



NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Office of the Bishop
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April 13, 2010

Mr. Mark Shepp
15266 Bayside Ave.
Clear Lake IA 50428-8757

Dear Mr. Shepp:

Thank you for sending me a copy of the notice of your congregational meeting scheduled for May 2 at 6 p.m. I am grateful for this decision that will bring clarity to Zion's discernment process.

I want to raise a concern about the registering and voting process that you describe in the Congregation Council's letter. As you know, our constitutions require a 2/3 vote of partners who are present at the meeting. Your letter states: "At the meeting partners will be directed to come forward to be counted in order to determine the number present. Any who do not come forward as directed will not be considered present for the purposes of the 2/3 vote needed."

I do not believe that this is consistent with the constitutional requirement that the vote requires 2/3 of those present. To state that someone is not present because they do not come forward to vote is contrary to the constitution and suggests that those who are attending the meeting but who choose not to vote are not present.

It will be important that no partner or anyone else can challenge the validity or legality of this vote. Consequently, I am asking that a different process be used that would count all persons who are in attendance and not simply those who come forward to vote.

I am also aware that a Pastor Gullickson will be visiting Zion to make comparisons between the ELCA and LCMC. At your invitation, I or a member of my staff would seek to be available for a similar presentation prior to the vote.

We are joining you in the 40 days of prayer in preparation for the May 2 meeting. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

In Christ,

The Rev. Dr. Steven L. Ullestad
Bishop

cc: Pastor Dean Hess, Pastor Derik Yarian, David Swartling