

WELCOME!

Agenda

Opening prayer
Opening Worship
Church Council Presentation
NALC Presentation
Q & A for NALC Guests
Q & A for Council
Closing Prayer
Closing Worship

ON SCREEN WHEN PEOPLE ARRIVE

Mike Brost Welcome people and go through agenda

Opening Prayer

**Mike Brost,
Interim Pastor**

MIKE BROST opening prayer

Opening Worship

The Church's One Foundation

Brown Hymnal page 277

Opening Hymn: The Church's One Foundation: Organ

Nazareth's Mission Statement:

Living together in God's amazing grace, we invite all people to know Christ, grow in Christ, and make Christ known.

As we evaluated our affiliation with the ELCA as a church Council, we came back to two guiding principles that have influenced Nazareth's decision making and ministries for decades. These have been voted on and confirmed by all of us eleven different times since 1993. These Biblical principles are the solid rock upon which Nazareth was built. As we heard from Pastor Marshaundus Robinson last week, if we don't build on a solid rock foundation, we as a church will not stand.

The first guiding principle is our mission statement:

Read slide

Nazareth's Confession of Faith:

This congregation accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as a whole and in all their parts as the divinely inspired, revealed, and inerrant Word of God and submits to this as the only infallible authority in all matters of faith and life.

And our second guiding principle is our confession of faith.

Read slide

- ❖ **Nazareth believes in the Truth & Authority of Scripture**
- ❖ **Nazareth's Unity is found only in Christ**
- ❖ **Nazareth desires Fruitful Mission**

Based on our mission statement and confession of faith, we as a council asked ourselves the following: Is our affiliation with the ELCA helping Nazareth reinforce our belief in the truth and authority of scripture? Are they helping us as a congregation be unified in Christ? And are they helping us find fruitful mission in the Great Commission we are called to as a church?

Truth & Authority of Scripture

⁶ “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

John 14:6

¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”

Matthew 28:18

Please consider these words from Jesus regarding the truth and authority of scripture.

Read slide

Jesus Christ is both the Truth and Authority of ALL Scripture from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21.

DOUBT

- ❖ **Bishop Eaton: “If there is a hell, I think it is empty”**
- ❖ **The ELCA’s policy on Human Sexuality is in contrast with Nazareth’s By-laws**

If Satan can get people to doubt the Bible, then it doesn't take long before he can get them to deny the Bible. Then if they will deny, it is easy to get them to disobey. That has worked so well since the Garden of Eden, Satan hasn't ever had to change his tactics. He still uses it.

Source: The God Who Speaks (thegodwhospeaks.org)

To address the first bulleted example of an area where the ELCA has cast doubt on the truth and authority of scripture, in very public comments by ELCA leadership, they have cast doubt on the full truth and authority of scripture. Take for instance our presiding Bishop's comments to the Chicago Sun Times when asked if there is a hell – her response was, “If there is a hell, I think it is empty.” When Nazareth asked her to repent of this statement in our Letter of Dissent, she did not. By contrast, scripture tells us in Matthew 10:28 “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”

Source:

<https://chicago.suntimes.com/2018/3/7/18372814/top-lutheran-bishop-if-hell-exists-i-think-it-s-empty>

Another example is seen in the second bullet on the slide: It is clear that the ELCA's policy on Human Sexuality stands in contrast to the truth and authority

of scripture. This has resulted in Nazareth finding it necessary to draft the “Speaking the Truth in Love” document, as well as amending our By-laws to be aligned with this document. These actions have put us in direct opposition to the ELCA’s leading.

Source:

<https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Human-Sexuality>

Source: [Speaking the Truth in Love](#)

Genesis 3:3 – Did God really say?...

Our Unity is found only in Christ

²⁰My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²²I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one, ²³I in them and you in me, so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

John 17:20-23

Read slide

In this verse, Jesus prays to the Father that we would be brought to complete unity, and this should be our witness to the world for Him.

Our Unity is found only in Christ

¹³Until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Ephesians 4:13

Read slide

This verse tells us that our faith in Christ and knowing Him is where we find unity as a congregation and Church.

Until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Eph 4:13

DISUNITY

The ELCA, in choosing positions of societal debates that are inconsistent with the authority of scripture, has caused a theological drift away from the authority of scripture.

The ELCA, in choosing positions of societal debates that are inconsistent with the authority of scripture, has caused a theological drift away from the authority of scripture. Rather than our unity being found only in Christ, the ELCA has placed an emphasis in our unity being found in believing the same thing on social issues. In doing so, they've created the same environment and disunity within our walls as society has created in the public square.

Fruitful Missions

¹⁷And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:17-20

Read slide, then below –

Jesus tells us that His Great Commission is THE purpose of HIS Church.

DISTRACTION

13 Social Statements

In the ELCA document, "[The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective](#)", (linked to the elca.org website) it states: "This church shall develop social statements ... that will guide the life of this church as an institution and inform the conscience of its members in the spirit of Christian liberty." Nazareth believes that It is only the Word of God that guides the life of the Church and informs the conscience of its members.

The ELCA placed a heavy emphasis on producing social statements and policies. Over the last 20 years, The ELCA has forced Nazareth to take time away from our primary mission to address and restate our views as a church which have not been in alignment with ELCA policy. Examples of this are bylaw changes voted on and approved, Speaking the Truth in Love document and letters of dissent created, and affiliation task forces formed. All of this has led to taking time, energy, focus, and resources from our primary mission as a church. What a distraction!

What will Nazareth choose to do now?

Compromise?

Reform?

Disaffiliate?

[Video Clip](#)

Is doubt, disunity, and distraction what we want from our affiliation with the ELCA? As a church council, we have unanimously voted 9-0 that it would be better to affiliate with a church body who supports our mission and confession of faith. And you will hear that from our guests in a few moments.

When we've gotten to this point as a church before, we've chosen to compromise and reform. I want you to watch this clip of what reform looks like in the ELCA. It is of a delegate from Minnesota who is trying to get an amendment to an ELCA resolution on "Inter-faith partners." He is asking them to strike lines 630 to 655, portions of which state, "We must be careful about claiming to know God's judgements regarding another religion." During his time at the microphone, he makes it clear that this line is contrary to scripture, because in John 14:6 Jesus says "I am the way and the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me." What you are about to hear is the introduction of the resolution by the ELCA secretary, and then Bishop Eaton asking Bishop Lull (the chair of the ad hoc committee) to read the Minnesota delegate's amendment request. Because she is reading it, do not be fooled that she is in favor of it. After reading it, she tells the Bishop that the ad hoc committee does not recommend passage of this amendment for two reasons: because Martin Luther himself would not have interpreted John 14:6 in the same manner as the gentleman from Minnesota, and also because they

feel we should approach our inter-faith neighbors with humility and curiosity instead of making disciples out of them. I will allow the rest of the video to speak for itself.

[SHOW CLIP: Plenary 7 Thursday Afternoon | ELCA Churchwide Assembly 2019](#)

Can you believe that? I can – I was actually a delegate just like him in 2009 standing before that same churchwide assembly trying to reform the ELCA on your behalf. And the outcome of the vote was the same.

Reform hasn't worked. Compromise hasn't worked. It is now time to make a decision to disaffiliate from the ELCA, and that is what your church council has unanimously recommended that you vote to do.

Nazareth will not fulfill Christ's purpose for the church if we stay on the **ELCA** **path.**

Truth of Scripture vs. **Doubt of Scripture**
Unity in Christ vs. **Continued disunity**
Fruitful Mission vs. **Distraction**

By compromising, Nazareth, over the last 20 years has fewer members, fewer ministries, and fewer resources. Our affiliation should not be sowing seeds of disunity amongst our congregation. It should not be distracting us from our primary mission – which is calling all people to know Christ, grow in Christ, and make Christ known. In 1 Peter 5:8 and Ephesians 4:15, we are told that wherever corruption or compromise seeks a foothold, we need to be vigilant, sober, on guard, and to speak the truth in love. **Out of a heart that has been changed by Christ** comes solutions to social justice issues, it doesn't come from institutions. So how will Nazareth proceed this time? Will we seek to compromise again, will we table the vote, will we write a dissenting letter, or will we let go of closed fists and clenched jaws? Will we soften our hearts, have a desire for Nazareth to be unified and CHOOSE to do something together?

Your church council has chosen to do this. We've done a lot of work in our individual hearts to repent and let go of bitterness that has built up regarding these issues. We've listened to one another as we all came into this time of serving with different views on the ELCA. And most importantly, we've placed the Word of God at the center of our decision-making process. We are tired of being distracted away from the primary mission the Bible makes clear for His Church, which is the Great Commandment Matthew (Chapter 22) and the

Great Commission Matthew (Chapter 28). We believe that God has provided a path forward together with the North American Lutheran Church. They align closely with our values and mission statement. But, more than anything, we hope you follow your council's lead and unite with us to move forward and affiliate with the North American Lutheran Church.

Please welcome our special guests from Dallas, TX!

Reverend Dr. Amy Little
General Secretary, NALC



Reverend Dr. Daniel Selbo
Bishop, NALC



That pretty much covers Resolution #1 which is our unanimous recommendation to leave the ELCA. But where do we recommend that we go? Resolution #2 is Council's unanimous recommendation to affiliate with the North American Lutheran Church (NALC). We have some guests here to help us learn more about the NALC – It is our pleasure to introduce to you the General Secretary of the NALC, Reverend Dr. Amy Little, and the Bishop of the NALC, Reverend Dr. Daniel Selbo. They have graciously travelled from Dallas, Texas to be with us today to share their vision for a fruitful partnership in affiliation with Nazareth. Please help me welcome them!

Q & A

We will now have time for questions for our guests from the NALC. Please hold off on follow-up questions until everyone who wants to ask one question has gotten a chance. Once our guests have answered your questions, we will open up any further questions for the Church Council. All questions will have a 2-minute time limit.

Reminder of Upcoming Events

Sunday, June 25th – Repeat of Council Presentation

- **3:30-5:30 p.m. in the Worship Center**

Sunday, July 2nd – Last Communion Sunday before vote

- **9 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. in the Worship Center**

Sunday, July 16th – Special Congregational Meeting (the Vote)

- **12:30 p.m. in the Worship Center**

Read slide

Closing Prayer

**Tim Boettger,
Interim Associate Pastor**

closing prayer

Closing Worship

In Christ Alone

Closing song: In Christ Alone: Piano