianity. Whereas the liturgical movement seeks to reintroduce the historic liturgy, the other side strives for the new and the innovative. Just as much as the liturgical movement wants to cross the Po River, the other side climbs the Alps. The means the Holy Spirit uses to give grace are brushed aside in favor of sanctification. Discipleship under the cross is relieved by the theology of glory. Although Church-Growth principles are beginning to lose their punch, the generic Christian mindset still finds a home in many of the groups that have splintered off from the ELCA.

The history of the Lutheran Church in America has seen its fair share of divisions, mergers and divisions again. One could only guess as to what will happen next. Are there more divisions on the horizon, or will we see another wave of mergers? One thing is for sure, as long as people stand up for the inerrancy of Scripture and congregational autonomy, there will continue to be doctrinal and political clashes with those on the other side.

Addendum

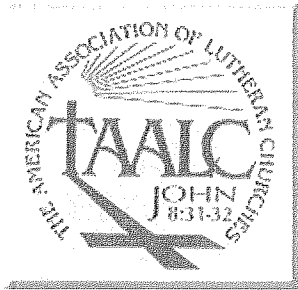
The following pages list basic information about the thirty-three Lutheran groups existent in the United States as of December 2004. This excludes the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Latvian Lutheran Church and the Lithuanian Evangelical Lutheran Church in Diaspora.

All statistics are taken from the particular group's website unless otherwise noted. Some statistics are fairly rough estimates because many of these groups do not keep accurate numbers.



Name	Alliance of Renewal Churches
Location	Roseville, MN
Website	allianceofrenewalchurches.org
Founded	2002
Source	Various
Countries	USA
States	6
Congregations	13
Members	N/A
Clergy	14
Missions	No
Government	"Leadership Team"
President	Rev. Paul Anderson (Director)
Affiliations	Lutheran Renewal
Publish. House	No
Seminary	The Master's Institute ⁸¹
Location	St. Paul, MN
Founded	2002
Enrollment	22
President	Rev. Mike Bradley (Director/Dean)

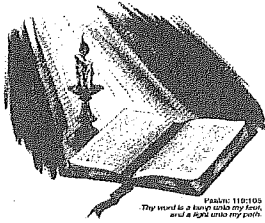
⁸¹ Seminary info taken from personal e-mail through ARC's website.
Unknown author. Website e-mail, September 23, 2004.



Name	American Association of Lutheran Churches
Location	Minneapolis, MN
Website	taalc.com
Founded	1987
Source	ALC and LCA
Countries	USA
States	23
Congregations	84
Members	15,230 (souls) ⁸²
Clergy	150
Missions	No
Government	10 regions, regional pastors
President	Rev. Thomas Aaland (Presiding Pastor)
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	No
Seminary	American Lutheran Theological Seminary
Location	Edina, MN
Founded	1993
Enrollment	17 full-time pastoral, 40 total ⁸³
President	Rev. Dr. Harold Schoubye

⁸² Unknown author. Website e-mail, November 2, 2004.

⁸³ Ibid.



Name	Apostolic Lutheran Church of America
Location	Houghton, MI ⁸⁴
Website	apostolic-lutheran.org
Founded	1908, officially 1928
Source	Laestadian movement
Countries	USA, mission in Alberta
States	13
Congregations	60 ⁸⁵
Members	1,000 (1983 estimate) ⁸⁶
Clergy	76 ⁸⁷
Missions	8 countries
Government	Federation, Annual Meeting
President	Rev. Earl Kaurala
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	Apostolic Lutheran Book Concern
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A

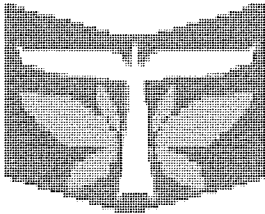
⁸⁴ The ALCA has no official office, this is the president's home, the de facto headquarters.

⁸⁵ Seppala.

⁸⁶ Some congregations in the ALCA feel that it is unwise to count members and their secretary (president) could not provide statistics. This estimate is from Prof. Fredrich.

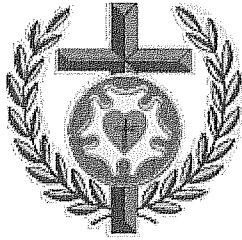
Fredrich, E.C. Page 3.

⁸⁷ Seppala.



Name	Association of Free Lutheran Congregations ⁸⁸
Location	Minneapolis, MN
Website	aflc.org
Founded	1962
Source	Lutheran Free Church
Countries	USA, Canada
States	27 states, 3 provinces
Congregations	260
Members	40,000
Clergy	259
Missions	Brazil, Mexico, India
Government	Coordinating Council
President	Robert E. Lee
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	Ambassador Publications
Seminary	Association of Free Lutheran Theological Seminary
Location	Plymouth, MN
Founded	1964
Enrollment	25 full time, 6 “special students”
President	Rev. Dr. Francis Monseth

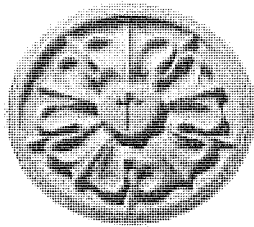
⁸⁸ All statistics taken from personal e-mail.
Lee.



Name	Association of Independent Evangelical Lutheran Congregations
Location	Astoria, NY
Website	AssociationOfIndependentEvangelicalLutheranCongregations.org
Founded	1992, officially 2001 ⁸⁹
Source	N/A
Countries	USA, Argentina
States	New York
Congregations	About 100
Members	20,000 ⁹⁰
Clergy	About 100
Missions	Haiti
Government	Board of Trustees
President	Rev. Dr. Pedro Bravo-Guzman (President and Bishop)
Affiliations	AAC-AC, ECC-L et. al.
Publish.House	No
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A

⁸⁹ Bravo-Guzman.

⁹⁰ Ibid.



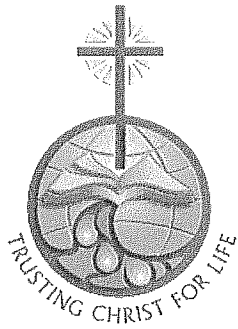
Name	Athanasian Catholic Church of the Augsburg Confession ⁹¹
Location	West Chester, PA
Website	Athanasian.org
Founded	2003
Source	AFLC
Countries	USA
States	Pennsylvania
Congregations	2
Members	50
Clergy	1
Missions	None
Government	Bishop
President	Rev. Raymond Copp (Bishop)
Affiliations	AIELC, ACC-L, EPC
Publish. House	No
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A

⁹¹ All statistics taken from personal phone conversation.
Copp.

AOES

Name	Augustana Orthodox and Evangelical Synod ⁹²
Location	Roseville, MN
Website	None
Founded	1860 as Augustana Synod, reorganized in 1997
Source	Swedish immigrants
Countries	USA
States	Minnesota
Congregations	1
Members	300
Clergy	2
Missions	No
Government	N/A
President	N/A
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	No
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A

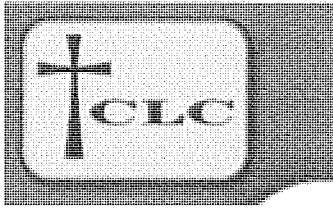
⁹² All information taken from personal phone conversation.
Basich.



Name	Church of the Lutheran Brethren of America
Location	Fergus Falls, MN
Website	clba.org
Founded	1900
Source	Norwegian-American Lutheran Spiritual Renewals
Countries	USA and Canada
States	21, 2 provinces
Congregations	123
Members	14,023 ⁹³
Clergy	175 ⁹⁴
Missions	Cameroon, Chad, Japan, Taiwan
Government	5 districts
President	Rev. Joel R. Egge
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	Faith and Fellowship Bookstore
Seminary	Lutheran Brethren Seminary
Location	Fergus Falls, MN
Founded	1903
Enrollment	20
President	Rev. Dr. Joel Nordvedt

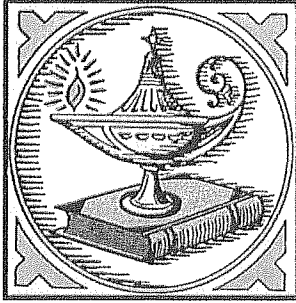
⁹³ Personal phone conversation with president's office secretary.

⁹⁴ Ibid.



Name	Church of the Lutheran Confession ⁹⁵
Location	Eau Claire, WI
Website	clclutheran.org
Founded	1953, 1960 officially
Source	WELS, ELS, LC-MS
Countries	USA
States	24
Congregations	75
Members	8,390
Clergy	64
Missions	India, Nigeria
Government	Biennial conventions
President	Rev. John Schierenbeck
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	CLC Bookhouse
Seminary	Immanuel Lutheran
Location	Eau Claire, WI
Founded	1959
Enrollment	5
President	Rev. John Pfeiffer

⁹⁵ Statistics taken from personal e-mail.
Fleischer, Daniel. Personal e-mail, September 5, 2004.

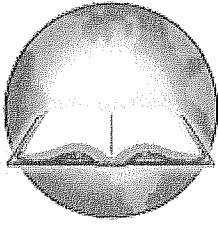


Name	Concordia Lutheran Conference ⁹⁶
Location	Oak Forest, IL ⁹⁷
Website	concordialutheranconf.com
Founded	1955
Source	LC-MS, Orthodox Lutheran Conference
Countries	USA
States	8
Congregations	7, 2 in fellowship
Members	N/A
Clergy	7, 2 in fellowship
Missions	Russia, Nigeria
Government	Annual convention, Board of Directors
President	Rev. Robert J. Leitz
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	Scriptural Publications
Seminary	Concordia Theological Seminary
Location	Oak Forest, IL
Founded	1959 (discontinued 1962-1969)
Enrollment	1
President	Rev. Mark W. Diekig (Chairman of Committee on Theological Education)

⁹⁶ Statistics taken from personal letter.

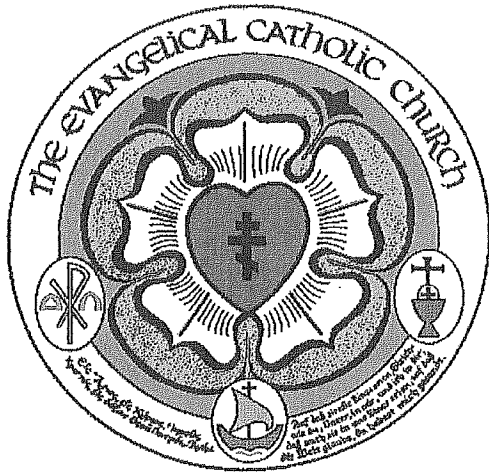
Lietz, Robert J. Personal letter, October 5, 2004.

⁹⁷ The CLC has no official offices, this is the location of the president/seminary, their de facto headquarters.

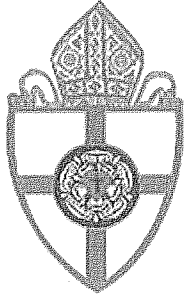


Name	Conservative Lutheran Association
Location	Tacoma, WI
Website	tlcanaheim.com
Founded	1965 (as Lutheran Alert National), 1980 (as CLA)
Source	ALC, et. al.
Countries	USA
States	Washington, California
Congregations	5
Members	1,267
Clergy	6
Missions	No
Government	President, periodical conventions
President	Rev. Pomeroy J. Moore
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	No
Seminary	Faith Evangelical Lutheran Seminary
Location	Tacoma, WA
Founded	1969 (by LAN)
Enrollment	200 ⁹⁸
President	Rev. Michael Adams (Dean)

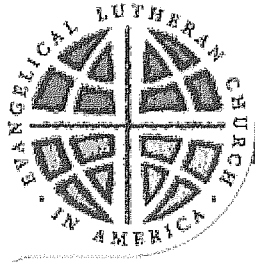
⁹⁸ Elmere, Jim. Personal letter, October 1, 2004.



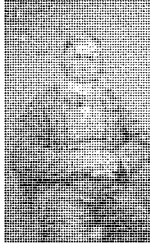
Name	Evangelical Catholic Church
Location	Scottsdale, AZ
Website	http://members.aol.com/EvCathCh/index.HTML
Founded	1976
Source	N/A
Countries	USA
States	N/A
Congregations	N/A
Members	N/A
Clergy	N/A
Missions	No
Government	General Synod, Archdioceses, Primate
President	Most Rev. Karl J. Barwin (Bishop)
Affiliations	Episcopal Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of America
Publish. House	No
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A



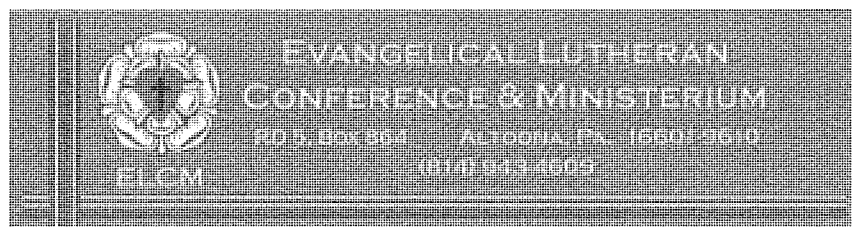
Name	Evangelical Community Church – Lutheran
Location	Kansas City. MO
Website	eccl.net.org
Founded	1997
Source	LC-MS
Countries	1
States	3 (GA, NY, MO)
Congregations	3
Members	N/A
Clergy	5
Missions	No
Government	Episcopal, Bishops
President	Most Rev. Irl A. Gladfelter (Prime Bishop)
Affiliations	Assoc. of Ind. Ev. Luth. Chs., Athanasian Cath. Ch. of the Augsburg Confess.
Publish. House	No
Seminary	Wittenberg Lutheran Seminar
Location	Kansas City, MO
Founded	1997
Enrollment	No
President	Most Rev. Irl A. Gladfelter



Name	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Location	Chicago, IL
Website	elca.org
Founded	1988
Source	ALC, LCA, et.al.
Countries	1
States	50
Congregations	10,721
Members	5,038,006
Clergy	17,703
Missions	50 + countries
Government	65 synods, 9 regions
President	Rev. Mark S. Hanson (Bishop)
Affiliations	LWF, Episcopal USA, Moravian Ch. in Am., Reformed Ch. in Am., United Ch. of Christ
Publish. House	Augsburg – Fortress
Seminary	8 different seminaries
Location	Chicago, Columbus, OH, Dubuque, IA, Gettysburg, Philadelphia, Columbia, SC, St. Paul, Berkeley
Founded	Various
Enrollment	1,200+
President	Various



Name	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – Eielsen Synod
Location	French Lake Township, MN
Website	cokato.mn.us/cmhs/immanuel
Founded	1846
Source	Norwegian-American Lutheran revivals
Countries	USA
States	Minnesota
Congregations	1
Members	25
Clergy	1
Missions	No
Government	N/A
President	N/A
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	No
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A

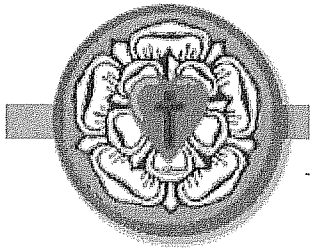


Name	Evangelical Lutheran Conference and Ministerium
Location	Altoona, PA
Website	elcm.org
Founded	1999
Source	LCA (ELCA)
Countries	1
States	5 (NY, ND, OH, PA, VA)
Congregations	14
Members	1,250
Clergy	14 (89 including missions)
Missions	20+ countries
Government	President, annual convention
President	Rev. Roy Steward Jr.
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	No
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD

Name	Evangelical Lutheran Synod
Location	Mankato, MN
Website	evluthsyn.org
Founded	1918
Source	Norwegian Synod
Countries	USA
States	18
Congregations	142
Members	21,729
Clergy	176
Missions	Peru, Chile
Government	President, conventions
President	Rev. John A. Molstad
Affiliations	CELC
Publish. House	No ⁹⁹
Seminary	Bethany Lutheran Seminary
Location	Mankato, MN
Founded	1946
Enrollment	10
President	Rev. Gary Schmeling

⁹⁹ The ELS uses outside publishers to print big projects.



Name	Fellowship of Confessing Lutheran Churches
Location	Dearborn Heights, MI
Website	newlutheranfellowship.org
Founded	2000
Source	N/A
Countries	1
States	1 (NY)
Congregations	2
Members	N/A
Clergy	9
Missions	No
Government	Board of Trustees
President	Rev. Kristian Baudler (Chairman of the board)
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	No
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A

--- Illinois Lutheran Conference ---

Name	Illinois Lutheran Conference
Location	Arbor Vitae, WI ¹⁰⁰
Website	illinoislutheranconference.org
Founded	1979
Source	WELS
Countries	1
States	5 (MI, WI, IL, MN, MO)
Congregations	7
Members	N/A
Clergy	4
Missions	0
Government	Annual convention
President	Dale Yeomans (secretary)
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	No
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A

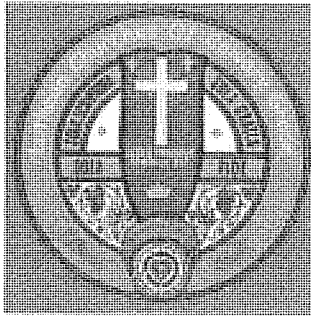
¹⁰⁰ The ILC does not have official offices. This is the secretary's hometown, the de facto headquarters.



Name	Laestadian Lutheran Church
Location	Plymouth, MN
Website	laestadianlutheran.org
Founded	1973
Source	Association of American Laestadian Churches
Countries	2
States	11, 3 provinces
Congregations	29
Members	N/A
Clergy	N/A
Missions	No
Government	Loose federation
President	None
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	No
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A



Name	Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod
Location	St. Louis, MO
Website	lcms.org
Founded	1847
Source	German Immigrants
Countries	USA
States	50
Congregations	6,142
Members	2,512,714
Clergy	8,759
Missions	40 countries
Government	35 districts
President	Rev. Dr. Gerald Kieschnick
Affiliations	ILC, Lutheran Church-Canada
Publish. House	Concordia Publishing House
Seminary	Concordia Theological Seminary, Concordia Seminary
Location	Fort Wayne, IN, St. Louis, MO
Founded	1846, 1839
Enrollment	Total 700+
President	Rev. Dean O. Wenthe, Rev. Dr. John Johnson

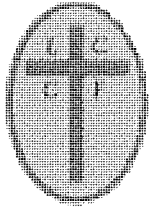


Name	Lutheran Churches of Calvary Grace ¹⁰¹
Location	Colorado Springs, CO
Website	thelutheran.net
Founded	1978
Source	Mission work by Rev. Dr. Roger Eyman in Amman, Jordan
Countries	USA, Canada, Mexico
States	5, 2 Provinces
Congregations	26
Members	1,000
Clergy	26
Missions	Singapore
Government	Board
President	Rev. Dr. Roger Eyman
Affiliations	Association of International Mission Services
Publish. House	No
Seminary	Traveling 2 year program by Dr. Eyman
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A

¹⁰¹ Statistics taken from personal e-mail.
Eyman.

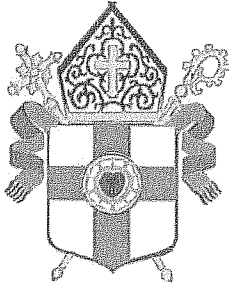


Name	Lutheran Churches of the Reformation
Location	Decatur, IL
Website	lcrusa.org
Founded	1964
Source	LCMS
Countries	USA, Canada
States	11, 1 province
Congregations	16
Members	1,000
Clergy	18
Missions	Nigeria
Government	Annual convention
President	Rev. Kenneth K. Miller (administrator)
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	No
Seminary	Martin Luther Institute of Sacred Studies
Location	Decatur, IN
Founded	1965
Enrollment	0
President	Rev. Kenneth K. Miller (dean)



Name	Lutheran Conference of Confessional Fellowship
Location	New Ulm, MN
Website	home.mn.rr.com/lccf
Founded	1980 (1983 officially)
Source	CLC
Countries	USA
States	Minnesota (missions in FL, AZ, SD)
Congregations	3
Members	175 ¹⁰²
Clergy	2
Missions	No
Government	President, periodical conventions
President	Rev. Robert Mehlretter
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	No
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A

¹⁰²Mehlretter.



Name	Lutheran Confessional Synod
Location	Decatur, IL
Website	hstrial.rdjaynes.homestead.com
Founded	1995
Source	ELCA
Countries	2
States	2, 1 province (IL, MI, BC)
Congregations	3
Members	N/A
Clergy	4
Missions	No
Government	Bishop, conventions
President	Rev. R.L. Dejaynes (Bishop)
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	No
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A

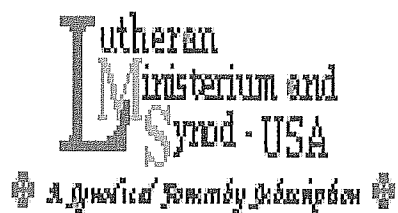


Name	Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
Location	Canton, MI
Website	lcmc.net
Founded	2001
Source	Word Alone Network (ELCA, et. al.)
Countries	3 (USA, Mexico, Vietnam)
States	25
Congregations	113
Members	N/A
Clergy	50 ¹⁰³
Missions	Haiti, Mexico, Vietnam
Government	Annual Convention
President	Rev. Dale Wolf (Chairman of the Board of Trustees)
Affiliations	World Mission Prayer League
Publish. House	No
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A

¹⁰³ Sullivan.



Name	Lutheran Evangelical Protestant Church
Location	Neffs, PA
Website	evanprotchurch.cbj.net
Founded	2001
Source	Evangelical Protestant Church
Countries	USA, Germany
States	N/A
Congregations	N/A
Members	N/A
Clergy	N/A
Missions	No
Government	President, conventions
President	Rev. Dr. Hans Haeuser
Affiliations	AIELC, ECC-L , ACC-AC
Publish. House	No
Seminary	Concordia Theologica Institute of Biblical Studies
Location	Neffs, PA
Founded	2001
Enrollment	0
President	N/A



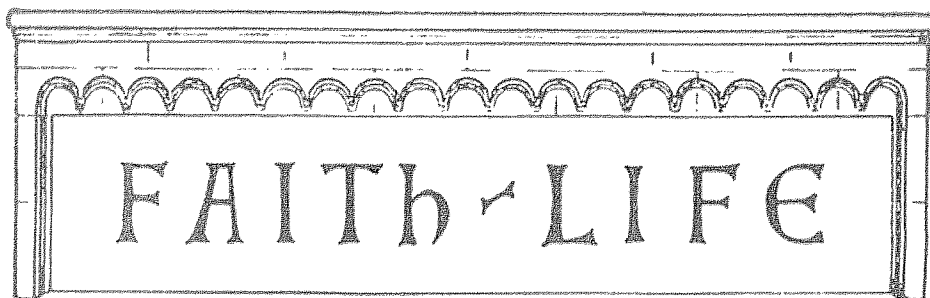
Name	Lutheran Ministerium and Synod - USA
Location	Indianapolis, IN
Website	lmsusa.org
Founded	1995
Source	AALC
Countries	USA
States	MI, WI, MN, IN, TN, IL, OH
Congregations	9
Members	500
Clergy	26
Missions	No
Government	Loose ministerium
President	Rev. Ralph Spears
Affiliations	No ¹⁰⁴
Publish. House	No
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A

¹⁰⁴ The LMS-USA is close to joining the ILC.
Spears, Ralph. Personal e-mail, November 16, 2004.

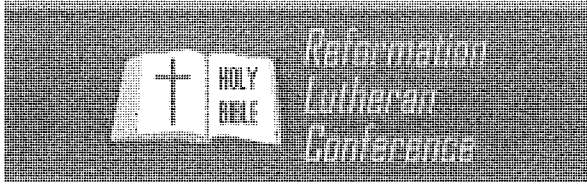


Sola Scriptis, Sola Fide, Sola Christo, Sola Scriptura

Name	Lutheran Orthodox Church Archdiocese
Location	Neffs, PA
Website	orgsites.com/pa/lutheranorthodox/
Founded	2004
Source	LEPC
Countries	USA
States	N/A
Congregations	N/A
Members	N/A
Clergy	N/A
Missions	No
Government	Council of Bishops, Primate
President	Most Rev. Sam Guido (Primate)
Affiliations	LEPC, ECC-L
Publish. House	No
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A

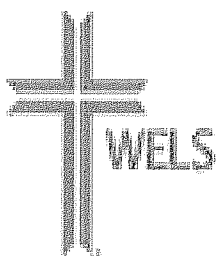


Name	Protes'tant Conference
Location	Appleton, WI
Website	Protestantconf.org
Founded	1928
Source	WELS
Countries	USA
States	WI, MN, MI, CA
Congregations	8
Members	1,000
Clergy	8
Missions	No
Government	Three annual conventions
President	Rev. Marcus Albrect
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	No
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A



Name	Reformation Lutheran Conference
Location	LaCrosse, WI ¹⁰⁵
Website	Lutheranrlc.org
Founded	2000
Source	CLC, LCCF
Countries	USA
States	Minnesota
Congregations	4
Members	150
Clergy	2
Missions	No
Government	Conventions (two or three annually)
President	N/A
Affiliations	No
Publish. House	No
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A

¹⁰⁵ The RLC has no official offices. Two of their four congregations are in the LaCrosse area.



Name	Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
Location	Milwaukee, WI
Website	wels.net
Founded	1849
Source	German immigrants
Countries	USA, Canada, Antigua, Grenada, St. Lucia
States	50
Congregations	1,239
Members	414,295
Clergy	1,650+
Missions	19 countries
Government	Biennial convention, Conference of Presidents
President	Rev. Karl Gurgel
Affiliations	CELC
Publish. House	Northwestern Publishing House
Seminary	Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary
Location	Mequon, WI
Founded	1863
Enrollment	189
President	Rev. Paul Wendland



Name	Word Alone Network
Location	New Brighton, MI
Website	Wordalone.org
Founded	1996
Source	ELCA
Countries	USA
States	45
Congregations	122
Members	110,000+
Clergy	200+
Missions	No
Government	President, conventions
President	Jaynan Clark Eglund
Affiliations	Lutheran Churches in Mission for Christ
Publish. House	No
Seminary	No
Location	N/A
Founded	N/A
Enrollment	N/A
President	N/A

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