



**Proposal for an Agreement between:  
Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus  
and  
The North American Lutheran Church**

As a result of our meetings, discussions and experience together during the Mission Convention and International Theological and Mission Conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, February 2011, we propose the following agreement be established and approved by both governing bodies.

1. We acknowledge a relationship that has already begun, a relationship bound by our mutual understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the orthodox understanding of our faith shaped by the authority of the Word of God, the historic interpretation of the Scriptures, our common Lutheran confessional heritage and the mission of the Church.
2. We seek to nurture that relationship and strengthen our partnership in mission by acknowledging that mission is a “two-way street” in that receiving from one another is as important as giving to one another. We acknowledge our mutual needs as well as the gifts each partner has to share for the sake of building up and strengthening the Church. We propose, as a starting point in the development of this partnership, the following:
  - a. Establish a partnership task force of two or three members of each body to review, prioritize and provide for the implementation of these and any other suggestions approved by both governing bodies.
  - b. Design a process to move toward full communion (as defined below), including all necessary theological and ecclesiological discussions.
  - c. Strengthen theological education by developing an exchange program for seminarians, an exchange program for seminary faculty and consultation in the process of designing curriculum.
  - d. Develop ways to identify and grow leaders who are passionate about the mission and ministry of the Church including the intentional design of leadership conferences exploring the best practices in growing such leaders.
  - e. Encourage individual congregational partnerships that would include specific strategies of “Mentoring for Mission” through pastoral exchange programs, lay leadership exchange programs and youth ministry exchange programs. These partnerships could be developed on the basis of congregational size and context to enhance the relationship and practical benefits while learning from one another new possibilities for growing our mission potential.
  - f. Enhance the intentional training of all the baptized in their personal responsibility for witnessing and evangelism as an extension of their participation in the priesthood of all believers.

- g. Clarify our understanding of discipleship in ways that strengthen both our identity as disciples of Jesus as well as our capacity for making disciples in every local congregation
  - h. Explore ways for the Church to have a greater impact on our respective cultures including influencing academic institutions regarding values, character development and morality, and the responsibility of all laity to work for the transformation of institutions promoting freedom, justice, mercy and peace.
  - i. Work together in addressing human needs, the plight of the poor and suffering, globally as well as in our respective cultures, developing strategies that address the needs of the whole person, physically and spiritually.
  - j. Find an effective plan for consistent communication that enhances this partnership and provides opportunities for personal interaction including, but not limited to, participation in the Committee of Mutual Christian Responsibility.
  - k. Identify ways of working together to strengthen our influence on other potential partners for mission and ministry both inside the worldwide Lutheran community and beyond.
3. We acknowledge that this relationship is the result of the design, power and strength of the Holy Spirit. It is through the work of that Holy Spirit that all we seek to accomplish in this relationship will be fulfilled. Through that same Holy Spirit we pray that our witness to the world and to the whole Church will be strengthened.

Understanding of Full Communion:

- a. The recognition that each church is an authentic church body within the one Church of Christ according to the Lutheran confession.
- b. The admission of members in the one church body to the Lord's Table in the other church body.
- c. The permission of pastors in the one church to preach and preside at worship services in the other church.
- d. The interchangeability of pastors in one church to serve as pastors in the other church.

**2011 NALC Convocation Resolution for Ratification by North American Lutheran Church Congregations**

That the North American Lutheran Church approve a relationship of full communion with the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus; and that congregations of the North American Lutheran Church be urged to ratify this church-to-church relationship in accordance with 13.04 of the Provisional Constitution.