

# **ECLA reports drop in membership: A slight decrease**

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The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America saw a slight drop in membership in 2006, continuing a trend of decline since the 1990s. The total of baptized members at the end of last year was 4,774,203—a 1.6 percent decrease from the 2005 total of 4,850,776, denominational officials said.

The denomination has lost about 466,000 baptized members in the past 16 years, said Lowell G. Almen, ELCA secretary. In 1990, there were 5,240,739 members.

Recent declines are due to a drop in the number of new members, the disbanding of 40 congregations and “roll cleaning,” in which long-inactive members have been removed from church membership lists. *-Religion News Service*