

## Director reports on Churchwide Assembly

**By Pastor Mark Chavez**

WordAlone director

WordAlone Network members left the 2003 Churchwide Assembly in Milwaukee very hopeful.

A door opened to pursue a hearing by the Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee on the "Admonition for the Sake of the True Peace and Unity of the Church," which WordAlone's Theological Advisory Board wrote in 2002.

The assembly approved a memorials committee recommendation to send two memorials calling for freedom for both pastors and bishops to be ordained outside the historic episcopate to the ELCA Department of Ecumenical Affairs. But not before WordAlone members made a successful amendment to also send them to the Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee. The Admonition was the basis for one of the forwarded memorials, thus providing the possibility of the hearing.

Although all reforming and restructuring proposals were defeated, there is a strong basis for trying again. One veteran of churchwide assemblies noted that these proposals garnered more support this year than did similar proposals at past assemblies.

In addition, WordAlone members and supporters met many people who said they dreaded coming to the assembly because they believed they would encounter a well-oiled political machine that would promote a one-sided socio-political ideology.

They said they had not expected to find, in that setting, a movement such as WordAlone, which seeks to help the church be faithful to Christ alone and persists in being a constructive witness within the ELCA. Important connections were made at this assembly with people in every region of the country who had felt alone in their concern that the ELCA was in trouble.

There are many new opportunities to grow the Network.

The assembly also provided a great opportunity to clear up misconceptions bishops may have about WordAlone (WA). South Dakota Synod Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, co-chair of the ELCA's Conference of Bishops confirmed there are misconceptions when she said during a meeting sponsored by WordAlone that the bishops think:

- 1) The *Lutheran Commentator* is WA's official newsletter.
- 2) The WordAlone Network and Lutherans Congregations in (Continued on page 2)

## Director reports on Churchwide Assembly *(Continued from page 1)*

Mission for Christ (LCMC) cannot be distinguished.

- 3) WordAlone makes redirection of benevolence a condition for membership and officially encourages everyone to redirect.

None of these is true.

DeGroot-Nesdahl was pleasantly surprised to hear WordAlone answers and explanations and said that all other ELCA bishops would benefit from receiving the same information. Hopefully, we can build upon this contact to improve communication with the Conference of Bishops.

With regards to reforming and restructuring the church, both proposals for ratification of certain Churchwide Assembly actions by congregations or synods were defeated. There was excellent discussion of both memorials, with many speakers, both for and against, lined up at the microphones.

A resolution proposing to restructure the Church Council by having direct election of council members by synods was defeated. Five bishops took the lead on what had started as a WordAlone proposal: Bishop Peter Rogness (Saint Paul Area), Bishop Craig Johnson (Minneapolis Area), Bishop Steven Ullestad (Northeastern Iowa),

Bishop Robert Berg (Northwest Wisconsin) and Bishop Martin Wells (Eastern Washington-Idaho).

People have commented how strange it was that the assembly did not approve such a reasonable request when it was obvious from what was said in the debate (and in the ratification discussions) that there was a strong undercurrent of disconnection from the churchwide structures.

### Get involved now for 2005

Now is the time to find out how your synod elects churchwide assembly members and to think about volunteering yourself or recruiting someone to volunteer as a candidate for voting member for the 2005 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Churchwide Assembly.

This assembly will vote on ordaining persons in homosexual relationships and on blessing same gender relationships.

Voting members will be elected at synod assemblies in spring 2004. In some synods the process for electing "delegates" begins as early as this November.

Synods use two basic methods to elect voting members. Some use conferences or clusters to nominate individuals who are then elected or confirmed at the spring synod assembly. Some conferences and clusters will meet as early as this fall, while most will meet early in 2004. Other synods use a nominating committee to present nominees to the spring assembly.

Now is also the time for congregations and individuals to participate in the sexuality discussion leading up to the votes on blessing same gender relationships and ordaining persons in homosexual relationships. A second study guide from the sexuality task force was mailed to all congregations the week of Sept. 2, and the task force wants to hear from all ELCA members. You can get the study guide on the ELCA website: [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org).

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

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# Reflections on the 2003 Churchwide Assembly

**By Pastor Mark R. Olson**

Voting member  
Northwest Minnesota Synod

The opening line in Charles Dickens "A Tale of Two Cities" is a fitting summary of my experiences at the 2003 Churchwide Assembly in the city of Milwaukee, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times..."

It was the "the best of times" because Bishop Mark Hanson laid out a solid evangelism strategy for the future of our church. The theme for the strategy is:

*Marked with the cross of Christ forever,  
we are claimed, gathered and sent  
for the sake of the world.*

The strategy is Christ-centered and focuses on assisting local congregations in their call to share the good news. Bishop Hanson spoke of the Biblical illiteracy of our church and indicated that our church must equip disciples, rather than just add members.

Bishop Hanson was driving at two basic points: Discipleship is about "witnessing" to Jesus and "inviting" people into a life-changing relationship with him.

After hearing him speak, I was convinced! It was the best of times. Bishop Hanson left me believing that if the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) develops an evangelism strategy grounded in those two main principles (witnessing and inviting), our mission and ministry will grow.

However, it was the "worst of times" because every attempt to strengthen the relationship between the "churchwide" structures of our church and the local congrega-

tion was defeated.

The Evangelism strategy aims to assist congregations in their outreach, but I have sensed a grave level of disconnection between the decisions of a churchwide assembly and the ministry that happens in the local congregation. The rift of distrust between churchwide and the local church was only widened in Milwaukee. Three different proposals attempted to bridge this rift but were rejected. First there was a proposal to ask the local congregations to ratify or reject changes in ecumenical agreements and in ministry standards passed at a churchwide assembly. The second proposal asked the assembly for synodical ratification of ELCA constitutional changes.

Finally a proposal was made to change the ELCA Church Council from 37 to 69 members. Each synod would have had its own representative. Several bishops spoke from the floor in favor of this change, and yet it was defeated. We had several opportunities to empower congregations and synods, but the old axiom, "we've never done it that way before," ruled the day.

I am a cautious optimist. I hope for the best, while preparing for the worst. If the worst includes a split in the ranks of the ELCA over sexuality issues, I can live with that. I don't wish for this, but I think we all must admit this is a possibility. I will support the ELCA Evangelism strategy with every fiber of my being. The time is now to reach people with the love of Jesus. These are the "best of times" for evangelism. However, it may still prove to be "the worst of times" for the ELCA.

## WordAlone sponsors conference on proposed ELCA worship resources

"Reclaiming Evangelical Worship," is the theme of a WordAlone conference, Nov. 16-18 at Zion Lutheran Church, Anoka, Minn., that will evaluate the proposed worship resources coming from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

"The ELCA is working on new worship resources with new hymns and orders of service," says Gracia Grindal, professor of rhetoric at Luther Seminary. "The WordAlone Network, as a reforming movement within the ELCA, will discuss these proposed new worship resources and examine them in light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Augsburg Confession."

Martin Luther reformed the communion service so that worshippers clearly hear that Christ is giving himself to believers, rather than receiving an offering of sacrifice from the worshippers. The proposed

worship resources may reverse Luther's reforms. It is essential for congregations to be well informed, and know what is at stake in the preparation of the new worship resources.

Keynote speakers are Dr. Walter Huffman, professor of worship and dean of chapel at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio, Dr. Steven D. Paulson, associate professor of systematic theology at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., Dr. Oliver K. Olson, Minneapolis, Minn., and Grindal. Preachers include Pastor Jaynan Clark Eglund, WordAlone president, and Associate Pastor Mark Tiede of Zion Lutheran in Anoka.

Registration is \$40.00 per person. There is no registration fee for seminarians. A brochure with more information will be mailed soon, or call WordAlone (651-633-6004 or toll free at 888-551-7254) or email at [wordalone@poppp.net](mailto:wordalone@poppp.net).

## Two more ordinations in unusual circumstances reported

Ordinations of a ninth and a tenth pastor by pastors under the ELCA's ordination in "unusual circumstances" exception-by-law have been reported. According to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's full communion agreement with The Episcopal Church USA, ordinations are to be done by bishops.

The new pastors are Kjell Ferris, ordained at Zion Lutheran Church, Anoka, Minn., and Sally Terrell, ordained at Atonement Lutheran Church in Green Bay, Wis. Both are serving at the churches where they were ordained. Ferris is a graduate of Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., and Terrell of Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.

### 'Admonition' printed in journal

The "Admonition for the Sake of the True Peace and Unity of the Church," written by the WordAlone Network Theological Advisory Board, was printed in the Spring 2003 edition of the "Lutheran Quarterly," a confessional theological journal.

A subscription to "Lutheran Quarterly" is \$30 for 1 year (4 issues) or \$55 for 2 years (8 issues). Subscriptions may be requested by mail at Lutheran Quarterly, S. 2715 Ray Street, Spokane, WA 99223, by calling 1-800-555-3813, or through the publication's website, [www.lutheranquarterly.com](http://www.lutheranquarterly.com).

## Rearranging Deck Chairs



by  
**Tim Huffman**  
professor of  
Christian Mission  
Trinity Lutheran  
Seminary  
Columbus, Ohio

More than 300 graves stretch in three curved rows resembling a ship's hull in Fairview cemetery in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Some of the simple stones bear names, some do not. All bear the same date: April 15, 1912. Number 227 says "J. Dawson, April 15, 1912." Number 317 is more elaborate.

SACRED  
TO THE MEMORY OF  
EVERETT EDWARD  
ELLIOTT  
OF THE HEROIC CREW  
S.S. "TITANIC." DIED ON DUTY  
APRIL 15, 1912  
AGED 24 YEARS

EACH MAN STOOD AT HIS POST  
WHILE ALL THE WEAKER ONES  
WENT BY, AND SHOWED ONCE  
MORE TO ALL THE WORLD  
HOW ENGLISHMEN SHOULD DIE

A historical marker says that this stone was donated by Bruce Ismay, principal owner of the White Star Line and a survivor of the tragic voyage, out of admiration or perhaps out of guilt.

Tourists to Halifax include Fairview as a pilgrimage in their visits. While recent years have seen much attention to J. Dawson's tombstone, as if it really held Leonardo Di Caprio, the poignant story of the real tragedy still captivates the mind. More than 1500

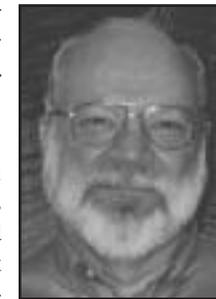
of the 2200 persons aboard died. Fairview holds the remains of the recovered bodies known or guessed to be Protestant.

Contemporary press coverage quoted survivors, both passengers and crew. One surviving crewmember said "There was no excuse for the accident. The night was clear and fine; you could see for hundreds of yards and the officers of the ship knew that we were in the latitude where ice would be met, yet the ship proceeded at full speed" (online "Encyclopedia Titanica"). In later testimony before a U.S. Senate committee, Bruce Ismay denied that the ship was at full speed, arguing that they had increased the speed each day, until they were traveling at 75 revolutions (per minute), while "full speed" was 78 revolutions.

For generations it was believed that the iceberg had torn a large gash in the starboard hull. However, the recent underwater explorations of the hull of the Titanic have shown that it did not sustain a large gash from the iceberg as was long believed, but instead suffered "a series of thin gashes as well as brittle fracturing and separation of seams in the adjacent hull plates, thus allowing water to flood in and sink the ship" (Encyclopedia Britannica). "The shock was so slight that no one was jarred. It was not

as great a shock as is produced by a ship tilting her propeller out of the water," said a crew member. The Titanic was sunk by an accumulation of small gashes resulting from a relatively gentle bump.

The great ship Titanic was built according to the best and latest design. It was large - the largest human con- (Continued on page 6)



Tim Huffman

# Rearranging Deck Chairs

(Continued from page 5) struction at that time, larger than any building and the largest moving object on earth. It was luxurious, it reflected the finest science, it had the best engines. Titanic was popularly believed to be "unsinkable" because of its double hull design, but the watertight compartments were not "capped," and therefore water could spill over the tops of the compartments. That is what happened, and Thomas Andrews, the chief designer and a passenger who made the decision not to try to escape, knew immediately upon hearing the details of the damage that the ship would sink, and even calculated approximately how long it would float above its 12,000-foot deep graveyard.

Throughout the day before the accident the Titanic was receiving "marconigrams" (radio telegrams) from other ships warning of the "icefields in the vicinity of the vessel." One press report quotes first class passengers who said that at least an hour before the vessel struck the iceberg they witnessed Bruce Ismay reading a newly received warning of the "presence of large quantities of ice." They reportedly asked Ismay, "Do you intend to slow the boat down?" His reply was, "No, we're going ahead at full speed."

One crewmember said "The loss of life in great part was due to overconfidence, as every person on board thought the ship unsinkable. The shortage of lifeboats was sinful. Every man could have been saved if there had been enough boats and enough competent men to lower them. Collapsible boats were there, but no one knew how to adjust them and they were next to useless."

After the collision, crewmembers repeatedly assured passengers "No, nothing's wrong." "It'll be o.k."

Passengers accepted the reassurances of

these professionals at their peril. The ship was already fatally wounded, but the urgency of the moment was downplayed, partly in ignorance, partly to prevent panic. The steerage passengers were indeed locked in during the time they might have reached the lifeboats. Most who reached those spots could only watch the lifeboats on the water (or capsized), some only half full. Seven hundred of the 2200 hundred survived, but the ship was lost forever, serving today as a deep-water memorial and as a cautionary tale for mainline denominations.

The prospects for mainline denominations in America are dim. Total mainline church membership topped more than 29 million in 1960. By the year 2000 it had fallen to 22 million, a 21 percent decline. During that period the U.S. population increased by 56 percent, so the effective loss was about 70 percent against population. The United Church of Christ lost an actual 39 percent, the Episcopal Church 33 percent, and the Presbyterians who are now the PCUSA lost around 40 percent. But total church membership increased by 33 percent during that same period. Of all church members more than a quarter belonged to the seven mainline denominations in 1960, but today the seven include fewer than 15 percent of all church members.

Even in the recent past, losing trends have continued. According to Diane Knippers, in the 1990s the Episcopal Church USA lost 5.3 percent (during its "decade of evangelism"), the American Baptist churches declined 5.7 percent, the PCUSA declined 11.6 percent and the UCC lost 14.8 percent. These losses must be reckoned against a population increase of more than 13 percent during that time. But not all churches declined. The Presbyterian Church in America, founded in 1973, grew 42 percent in the 1990s. The Wesleyan Church increased

by 47 percent; and other growing groups included Southern Baptists, Assemblies of God, the Churches of Christ and the Roman Catholic Church (Knippers, "God Is Working Among Us" in "Confessing the Faith," 2002), although the Catholic growth was mostly by immigration.

Despite its numerical growth the Roman Catholic Church is in desperate straits, even before the damage of the recent crisis has become clear. Kenneth C. Jones of St. Louis recently published a small book entitled "Index of Leading Catholic Indicators." Among his findings: the number of priests doubled between 1930 and 1965 to 58,000, but has dropped to 45,000. By 2020 only 31,000 priests will be left, only 15,000 of them under 70. In 1965 1,575 new priests were ordained in the U.S., but in 2002 only 450 were. Fifteen percent of all parishes have not a single priest. The number of seminarians has dropped more than 90 percent (49,000 to 4,700) since 1965, with 2/3 of seminaries closing in that period. There has been a 94 percent decline in the number of teaching nuns, with drops of about 50 percent in parochial school enrollment. Attendance at Sunday Mass has dropped from 1958's three in four Catholics to today's one in four.

Lutherans often take comfort in the fact that our losses are the smallest among the mainline churches. The ELCA lost only 2.2 percent in the 1990's, and was losing about 1/2 percent per year, until 2002, when losses topped 1 percent. That looks almost encouraging when compared with the other church bodies we know best.

But the ELCA loss of 2.2 percent in the 1990's is a true loss of 15 percent against population, or a loss of roughly 20 percent against population during the short life of the ELCA. The median age of ELCA mem-

bers is in the 50's, increasing numbers of congregations lack pastors, seminaries graduate only a third of the seminarians requested each year, almost half our pastors are within 10 years of retirement by conventional standards, synodical and national budgets are falling short although congregational receipts are growing—all the warning signs are there. We are proceeding through ice fields, and the icebergs out there have done grave damage to the church bodies most like us.

What lies ahead? Although the Episcopal Church has decreased to less than one percent of population—the classic definition of a sect—it has the great advantage of rich parishes and dioceses, with extensive property and endowments. Its potential saving grace is that disaffected and divorced Roman Catholics look first at Episcopalianism if they want another church. A recent study in the PCUSA showed that only 5 percent of its parishes report financial difficulties—again the advantage of status and money may keep it afloat in some fashion, even as the membership numbers drop.

The ELCA lacks these resources.

Incidentally, more than a decade ago the PCUSA experienced a statistical bump up when they changed the definition of membership to "comprehensive" membership, and the ECUSA in at least some studies has used the big four Sundays a year to calculate "average Sunday attendance." This makes it more a concern that the ELCA's presiding bishop recently suggested in "The Lutheran" that congregations not drop inactive members so quickly. One hopes this is not an oblique response to mask the accelerating drop in ELCA membership numbers.

What makes trying to save the ELCA worth the effort? (Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7) The comparisons with other mainline bodies suggest that there still is time to salvage the ELCA, while our closest neighbors seem lost, beyond hope. The ELCA has some things going for it, but the biggest advantage is that some of the major icebergs are still ahead for us, even as we watch our neighbors hit them and send back messages about the ice fields. The question is whether those at the controls are getting the message. "Full speed ahead," "focus on the positive," "emphasize the things that unite us" are messages we all would like to hear and believe, but they do not reflect the reality of our time and place. The ice fields have claimed real victims, leaving only shells of formerly vigorous church bodies. That is also the certain future of the ELCA if we refuse to hear and heed the danger signals. The Milwaukee Assembly showed little evidence of the change of course and speed that alone would spare the ELCA.

WordAlone is young and has been described in varying terms. Some have called it "a resistance movement." It is certainly that, resisting certain decisions we regard as unacceptable, resisting dangerous directions. But it is more than that. Others have called it "a renewal movement," and we do aspire to be a renewing leaven in the loaf of the ELCA, grounded in scripture and the Reformation to renew a declining body before it is too late. Other denominations have had renewal movements for a generation, as well as some new ones, but they have achieved little in actually renewing their denominations.

Perhaps the best way to understand WordAlone is as "a prophetic movement." Prophets are not clairvoyants, miraculously seeing visions of the future. Prophets are those who genuinely understand the present,

and who can see the inevitable outcome of present actions and decisions. They say, "This is the road to disaster. Change course." True prophets always work surrounded by a gaggle of false prophets, most of whom give reassuring predictions to leaders to curry their favor, "saying 'Peace, peace'; when there is no peace," Jeremiah 6:14, 8:11, cf. 15:13 ff., passim. True prophets are seldom appreciated. They are irritating in their disruptiveness. They cannot even prove that they are right. The Biblical witness is that the true prophet can only be discerned *ex post facto*, which leaves a prophetic community to rely on faith. True prophets are always grounded in the tradition and the covenant, always trying to recall the larger community to the faith entrusted to its ancestors, always challenged by those with a heavy investment in the present direction. Irritating? Yes! But when prophets are right, they are critically important. They can slow the forward rush toward disaster.

In the present moment WordAlone is the community of those calling out that the ELCA is in a sea crowded with icebergs, reading aloud marconigrams saying that other ships are foundering, protesting that focusing on the positive while ignoring what is wrong and misguided is the course to disaster. WordAlone is the group refusing to accept the false reassurances that the bump in the night was nothing, and that we should ignore the iceberg outside our port-hole, because the design is modern, the ship is big and luxurious, and the crew is expert. The double hull construction makes it unsinkable, after all.

The "Titanic" tragedy still captivates the mind because it did not have to happen. Perhaps the next ELCA Assembly should meet in Halifax.

## Ten Affirmations

*What the WordAlone Network is for...*

*Editor's note: Pastors David Glesne, Fridley, Minn.; Scott Grorud, Redwood Falls, Minn.; and Greg Johnson, Tea, S.D., prepared the Ten Affirmations and presented them at their seminar, "Affirmations: Forming a Statement of Beliefs," at the Reformation at the Crossroads conference, Mahtomedi, Minn., in November 2002. This is a good example of the resources that are developed and used by people throughout this grassroots movement.*

The growing WordAlone movement is driven by the Biblical and Confessional teachings of the Lutheran church. Although it arose in opposition to decisions made by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, it is an essentially positive movement, seeking to preserve and uphold the riches of the Lutheran theological tradition.

The following affirmations are an attempt to state positively those convictions that the WordAlone Network is committed to preserving in the church. It is expected that as individuals and groups consider these affirmations across the ELCA, many of them will realize that they share these convictions and already are members of WordAlone in spirit and conviction.

### ***Jesus is the only way of salvation.***

God's justification of the godless by faith in Jesus Christ is the heart of the Gospel.

### ***The Bible is the final authority over the faith and life of the Church.***

The Bible is God's Word to us, spoken in Law and Gospel. It is a light to, rather than a reflection of, the world.

### ***The Lutheran Confessions are a faithful interpretation of Scripture.***

As faith seeks understanding, the Lutheran Confessions reliably guide us in the truth.

### ***The Church's ministry is centered in the priesthood of all believers.***

In Baptism, the Holy Spirit makes all Christians priests to serve others for Jesus' sake.

### ***Congregations call pastors to serve with them in ministry.***

Pastors preach and administer the sacraments to keep good order in the church, but are not necessary for Christ to be present in Word or Sacrament.

### ***The local congregation is the heart of Christ's mission.***

The Christian Church is the assembly of believers called and gathered by God around Word and Sacrament. Regional and national structures exist to serve local churches.

### ***Faithful Christian worship keeps Christ at the center.***

The purpose of worship is to proclaim Christ and his saving work. It is not our sacrifice to God, but God coming to us to save us and guide us by his Word.

### ***Church governance should be representative and accountable.***

Churchwide assemblies must respect the integrity and authority of local congregations.

### ***Christian unity is given by and centered in Jesus Christ.***

True ecumenism respects the diversity within the Body of Christ, embracing worship, work and service with other Christian churches without compromising core convictions.

### ***Biblical norms establish the boundaries and proper use of sexuality.***

The Bible clearly teaches that marriage is a holy bond between one man and one woman and is the only proper arena for sexual activity. From marriages, families are formed that serve as the building blocks of civilization.

# Who is sewing the temple curtain?

By Lou Hesse

Layman from Moses Lake, Wash.  
Member of the Task Force  
for ELCA Studies on Sexuality

One of the most powerful images I remember from my days in catechism more than 35 years ago was of Lutheran Church Missouri Synod Pastor George Reule teaching our class the significance of the temple curtains' being torn in two. With the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, access to the holiest of holies was now available to all. A priesthood of all believers could confess, pray, be forgiven, commune, cavort, enjoy and worship God directly - no barriers were in the way.

What a profound and immense joy, and what a profound symbol of our changed relationship to God Most High through Jesus Christ!

It seems to me that slowly, stitch by stitch, that curtain is being re-sewn.

Last week I was cultivating corn. Listening to the radio in the tractor, an hourly news report came on reporting that 100,000 had gathered to "watch the pope celebrate Mass" in a field in Croatia, and several had died due to the heat. The report was sad in two ways -- people had died, and the curtain was up. The people only "watched."

Stitch by stitch. Last week a notice came to our synod's clergy from our bishop, reminding pastors and councils to ensure that "appropriate" people were going to preside at communion through the summer months while ordained clergy were on vacations. It's no longer enough to proclaim the Word in a community of believers it seems. I believe that if the congregation has no problems with the person selected, a lay man or woman can lead worship, preach a sermon, preside at communion, baptize and anything else we believe people can do as

members of the priesthood of believers.

Stitch by stitch. Historic episcopacy supposedly declares a special class of believers uniquely endowed to preserve the integrity of the faith.

Stitch by stitch. Eucharistic prayer changes the direction of the sacrament and its meaning. It's no longer about Christ's coming to us, but it's about "us remembering;" it's about "our sense of community;" it's about "who we are as the people of God," praising His action; it's about ordained clergy putting on "the right show."

I bought and read Oliver Olson's tome on Matthias Flacius Illyricus. It's not an easy read for a layman but it tells a piece of our history that needs to be remembered and valued. We need to remember sacrifices made in the past and why those sacrifices were made and the dangers of ignoring the lessons of history.

"The whole papacy is in the canon."-Flacius, via Olson [Flacius was a student of Luther's and was an early defender of strict Lutheranism.]

Stich by stitch. With the signing of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) says it believes we are closer to the Roman Catholic communion. It appears to me that Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson hopes to soon share communion and altar fellowship with those folks.

Before long, I can look forward to "watching the pope celebrate Mass." A poor miserable layman excluded from things holy by a restored temple curtain.

Altering a phrase borrowed from George Orwell's Animal Farm, "Lutherans believe in the priesthood of all believers. In the ELCA, some believers are more priestly than others."

# Lutheran Clergy Connect

Lutheran Clergy Connect is one way for congregations seeking a pastor to connect with potential 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. Below are the most recent listings. A full list, which includes 16 additional listings, is posted on the WordAlone website. ([www.wordalone.org](http://www.wordalone.org)).

If you would like your congregation listed on Clergy Connect, please 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: 651-633-5994. (Please notify us when the position's been filled.)

Give the following information:  
Pastoral position  
Congregation's name, city, & state (&website address if applicable)  
Contact person  
Phone number  
E-mail address

Calls are listed starting with the most recently received.

✦  
Grace Lutheran Church & Learning Center  
**Miami Springs, FL**  
Contact: Jim Llewellyn  
254 Curtiss Parkway  
Miami Springs, FL 33166  
305-887-7632  
JDFllewellyn@aol.com  
*A like-minded, Full-time Senior Pastor is being sought by an enthusiastic, Christ-centered, ready-to-grow congregation. Bilingual (English/Spanish) an asset. For a complete description of this position please contact the Call Chair listed above. All inquiries treated with strictest confidentiality.*

✦  
Immanuel Lutheran Church  
**Moses Lake, WA**  
Contact Person: Judy Burns  
1020 South A Street  
Moses Lake, WA 98837  
509-765-8621 rtdntr@2fast.net  
*Full-time interim pastor for a congregation with 1000 baptized members.*

Resurrection Lutheran Church  
**Blaine, MN**  
Contact: Diane Vaughn  
14511 Brant St. N.E.  
Ham Lake, MN 55304  
763-786-9419  
vaughndiane@hotmail.co  
*Full-time Solo Pastor for a suburban congregation which has 408 baptized members.*

✦  
St. John Lutheran Church  
**Sheldon, IA**  
Contact: Paul Winter  
4213 300th Street  
Sheldon, IA 51201  
pkhcw@rcconnect.com  
712-725-2574  
Full-time Pastor

✦  
St. Paul Lutheran Church  
**New Braunfels, TX**  
Contact: Will Krieg  
1410 Flaming Oak  
New Braunfels, TX 78132  
830-625-9347  
Pastor

✦  
Lord of Life Lutheran Church  
**Oconomowoc, WI**  
Contact: Donald Wiemer, Pres.  
828 Wildwood Place  
Oconomowoc, WI 53066  
262-567-5301(w)262-567-0707(h)  
dwiemer@execpc.com  
Full-time Pastor

First Ev. Lutheran Church  
**White Bear Lake, MN**  
Contact: Helen Kahl  
4044 Scheuneman Road  
White Bear Lake, MN 55110  
651-429-5137 whkahl@att.net  
*Seeking a TEACHING PASTOR whose primary duties would be to implement & oversee Adult Spiritual Growth Program of evangelism, discipleship & lay ministry. For a complete description of this position, please contact the person above or visit our church website at www.firstlutheranwbl.org.*

✦  
King of Glory Lutheran Church  
**Tempe, AZ**  
Contact: Roger Gordon, pastor  
2085 East Southern Avenue  
Tempe, AZ 85282  
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ino@kogaz.org  
*Associate Pastor for 3,800 member congregation near Arizona State University. Need good teaching skills and ability to organize and supervise paid staff and volunteers. Specific work responsibilities depend upon experiences and training but areas of family life/children/youth will be included.*