

Ohio pastor elected to lead breakaway Lutheran church

by [Jack Jenkins](#)

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(RNS) Members of the North American Lutheran Church (NALC) have elected an Ohio pastor as their new head bishop, making him the first non-provisional leader of the year-old denomination.

The Rev. John Bradosky was elected Aug. 11 by 800 NALC members who met in Columbus, Ohio, to elect new leaders and conduct official church business during the church's annual meeting.

The NALC was founded in 2010 as part of a split from the more liberal Evangelical Lutheran Church in America after the ELCA voted to allow openly gay clergy. The breakaway body now counts more than 100,000 members nationwide, many of whom were previously affiliated with the ELCA.

"Today I stand before you even more deeply honored and humbled," Bradosky said in a speech following his election. "You have the promise of my prayer for each of you and your ministries that together, through the work of the Holy Spirit, we will boldly confess Christ."

Bradosky, who previously served as a pastor for 32 years, emphasized church growth as part of his vision for the denomination.

"The local congregation is the front line for mission and ministry," Bradosky said. "Our work is to support, facilitate and encourage the ministry and mission work of local congregations. Our structure must keep pastors and congregations connected for learning, growing, offering support and care."

Several former ELCA bishops took part in Bradosky's installation ceremony, including the Rev. Paull Spring, who was elected as

provisional bishop in 2010 to guide the group through its first year.