

From the AMR Dean...

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Attached is the Draft Realignment Plan for the Atlantic Mission District (AMD) to become the Atlantic Mission Region (AMR) by June 2019 with the addition of Virginia Mission District (VMD) and led by a Dean. The AMR would be structured into four (4) smaller Mission Districts led by Assistant Deans. The enclosed Plan explains PROPOSED details.

We are re-sending the Draft Plan to assure each congregation and Pastor has a copy. Over the next months you will be invited by an Interim Assistant Dean and the AMR Council to attend two (2) gatherings:

- 1) A local Mission District Meeting (see proposed Mission Districts) to discuss the Draft Plan and receive input as well as elect a permanent Assistant Dean for your local Mission District;
- 2) An AMR Convocation tentatively planned for early June 2019 to approve a final Plan after input and necessary Constitutional/B-law changes.

Please, distribute this Draft Realignment Plan however you wish and seek input from your congregants that may be brought by Delegates to both the local Mission District Gathering and AMR Convocation to assist in designing the Final Plan.

Why consider realignment?

- Over the period of my service as Dean as well as prior as I sat on AMD Council, there has been nearly universal agreement that the AMD is geographically unwieldy;
- VAMD with few congregations has been challenged to organize communication, structure, and events as a Mission District;
- First suggestions were to “give” the AMD Maryland congregations over to VAMD but was rejected because it would not fully address the geographic issues AMD suffers, and shared strengths and resources could be dissipated;
- Current AMD brings strength of structure and some organized Mission District fellowship and training to the table, while VAMD brings strength in congregational development and planting to the table for mutual benefit and growth;
- As we are growing and developing, and principally engaging in congregational renewal, the need for more personal attention and communication have become paramount;
- One major Discipleship and Mission resource currently in development, a Mission Training and Support Center (MTSC), has always been envisioned as a “shared” resource across Mission District lines;
- At times of transition, in particular, congregations need more personal and effective assistance from the Mission District and Dean than is possible under current structure;
- Maintain or even increase the pool of available Supply Pastors and Interim Pastors who can serve across the region;
- The NALC has been studying and developing a Restructure Plan that would, as currently conceived, include “regionalization” for Mission Districts likely within two years or so.

In summary, it seems better to “hang together” but reframe the external Mission District structure to continue sharing strengths while delivering more rapid, effective and personal service from the Mission District to our congregations, members and Pastors. Ohio Mission District was first to realign very successfully, and, more recently, the two Texas Mission Districts and the Carolina Mission District have been engaged in realignment.

What model are we using and how will it unfold?

The Draft Plan has been developed to this point looking a little at the Ohio experience but more at the NALC-wide restructure discussions honed a bit for our unique needs.

The October AMD Convocation approved a “transitional” plan beginning at the October 2018 AMD Convocation to which we invited the VAMD congregations, and ending with the full plan in place after Mission District-wide input hopefully by mid-June 2019.

Why wait? Why not present the final plan for approval at October 2018 Convo?

Mostly time! We believe this will require more time than we could reasonably allow at the Annual Convocation especially since we are pledged to devote the October Convocations principally to fellowship, networking, and equipping the saints. Something would suffer. Besides we want time to engage in sufficient dialog and input across the AMR.

We believe the full implementation requires gatherings devoted principally to the plan with no other major agenda. As mentioned, we plan small, half-day or one day local Mission District gatherings as well as ultimately a half-day or one-day Special AMR Convocation for final approval by delegates including any By-law changes necessary.

OK, roughly what does the new structure look like?

If you have participated in any of the workshops or discussions offered these past two year by the NALC on their restructuring plan, you have at least an idea already.

We propose the current AMD and VAMD combine geographically and become the **Atlantic Mission Region (AMR)** with leadership and oversight by a **Dean**. The **AMR** would consist of four **Mission Districts (MD)** of 10-14 congregations clustered as geographically close as possible led and served by an **Assistant Dean** elected by the individual **MD**. The **Assistant Deans** from each **MD** would also serve as the **AMR Council** along with a Lay representative elected from each of the **MD**'s. So we would be increasing the **Council** to eight – two representatives from each **MD** (elected Assistant Dean and elected Lay rep) equally representing the entire Region.

Responsibilities of the **Dean** and **Assistant Deans** would be shared from the current responsibilities of just one Dean over the whole territory. This is a plan for decentralization intending smaller cluster of congregations to have input into the long term development and function of the Mission Region as well as more effectively delivering the services of the larger church and the ministry of the Bishop to smaller areas with the cooperation of an Assistant Dean and the Regional Dean.

Please, review and discuss in congregation as you are able the attached Draft Realignment Plan and be prepared to ask questions, discuss, suggest and, hopefully, authorize our moving forward toward a final new structure through the local Mission District gatherings to be announced and the Special AMR Convocation in June.

Pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance and direction in this effort. Thank you for your ongoing support. God bless you.

David McGettigan+
AMR Dean