

Pilgrim Lutheran Church

Leaving LCMS

How decision was made

How Members were Prepared

Steps that were Taken

Reasons for leaving

Long Story Short

- Provide Education
- Clarify Reasons
- Make Preparation
- Stay Focused (do not get lost in details)
- Bring to the Voters
- Ensure Pastors and/or Laity are Involved

Education and Communication Needed at Many Levels

- Education from two perspectives; Biblical and secular
- Elder and Council meetings were used to identify and discuss why PLC needed to be concerned about direction LCMS appeared to be headed
- Bible classes had brief updates and key concerns were identified in studies
- Laity and Pr's took part in Synod and District conventions and reported back to Congregation

Education and Communication Needed at Many Levels

- Forums were held at PLC
 - Open Public forums with special invitation to LCMS congregations in Central Illinois district
 - Purpose was to hear from some Synodical leaders and Professors who had concerns about where the Synod was headed
 - Rev Kurt Marquardt
 - Dr A.L. Barry
 - Rev. Dr Robert D. Preus

Clarify and Communicate Reasons

- Elders, Council and Congregation heard the many Reasons
 - Deemed Important to put to writing why we felt it was necessary to leave LCMS
 - Would help all to have same understanding of concerns
 - Would clearly document for the voters meeting
 - Would provide information for members to share when questions arose
- Information packet was developed and available on PLC Website

Why Pilgrim left LCMS

- Open Communion
- Confusion of Law and Gospel
 - Church Growth
- Bureaucracy
- Unionistic/Syncretistic Prayer service
- Worship vs. Entertainment
- Congregational Autonomy

More information at : www.pilgrimlutherandecatur.org

Hot Link w Title of “An Independent Lutheran Church”

Summary Info Packet “Because I Care”

Make Preparation

- At PLC it fell to the Council to take the Lead
- Areas that were reviewed and actions taken included
 - Financial / Banking Matters
 - Pastors and Staff Health and Pension Benefits
 - Budget Changes
 - Legal Review
 - Constitution (provisions and required changes)
 - Process and Paper worked required for withdrawal
 - Sources for Sunday School, Midweek School, VBS, and Worship Material

Make Preparation

- PLC Constitution
- Article 8-c, Synodical Membership
- This congregation shall be a member of the LCMS as long as the synod conforms to the congregation's confessional standard set forth in section 3-c.

Make Preparation

- Started working on anticipated questions from Votes
 - What happens to the well being of Pr's and Staff
 - What will be the source for new Pastors
 - How to use PLC Mission Funds
 - How or what will be the impacts on PLC
 - What do we tell family, relatives and friends
 - Will PLC be alone
- Stated reviewing other independent groups

Make Preparation

– Congregational Meetings

- What is happening at Synod
- What Council, Elders and Pastors have been discussing and reviewing
- What would be proposed to the Voters by Council and Elders
- Answers to anticipated questions
- Request for additional questions

Maintain Focus

- Recognized all questions would not be answered nor even identified prior to Voters meeting
- During this decision making period Council and Elders stayed focused on questions pertinent to a decision to leave; other questions were listed as future work
- Even decisions on when or who to join after we left were listed as future work

Bring Decision to the Voters

- Hopefully from what I have presented up to now will help you understand when I say the preparations for the voters meeting where it would be decided whether PLC would stay or leave the Synod were easier than much of the previous work that had already been done
- A joint resolution from Council and Elders was prepared and presented to the voters
- Required paper work was prepared and brought to the meeting with thought that it would be signed that night and placed in mail if decision was made to leave
- A later voters' meeting was used for decision to join Redeemer St Clare shores to form ULMA

Involvement

- Pastors, Council, Elders, and Congregation were involved from very early
- Right after the many prayers and the diligent searching for God's will and direction ;
"Involvement" and "Communications" were probably the two most important steps taken
- The support of our Pastors, Council, Elders, and reassurance from the Laity were key to the unity that was demonstrated during these activities