

Mission Statement

WordAlone is a Lutheran grassroots network of congregations and individuals committed to the authority of the Word manifest in Jesus the Christ as proclaimed in Scripture and safeguarded through the work of the Holy Spirit. WordAlone advocates reform and renewal of the church, representative governance, theological integrity, and freedom from a mandated historic episcopate.

WordAlone's three R's

- **Renew** the ELCA so that we are grounded in God's Word and truly centered on making disciples of Jesus Christ.
- **Reform** and restructure the ELCA so there is: 1) Representative governance throughout the church with effective checks and balances; and 2) Resistance to a mandatory historic episcopate so that all pastors and bishops are free to practice what Lutherans believe about ordination.
- **Reflect** more deeply upon our Lutheran biblical and confessional foundations in ways that engage all ELCA members—lay people, pastors and theologians—in life-long learning and teaching.

Your contributions are greatly appreciated

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NETWORK NEWS



Volume 8, Issue 6

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2007

Reforming ELCA is ministry, not political movement—Nestingen

by Pastor W. Stevens Shipman, Lutheran CORE steering committee, and Betsy Carlson, editor

Reforming the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is a call to a ministry to the denomination not to a political movement, Prof. Emeritus James Nestingen told some 250 Lutherans gathered near Chicago, Ill., in September to discuss strategy for reforming the ELCA.

Setting the tone for the strategy meeting, Pastor Erma Wolf, vice-chair of Lutheran CORE, a coalition of individuals, churches and reform groups including the WordAlone Network, had opened the session with a call to ministry, “What are we here to do?”

She answered her own question by reminding participants they had come to meet the leaders of the reform effort and hear more about the work. She said, “Turn to the person next to you and introduce yourself. You're it! You're the leaders! The Spirit is working in you and has raised you up.”

Nestingen, who taught at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., and Wolf were just two of several reform movement leaders who spoke at the Lindenhurst, Ill., meeting that was held to plan efforts for reform in 2008

and 2009 before the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in August 2009 in Minneapolis, Minn.

Reinforcing the sense of call, Nestingen said, “God has called us to this ministry; God who speaks by His Word has said, ‘I want you to stand up.’”

Nestingen led a Bible study on 1 Corinthians 4:1-2, 7-8 about being Christ's servants.

A ministry is different from a lobby he reminded the group, and explained that Lutheran CORE's call is a ministry to the ELCA, not a political movement.

“We are not gathered here to triumph over anybody. We hear God's voice speaking clearly to us on these issues. The Word always engenders attacks,” Nestingen said. “If you are called to this ministry, you will look a little like Jesus.”

He added that Christian ministry always takes the shape of the cross.

Ryan Schwarz, a layperson from the Metro Washington, D.C., synod and a member of

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the Lutheran CORE steering committee, asked participants, “If this isn’t the time God is calling you to take a stand, what would that time look like?”

Pastor Paull Spring, chair of Lutheran CORE, reported on the August 2007 churchwide assembly in Chicago. He said

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**Please
pass
it on!**

Network News is published six times yearly by the WordAlone Network.

Jaynan Clark Egland: president

Mark C. Chavez: director

Betsy Carlson: editor

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that he saw both positive signs and troubling results.

He said, “Chicago did not resolve most of the issues facing our church.”

A positive aspect, he said, was that many synodical bishops participated in the debate. He added that he was pleased with the competence and commitment of Lutheran CORE supporters and noted, “People we didn’t even know spoke on our side.”

Spring told his audience there was hidden support for reform if reformers would remain “churchly,” moderate and focused on the issues.

Referring all synodical memorials on sexuality to the ELCA sexuality task force, which is to prepare a social statement for the 2009 churchwide assembly, was positive because of efforts of some in the denomination to allow blessing of same-sex relationships and the ordinations of persons in such relationships, he said. Such ordinations are not allowed under current ELCA rules.

Spring called referrals to the task force a “tactical victory” and said, “We bought time.”

A revealing assembly decision on homosexual behavior was to urge ELCA officials to “refrain” from disciplining pastors and lay ministers in same-sex relationships, according to Spring. He reminded people that the move did not change the policies of the church and “may be a much-needed wake up call.”

But a positive resolution, on the other hand, asked for a definition of the accountability of bishops to ELCA official policies, Spring said.

He said the defeat of an amendment regarding a new Bible study program of the ELCA was troubling because the assembly chose to speak of Lutheran “approaches” to the Bible instead of “an approach” as the amendment had proposed. Spring called the amendment’s defeat a “weakening of biblical authority and our confessional witness.”

From WordAlone’s president:

After fall meeting, WordAlone board members ‘Know the Way to San Jose’

Although most of us already knew “the way” it was certainly a good experience for board members and staff while St. Timothy Lutheran Church in San Jose, Calif. graciously hosted us for our quarterly meeting in mid-October.

Because we gathered in California where a number of people involved with FOCL (Fellowship of Confessing Lutherans) reside, the board spent time with FOCL leaders discussing the future for confessional Lutherans and how we can work together to increase our effectiveness in delivering our messages and broadening our impacts.

With education being a primary area in which the WordAlone Network is involved, the board gladly heard my reports regarding the early work of our new education director, Pastor Steven King. He is developing many new resources and will present them officially at the annual convention in April 2008. Sola Publishing, a new venture for WordAlone—established in order to produce our new resources—was introduced. I also informed the board that WordAlone’s first book, “By What Authority?” is scheduled to be in print next year.

The staff updated the board on our fall theological event that was to be held Nov. 11-13 at First Evangelical Lutheran Church in White Bear Lake, Minn., that would explore discerning the spirits. The board discussed plans for the annual convention next April 13-14 at Calvary Lutheran Church, Golden Valley, Minn., and encouraged staff to highlight our growing educational program.

The board heard reports from its task force on institute autonomy; the staff of the

theological institute, Pastor Dennis Bielfeldt, Ph.D., director, and Pastor Randy Freund, associate director; and consultant Charles Manske, Ph.D., founding president of Concordia University, Irvine, Calif. They shared information regarding the program, identity and structure of the emerging institute.

Also discussed was the future relationship of the institute to the WordAlone Network. After much discussion and consideration, the board voted to grant complete and immediate autonomy to the institute in order to help with the efforts to gain accreditation and to broaden their base of support as a pan-Lutheran entity. The board also appointed the first three members to the institute’s board of regents: Chairperson Doug Dillner (current member of the WordAlone board and a U.S. Naval Academy professor), G. Barry Anderson (associate justice, Minnesota Supreme Court) and Uwe Siemon-Netto, Ph.D. (international journalist and director of the Center for Lutheran Theology and Public Life, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO.)

Working with others interested in reform of Christ’s church motivates our increasing support of and involvement in Lutheran CORE. The board heard reports about the churchwide assembly last August and Lutheran CORE’s post-churchwide-assembly meeting the end of September, both held in the Chicago area. By working with other reform groups and interested individuals under the Lutheran CORE banner while providing administrative staff support as a member organization, WordAlone has helped to broaden the base of orthodox Lutherans in the ELCA, Mark Chavez, director of both Lutheran CORE and WordAlone explained to the board.

(...to San Jose' Continues from page three)

Presently, WordAlone synod contacts work with Lutheran CORE coordinators, who in some places are the same person. Our concern is getting the work done, including: electing reform minded individuals for assembly voting seats and positions on councils and committees; holding the line on biblical ministry standards; and passing legislation at churchwide assemblies that helps make the denomination's governmental process more representative. WordAlone facilitates a more efficient effort with our partners across the ELCA.

Seminarians making requests to be ordained according to a Lutheran understanding of ordination and ministry rather than under an Episcopal practice now total at least 37 persons in 17 synods though there probably are more that we are not aware of. Alarming are reports that at least two requests were refused in 2007. The board agreed to send letters of support to all those individuals making requests for non-episcopal ordinations. If and when seminarians denied exceptions permit WordAlone to tell their stories publicly, we will report them to bring attention to such violations of conscience by bishops or their staffs that are being allowed in the ELCA.

The board also received reports from the audit committee and the treasurer that reflected a clean bill of financial health for WordAlone.

Additional items of business the board discussed included plans to:

- ▶ graciously receive the voluntary assistance of a professional developer and fundraiser who believes in our ministry,
- ▶ prepare a response to a draft social statement on sexuality next year,
- ▶ mail a letter to the international Lutheran churches of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) sharing our concerns not only for the ELCA specifically but also for the

global Lutheran witness,

- ▶ continue working closely with our Canadian partners,
- ▶ develop centers for Lutheran education and ministry in WordAlone churches and
- ▶ initiate an extensive poll of the people in the pews in North American Lutheran and other Protestant churches on issues facing the Christian church today.

In conclusion I urge you to consider—as you prepare your church and individual budgets for next year—increased support for the Network. As you just have read, we are working to broaden our base and increase our educational programs. Also consider additional support for the emerging independent institute. We all are challenged to look at what we give as benevolence dollars and to consider how we can most faithfully support those ministries that witness to what we truly believe. WordAlone board members and staff will enter 2008 with our eyes focused on our goal to witness to the authority of the Word of God as the source and norm for all of faith and life and to uphold that Truth whenever and wherever it comes under attack, even if, and especially if, from within Christ Jesus' own church.

In His grace and peace,
Jaynan Clark Eglund, president ♦

Correction:
The September October 2007 issue mistakenly reported that there are term limits for the office of presiding bishop in the ELCA. There are no term limits in the ELCA constitution for that office.

Coming soon: Sola Publishing!

by Betsy Carlson, editor

With the coming of 2008, the WordAlone Network is taking a big step forward in its education ministry by producing curriculum and teaching resources for congregations, according to WordAlone President Jaynan Clark Eglund. A new venture, Sola Publishing, is being headed by Pastor Steven King of Maple Lake, Minn., who has joined the WordAlone staff on a part-time basis this fall as education director.

The name “sola” comes from the Latin reformation slogans—*Sola Fide* (Faith Alone), *Sola Gratia* (Grace Alone), and *Sola Scriptura* (Scripture Alone)—representing the foundational principles of our Lutheran faith and heritage. This new publishing arm of WordAlone will focus specifically providing inexpensive and easy-to-use study materials for teaching children and adults, based on the Scriptures, the Catechism, and the Lutheran Confessions, Clark Eglund said recently.

“My primary interest,” said King, “is to produce materials that focus on Christ at the center of our faith. We want to produce resources that are intentionally Biblical and Lutheran, and are understandable and accessible to people of all ages.”

Referring to an amendment that was voted down at the recent ELCA churchwide assembly regarding the denomination's “Book of Faith” initiative, King said, “We will do what the assembly was not able to do for the Church. The goal of Sola Publishing will be to demonstrate ‘a more profound appreciation of the distinctive Lutheran focus on God's use of Scripture to bring sinners to repentance and salvation in Christ.’” [Editor's note: emphasis mine to show the amendment's language that was rejected by the churchwide assembly.]

King mentioned that some of the initial



Pastor Steven King

resources produced by Sola Publishing will include: a women's Bible study series on the Sermon on the Mount, a reader's study of the Augsburg Confession and a six-part curriculum series for children on the Small Catechism, including a brand new children's paraphrased version of “Luther's Small Catechism.” He added that future projects will include Bible studies on stewardship, evangelism and the afterlife. WordAlone also will be creating an educational leaflet ministry with brief teaching articles on various subjects.

A particular concern of Sola Publishing will be to provide solid resources for small congregations.

“Early on in my ministry, I started writing Bible studies of my own,” said King, “because my congregations couldn't afford to buy expensive curricula.”

As part of WordAlone's not-for-profit educational ministry, Sola Publishing will provide solid and trustworthy materials at economical prices, he added.

The website for Sola Publishing will be online in January, linked to the main WordAlone site. People will be able to order materials directly through the WordAlone office. ♦



Let's not repeat the past

by Mark Chavez, director

(Editor's note: A document similar to this article was handed out in September at the Lindenhurst, Ill., Lutheran CORE meeting on strategy leading up to the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.)

The crisis over the authority of God's Word in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will persist for many years. It has been brewing for decades and there will be no quick or easy resolution.

No one looks forward to years of struggle and some people, believing that the ELCA is on an irreversible course, have asked if it would be better to leave the ELCA sooner rather than later.

God alone knows whether or not the ELCA will turn back in the direction of faithful submission to the authority of His Word over all mat-

ters of faith and life. Whether the ELCA turns back or not, I believe that it will not be helpful to withdraw from the ELCA: not helpful for confessional Lutheran churches and members within the ELCA or for the overall confessional Lutheran witness in North America.

The history of Lutheran churches in North America in the 20th century was a series of mergers of smaller churches—with the hope that we could come together as one big church—or consequent splits. Some

churches raised legitimate concerns about the mergers and opted out. At other times groups of churches withdrew from a larger body over reasonable concerns.

Instead of one church at the end of the century, there were more than 20 Lutheran churches and only three had more than 400,000 members. Most had 200 congregations or fewer. The three largest denominations—ELCA, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod—have declined in recent years, as have most of the smaller ones.

While the rate of decline of the number of Lutherans hasn't been that high compared to the rate of decline of some other Protestant denominations, the ratio of Lutherans relative to

the total population has plummeted in the past century and continues to drop. For about 40 years Lutheran churches have been increasingly unable to reach the unchurched and nonbelievers in addition to having lost some of their membership base.

Jumping fences, looking for greener fields, has not helped. The bodies they left continued to struggle with the issues that had sparked some to leave. The break away bodies have struggled with problems of their own—financial, mobility for pastors

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or not enough pastors, to name just a few institutional difficulties.

Even in the best of denominations believers have to contend for the Gospel. The devil cannot stand to have people hear the Gospel anywhere and tries to squelch it from all angles and in all places. No church institution is immune to the devil's prowling.

Even if the devil were not at work being destructive in denominations and in churches, there is no shortage of other destructive agents. The only people in churches are sinners and sinners are bound to be destructive.

Jumping fences to look for greener fields has not helped the confessional Lutheran witness in North America. Let's do something different in the future. Instead of walking out of the ELCA or any Lutheran denomination, let's witness in the mission fields that God places before us. Let's all bear witness more boldly to the Gospel, no matter the consequences. Better to be put down, scorned or disciplined for refusing to accept the false gospels as "valid" interpretations of the Bible, than to walk out.

Let's bear witness in cooperation with all Lutherans and all Christians in North America who truly proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and not let denominational fences stand in the way of cooperative witness. Let's mutually celebrate when the Holy Spirit gathers unchurched or nonbelievers into biblically grounded churches in all denominations.

The mission field in the ELCA is challenging. Some people think they're all alone in their concerns for the proclamation of the Gospel. Others are in biblically grounded ELCA churches, but are unaware of the crisis of the authority of God's Word in other places in the ELCA. Others sense there must be something more to the Christian faith than a god who can have just about any name, who says everyone is fine

"Better to be put down, scorned or disciplined for refusing to accept the false gospels as 'valid' interpretations of the Bible, than to walk out."

just the way he or she is and that faith in Jesus isn't essential. Walking out of the ELCA would make it much more difficult to connect with and support all of those people.

Withdrawing from the ELCA would pull us away from churches and members who share our concerns for the ELCA's present course and its future. It would also pull us away from those ELCA churches and members who have fallen for the false gospels. Perhaps that is the most challenging task in our ELCA mission field—speaking the Truth to those who "are turning to a different gospel." (Galatians 1:6) Perhaps God has called us for just that purpose.

In the face of despair, blissful ignorance, apathy, unease or untruth, let's proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ with enthusiasm and zeal in our mission field. Let's all proclaim the Gospel through which the Holy Spirit truly calls sinners to faith in Jesus Christ.

If the ELCA does not hold together, let it be because the true Gospel was not known by some, ignored by a number and overruled by others, not because we abandoned the mission field. ♦

One person's opinion

Guilty as charged: ELCA violating its heritage?

by Kevin Peterson, WordAlone member, Herndon, Va.

Early in his life as a monk, Martin Luther's relationship with God was filled with guilt—extreme and omnipresent guilt. Guilt that he was never good enough; never did enough to please God; couldn't focus enough on God.

Under such guilt, he believed he was a miserable sinner who absolutely could never earn God's love and acceptance. Some say it was a "revelation," an "aha moment;" others believe it happened gradually over a period of time. No "doing," no amount of guilt...could "earn" it. But, Luther realized that God's love was a gift.

Our faith is founded on Jesus' love—not on guilt. It's not about us—it's about Jesus Christ, our loving Lord and Savior; it's about the Gospel.

Martin Luther took a Gospel-focused faithview [*Peterson's word used as a religious equivalent to "worldview" —Editor*]. It is this approach upon which our Lutheran Confessions were based and our church was founded.

Almost 450 years later, the ELCA seems to be abandoning our Lutheran heritage and turning back toward a guilt-focused faithview. As a layperson I feel this change in a few areas, but the one I wish to address is racial guilt.

To what degree it is intentional is open to debate: but how dare you be a white, middle-class, male Lutheran who speaks English as his primary language!

A little more than 10 years ago, I attended my first ELCA synod assembly. At that time I lived in the Southwest and attended a wonderful congregation. It was also the time that the ELCA was pushing (some interpreted that as "mandating") quotas for

minority representation in congregations. Although the leaders of my congregation took this whole issue with a grain of salt, others were very serious about it. [*Editor's note; The ELCA constitution mandates that churchwide and synodical assemblies and councils have 10% membership of people of color or primary language other than English.*]

At the assembly I met two lovely little old ladies, voting members from a neighboring congregation. They were in tears at a breakout session because of pressure they felt. Their congregation was nowhere near meeting the quota for black members even though they tried everything they could think of. I tried to comfort them by explaining there were hardly any black people living in these neighborhoods, and I knew only two black Lutherans in the city—my wife and the other a member of my congregation.

In fact, blacks represented less than 3 percent of the city's population. We had a large population of American Indians and Hispanic people, but I guess they didn't count at that time in that synod.

I think quotas in church membership are just plain silly considering that the church has more important work to do than to keep stats on the color of its members.

In short, I see the ELCA engaged in a subtle campaign to instill guilt on white, English-speaking people. Luther realized that guilt was not an appropriate basis for Christian faith in the 16th century; and a guilt-based faithview doesn't resonate with 21st century Americans either. Could that be part of the reason for ELCA membership decline in recent years? ♦

Disagreement on Bible's authority rips fabric of The Episcopal Church

by Betsy Carlson, editor

What is happening in the Episcopal Church in America? Its very fabric is ripping because of disagreement on the authority of the Bible.

And in the worldwide Anglican Communion as a result?

Anglican Communion leaders of provinces in the world's Southern Hemisphere are threatening to expel The Episcopal Church from the Communion because of its stance approving homosexual behavior. Global South "primates," or leaders, want to bring the U.S. denomination back to traditional, biblical teaching on homosexual behavior, which does not accept such behavior.

The communion could be left in tatters if liberal European and northern provinces side with the U.S. Episcopal Church.

The primates (bishops and archbishops) of the Global South Anglican provinces recently formed a "Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa." This group asked in October for an emergency meeting of the 38 primates of the communion's provinces and postponement of the 2008 Lambeth Conference, according to an early November news release from The Episcopal Church.

The Lambeth Conference is a meeting of all bishops of the Communion, which generally is held every 10 years.

The Most Rev. Dr. Peter Akinola of Nigeria wrote in an open letter to the Anglican primates Nov. 1 that the situation in the Anglican Communion today is similar to that facing Martin Luther almost 490 years ago. Luther asserted then in his 95 theses that the truth of the Gospel must always take precedence over the structures of the church, Akinola wrote.

The rift in the communion surfaced in 2003

when the General Convention of The Episcopal Church voted to install a non-celibate, homosexual man as a bishop in New Hampshire. Shortly thereafter, bishops and archbishops from Africa, Asia and South America protested the move. Some declared their communion with the U.S. church broken as far back as 2003.

The vote in favor of the practicing homosexual bishop may have been very troubling to them because the 1998 Lambeth voted 526 to 70 with 45 abstentions to uphold traditional, biblical stances that homosexual behavior was not acceptable. This overwhelming majority was led by the votes of most leaders of the dioceses of the developing world, who are in the majority in the communion and who hold traditional beliefs.

That victory for traditional Christian standards and the moves to seek repentance from or to expel the U.S. church may indicate that leadership of the Anglican Communion is shifting from the northern hemisphere to the southern hemisphere, where the most members of the Anglican Communion live.

Since 2003, the leaders of the 38 provinces of the Anglican Communion have met and issued reports and a communiqué listing actions the U.S. church was supposed to take to repair its standing in the communion. The U.S. church has responded a few times, most recently at the end of September, at one meeting did "apologize to those we have offended" and agreed to hold off ordaining practicing homosexuals as new bishops for a time.

The Joint Standing Committee of the Anglican Consultative Council accepted the most recent actions as sufficient. The

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leaders from the southern hemisphere, on the other hand, called American responses ambiguous and inadequate.

In the meantime, individuals and parishes—with traditional standards on marriage and family—have been leaving The Episcopal Church.

This has produced cross-boundary “interventions” by leaders of African dioceses to provide pastoral oversight to the Americans and “to allow them to remain in the Anglican Communion.” Those incursions angered The Episcopal Church leaders.

According to an article in the Nov. 16 Washington Times, U.S. Episcopal Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori said in an Oct. 30, taped deposition for a lawsuit over church property in Virginia that she was angered particularly by the presence of a Nigerian-controlled Convocation of Anglicans in North America, headquartered in Fairfax, Va., then.

The Times article related that she said the presence of the Nigerian oversight group violated the “ancient” principle of the church that two bishops not have jurisdiction in the same area. The article also reported that Jefferts Schori said she had directed the Diocese of Virginia to sue 11 churches that had broken away a year ago although the Virginia bishop was ready to accept buyouts from the 11 parishes.

The national Episcopal church has filed up to 25 lawsuits against departing parishes who want to take church property with them, according to the Episcopal News Service.

Now, even a diocese is on the verge of leaving the American church. The San Joaquin Diocese in Fresno, Calif., is expected to vote in mid-December on the second reading of a constitutional change that, if passed, would allow them to leave The Episcopal Church. The Pittsburgh Diocese voted in early November to start a two-year

process to leave and the Fort Worth Diocese voted just before press deadlines to start the withdrawal process. The Quincy Diocese voted earlier this fall not to withdraw at this time.

Presiding Bishop Jefferts Schori has threatened discipline procedures against the three or four bishops whose dioceses are considering leaving the church. She has disciplined or removed priests for leaving the church under charges of abandoning the communion.

At its November meeting, the Province of the Southern Cone, which includes several North American dioceses, voted to invite North American dioceses to come under its jurisdiction if they leave The Episcopal Church.

In an Associated Press article printed after the Pittsburgh Diocese approved moving ahead with the process of leaving The Episcopal Church, a spokesperson for Jefferts Schori said she was “extremely clear” that if a diocese chose to leave the national church and claimed \$30 million in trust funds and 70 churches, she would be negligent in her duty to let them leave.

The Washington Times article said she defended her actions in the Virginia matter as a way of preserving the assets of The Episcopal Church for its ministry and mission.

Nigerian archbishop Akinola wrote in his open letter, “The world needs to understand that the situation that we now confront is not primarily about structure or conferences but about irreconcilable truth claims....Of course there is value to preserving Anglican structures but we must never do so at the expense of the people for whom our Lord Jesus the Christ gave his life.” ♦

A reminder - donations for 2007 must be received in the WordAlone office or postmarked on or before December 31, 2007.
Thank you for your support.

(‘Reforming...’ Continues from page two)

Also troubling, Spring said, was that persons more supportive of Lutheran CORE’s goals were not elected to the ELCA Church Council.

Spring outlined what Lutheran CORE will do in preparation for the churchwide assembly in 2009. The participation of bishops will be solicited, particularly since the issues coming up need to be addressed theologically and biblically, instead of merely dealing with process and order, he said. Specifically, Lutheran CORE will zero in on the social statement on sexuality and on elections to the churchwide assembly and church council.

Pastor Mark Chavez, director of the WordAlone Network and Lutheran CORE, offered a general outline of plans to organize in synods. Chavez asked participants to contact him if they were willing to help with efforts in their synods. Participants divided into three working groups, depending on whether they perceived their synods as being strongly orthodox, moderate (inconsistent in positions and practice) or strongly revisionist.

Three DVD’s are available, which include all the main presentations and the “moderate” working session, for \$10 each from Lutheran CORE through the WordAlone office. MasterCard and VISA are accepted. To order, please call 888-551-7254 or 651-633-6004, or email the office at wa.mnoffice@popp.net.

Spring told participants during his comments that he wanted to emphasize Lutheran CORE’s 2008 actions would center on synods and synod assemblies, especially as voting members would be chosen for the next churchwide assembly in 2009. He said that Lutheran CORE would be drawing up memorials for the 2009 assemblies. He said that the steering committee hoped to recruit coordinator teams of a pastor and a layperson for each synod.

Spring reported that a lay voting member called him after the assembly in Chicago to remind him of the power of prayer in the face of spiritual warfare such as occurred at the assembly.

He concluded, “The last, first and most important thing is to undergird our efforts in prayer.” ♦

Lutheran Clergy Connect

Clergy Connect is a way for churches seeking a pastor or other leader to connect with candidates who believe that Christ alone is sufficient for the unity of the church and that the Word of God is the authority for the church. A full list, including more listings and detail, is posted at: www.wordalone.org/clergy.shtml

To list your search on Clergy Connect, mail or fax your request on church letterhead, signed by an officer or call committee chair, to: WordAlone Network, 2299 Palmer Dr. Suite 220, New Brighton, MN 55112 - Fax: 651 633-4260. Include: title, church’s name (city and state), contact person with phone number and e-mail address. Please inform us when you fill the position.

Risen Lord Lutheran Church Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Position: Pastor.

Contact: Vic Sedo, chair of the call committee at vs3249@telus.net, 780-438-3249 or 780-240-9603.

Dongola Lutheran Church Dongola, Illinois

Position: Pastor.

Contact: Stan Palmer, Parish President at scpalmer73@verizon.net, 618-833-8682 or 618-713-5981.

St. John Lutheran Church Roanoke, Virginia

Position: Associate Pastor.

Contact: Pastor Mark Graham, at mark@stjohnlutheran.org or 540-774-0712.

Water of Life Lutheran Church Newcastle, Maine

Position: Pastor.

Contact: Pastor Tim Roser, New England Synod, at 603-490-4446 or the church office at 207-563-1142.