

Motions to ELCSA (N-T) Church Synod, 10-13 October 2019

Motion 2

Motion by Church Council of ELCSA (N-T) to Church Synod

1. The Church Council of ELCSA (N-T) requests Synod to change the Name of ELCSA (N-T) – Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (N-T) *to either*

Region East and North Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Africa (RENELCSA)

Or

North-East Lutheran Evangelical Church in South Africa (NELECSA)

Motivation

1. *Originally the Name was Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (Natal-Transvaal). With the changing of the province-names the name was shortened to only include the (N-T), rather than (Natal-Transvaal)*
 - a. *Very often Partner Churches still refer to us as Natal-Transvaal, despite numerous notifications.*
 - b. *The “ELCSA” part is based on the plans at the time of the founding of ELCSA (N-T) to bring all Lutheran Churches into one organisation, ELCSA, where dioceses would then have their region reflected in brackets after the ELCSA.*
 - c. *Unity talks have long since come to a standstill. The constitution of our main discussion partner ELCSA has been changed from a synodal-congregational system to an episcopal one, very much akin to our combined history, doctrine and theology.*
 - d. *Although ELCSA and ELCSA (N-T) are two entirely separate legal entities and churches, our own members often refer to ELCSA (N-T) as ELCSA. This confusion has a significant impact:*
 - i. *Authorities are erroneously billing us for ELCSA issues*
 - ii. *Bequests are made to one church, while intended for the other*
 - iii. *Databases of service providers often ignore the part in brackets (N-T) and treat us as if we were ELCSA*
 - iv. *A major part of incoming phone calls is actually meant for ELCSA, because the people phoning do not know that they are separate entities.*
2. *Especially the issues mentioned in d. have compelled Church Council to re-think the name of the Church.*
3. *Congregations were informed and invited to submit suggestions. Many suggestions were received and are listed below.*
4. *Church Council is of the opinion that “Evangelical Lutheran” should be part of a new name:*
 - a. *“Lutheran” because we are rooted in the Lutheran tradition*
 - b. *“Evangelical” because we are based on the gospel (Greek: euangelion) of Jesus Christ.*

- i. The term “Evangelical” in South Africa often refers to Pentecostal or Charismatic Churches, and is used as opposite to “traditional”- This leads to regular confusion.
 - ii. Despite this, Church Council is of the opinion that it must form part of the name to make it clear that the gospel is our foundation, on which the Lutheran doctrine is based (and not vice versa)
5. Globally most Lutheran Churches include a regional reference in their name. In our case it is South Africa (as opposed to Southern Africa in ELCSA, LUCSA or UELCSA) The abbreviation in all cases however is SA.
6. Whatever Name is chosen, should have a short form that is easily pronounced.
7. Church Council admits that the two recommended versions, while being easily pronounced (RENELCSA and NELECSA) in their full form are “clumsy”
 - a. RENELCSA has ELCSA in it, but only as last part, which should take care of the confusion in Databases, which are normally sorted by first letters. The long form however can be interpreted as if we are part of ELCSA
 - b. NELECSA can be pronounced easily but the switch Evangelical Lutheran to Lutheran Evangelical is confusing.

Despite this, these were the most appropriate suggestions and are therefore put to synod for discussion and adoption.

As with any motion, a counter proposal can be made, and adopted, if it is more convincing.

Suggestions received and discussed by Church Council:

<i>SOLA</i>	<i>Sola scriptura, sola fide, sola gratia...</i>
<i>LIGHT</i>	<i>Lutheran Integrated Gathering in Holy Trinity;</i>
<i>LICHT/LIGHT</i>	<i>Lutheran Integration of Congregations in Holy Trinity</i>
<i>LECSA (N)</i>	<i>Lutheran Evangelical Church in South Africa</i>
<i>SAELC</i>	<i>South(ern?) African Evangelical Lutheran Church</i>
<i>ELCSA (NE)</i>	<i>ELCSA Northeast/ ELKSA-Nordost</i>
<i>ELC or ELCSA (and...)</i>	Historical: <i>ELC or ELCSA (N-T); ELC or ELCSA (B-H);</i> Language: <i>ELC or ELCSA (D-E-A-Z);</i> Geographical: <i>ELC or ELCSA (G-K-L-M-N); ELC or ELCSA (L-M); ELC or ELCSA (D-M);</i> Theological: <i>ELC or ELCSA (F-H-L); ELC or ELCSA (G-C-F-S)</i>
<i>CELCSA</i>	<i>Christian Evangelical Lutheran Church (in) South(ern) Africa.</i>
<i>sane ELC</i>	<i>South Africa North - East Evangelical Lutheran Church</i>
<i>saenELC</i>	<i>South Africa East-North Evangelical Lutheran Church</i>
<i>NELECSA</i>	<i>North-East Lutheran Evangelical Church in South Africa</i>
<i>RENELCSA</i>	<i>Region East and North Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Africa</i>