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NETWORK NEWS



Volume 11, Issue 3

MAY - JUNE 2010

WA Network is done, but WordAlone not out

by Betsy Carlson, editor

The WordAlone Network is finished.

But not the work of preaching, teaching and confessing the Word alone, Jesus Christ, by the newly designated WordAlone Ministries.

The WordAlone Network voted to change its name when it met in convention April 18-19 at Calvary Lutheran Church in Golden Valley, Minn., under the banner of “It’s a New Day!”

The convention affirmed that WordAlone will continue to serve congregations, groups and individuals committed to proclaiming the Word of God and to remaining faithful to the Bible, although it ended its attempts to reform the ELCA after its unbiblical decisions on marriage and family and on new standards for ministers at the churchwide assembly last August.

Earlier in the day, WordAlone President Jaynan Clark presented a new vision for WordAlone Ministries in a dynamic report that included her falling to her knees and repenting for anything WordAlone failed to do that the Lord called it to do in the past 10 years.

Still on her knees, she prayed, “Otherwise continue to call us, guide us; send us leaders, evangelists and (on) a mission to go

forward and to get beyond the nonsense of . . . celebration of sin.”

After rising from prayer, she said WordAlone wants to stay in the “boiler room doing the work” to support the efforts of faithful Lutheran church bodies.

Faithful Lutheran church bodies closely-related to WordAlone are Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ generally known as LCMC, Canadian Association of Lutheran Churches, Lutheran CORE and the North American Lutheran Church—when it’s established.

WordAlone Ministries will provide preaching, teaching and confessing ministries from what she called a “ministry forge.”

Two ministries newly out of the ministry forge are first responders to the crisis among Lutherans: the Chaplain Corps and the Evangelical Mission Teams. These programs provide assistance and accurate information to those wanting to leave either their congregations or denomination.

The next to be launched will be Life Together Churches in June, in partnership with Lutheran Evangelistic Movement. This ministry will support house churches, cell churches and, via the Internet, a virtual parish.

(Continues on page two)

‘Done...’ Continues from page one)

Clark said she also envisions a worldwide, multi-media evangelism ministry using Internet, radio and television to preach, teach and confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. She called this ministry “SALT, SALvation, Life and Truth,” and said it will be salt and light to the world.

The existing Clergy Connect electronic list of churches seeking ministers will be upgraded to a two-way tool for churches, clergy and lay ministers to communicate on the Internet.

In its past, WordAlone provided new ministries for congregations and individuals who held to the teachings of the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions. WordAlone Ministries will continue its collaborations with ministry groups such as Lutheran Youth Encounter, World Mission Prayer League, Faith Inkubators, China Service Ventures and East European Mission Network.

Clark introduced Sola Publishing as not just the educational wing of WordAlone, calling it the future for confessional, Lutheran publications. Sola is already producing faithful Sunday school and Vacation Bible School curriculum as well as valuable resources for adult Christian education.

Over the years WordAlone has supported the development of several new ministries.

LCMC was the first ministry WordAlone produced. It was officially launched in 2001 with about 25 churches, became independent and has grown to more than 400 congregations.

After LCMC came ReClaim Resources, now independent. ReClaim developed an introductory hymnal with nearly 50 hymns and a Lutheran—not ecumenical—order of service and other rites that proclaim God’s word. The group is working on more worship resources.

WordAlone also launched the Institute of Lutheran Theology, which is now function-

ing as an independent Lutheran online seminary.

Another important ministry development project has resulted in Lutheran CORE which provides affiliation options for Lutherans who are opposed to the recent unbiblical policies being implemented by the ELCA. ♦

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‘WordAlone needs a prayer movement’

By Betsy Carlson, editor

Christianity is always standing at the crossroads, the Rev. Dr. Gemechis Buba told the first session of the 11th annual WordAlone Network convention in mid-April at Calvary Lutheran Church in Golden Valley, Minn.

Buba told the gathering that a prayer movement must surround WordAlone.

The crossroads now are the confusion and conflict over whether to accept the authority of the Word of God or vote and follow the blowing wind of the culture. The word of God is that never changing ancient truth but the blowing wind of culture is a constantly changing phenomenon clashing and conflicting with the ever true and ever standing word of God.

Some congregations and individuals have left the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for other Lutheran groups over the issue.

The keynoter said, “When it (WordAlone) is embraced in prayer, then nothing can withstand this movement.”

WordAlone President Jaynan Clark, speaking that first evening of the assembly, said that no one should be surprised by the conflict or confusion in the ELCA now, and assured the audience that “this convention” had been planned and designed to say that in Jesus Christ there is not conflict or confusion.

“His good news is always good because it comes under the shroud of the cross of Christ,” she said.

Later that evening, keynote speaker Buba compared the state of churches today to that of Jewish people living in the time of the prophet Jeremiah.

Buba, director for African national ministries evangelical outreach and congregational mission for the ELCA, called Jeremiah a “crying prophet.”

He said Jeremiah was a prophet crying for the sins of his people. Jeremiah and the word of God declared through him were devalued by the people of his own nation who were not listening to his words. The prophet was crying because so many false prophets were running around saying, “Peace, peace,” when there was no peace.

He told them chapter 6 in the Book of Jeremiah had very important instructions for churches today here in the United States and in Western Europe. “Thus says the LORD: ‘**Stand** by the roads, and **look**, and **ask** for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and **walk** in it, and find rest for your souls,’” Jer. 6:15. [Emphasis added.]

WordAlone President Jaynan Clark had introduced Buba by saying, “Every so often God sends someone to remind us of who we are.”

She said she had been accused of not taking God seriously enough during her time as WordAlone president.

“But I am one who believes we take ourselves too seriously and God not seriously enough,” Clark said.

Then she continued, comparing her “old, comfortable cowboy boots,” which she said she purposely had worn that day, to the “old church.” She pointed out that her old boots had “soles, s-o-l-e-s” (spelling it out).

She had new boots, she told them, and compared them to a new church with “s-o-u-l-s.”

New churches might not be so comfortable, but “might stretch us, might pinch us, push us,” she said. Lutherans can’t take that seriously enough.

“We must stop taking ourselves so seriously and take the Word of God seriously,” Clark said, yielding the microphone to Buba, who is from Ethiopia.

(Continues on page four)

(‘Prayer movement...’ Continues from page three)

He responded, “Our God is forever on God’s throne and the Word of God is forever true and forever true.”

After introducing Jeremiah, chapter 6, Buba exhorted the people at the convention to stand firm and wait for the Lord because a church built on the living Word would never be shaken. He told his convention listeners to look intently and deeply to the future just as Jeremiah told his people to look for the right path to take.

He said too that where they stood would determine what they would see. If they stood in a valley they would see mountains.

The passion that they would have for the future depended on where they stood, Buba said. Moses went to the mountain top and saw the promised land.

“Martin Luther King, on the day of his death, said he had been to the mountain top and seen the promised land. What you see depended on where you stand,” Buba said.

After telling the people to stand and to look, he said his third commission to them was, “Ask.” One thing that has been relinquished in western Christianity is prayer. The western church wants to concentrate on training and teaching, he explained.

“I say, ‘Pray.’ Jesus said, ‘Pray.’” Buba said, “The western church has to go back, go back on our knees. That’s where the strong move of the Holy Spirit comes. Don’t go back to your mind to plan, to strategize. Start with prayer.

“Salvation, instruction, life, light come from here,” he said lifting up his Bible. “Ask, ask, ask. Give your undivided attention to the Bible. I am the child of a pastor. He was even a president of a synod. But I don’t claim my heritage for my love of preaching, for my devotion.

“I am not indoctrinated. I am transformed by the Word of God.

“Once you’ve asked Jeremiah said, ‘Walk.’ There is no east or west, no shortage of

mission field. Walk, walk. The Lutheran voice is wanted in the world.... It is time for us to walk with Jesus, armed with the Holy Word,” Buba said.

He said the church has people who are trained, have masters of divinity, certification after certification, but they go too fast.

After his resurrection, Jesus told the disciples to wait to go out and preach until the Holy Spirit came and gave them power, he said. Today the church bypasses the upper room experience and experiences spiritual bankruptcy.

Buba said, “Stay, for the Holy Spirit has the power, has the answer. With the Holy Spirit, the Church will never die. Christianity gets sustained. Don’t spend your nights worrying how the church is going to die. We are on the other side of the cross. The Church is not going to die.

“The Gospel is alive and well so, people, walk, walk with the Gospel. March. Go forward!”

Jeremiah said to take the Lord’s way and it would take them to a place of rest, Buba reminded them.

When they go out to preach, they must remember that Jesus fits in every culture. They won’t ruin cultures by preaching, he said.

Buba said, “We live in a restless world. Humanity is hungry for stability. Walk with Jesus, he will take you from one trouble to another trouble, from one persecution to another persecution, from one chaos to another, but Jesus is the king of peace. . . . Now is not the time to sit closed up in your room.

“Stand, stand, stand. Don’t doubt your faith. Don’t doubt the Word.” ♦

An update from Lutheran CORE

Remarks to 2010 WordAlone Convention, Golden Valley, Minn.

by Ryan M. Schwarz, steering committee member, Lutheran CORE

Editors note: This speech has been shortened to fit the available space.

Before I describe what Lutheran CORE has been doing in the eight months since the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Churchwide Assembly last summer, I’d like to begin by sharing some thoughts about **you**—the reason we are all here—the WordAlone Network. As most of you probably know, WordAlone was instrumental in the creation of Lutheran CORE back in 2005, and it is no exaggeration to say that Lutheran CORE could not and would not exist without WordAlone.

For many years, WordAlone was a lone voice crying out in the wilderness, or at least the only voice sufficiently organized to have a full-time staff, an office and copying machines. It is truly remarkable to consider the number of ministries that have been originated by WordAlone. You know the names better than I do: LCMC (Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ), ReClaim, the Institute of Lutheran Theology, Sola Publishing and Lutheran CORE.

In my professional life, we’d say that you have developed a “core competency” in identifying needs and developing ministries to meet those needs. And now in this “new day,” you are embarking on a new path, one that makes developing and growing ministries your main focus.

Let me propose an analogy that I believe captures just how essential is this new direction of WordAlone to the great mission of reconfiguration and renewal in which we are all engaged. How many of you have PCs here? I don’t mean you Mac folks. No, I mean good old-fashioned PCs running Windows.

How many of those PCs have a sticker somewhere on them that says “Intel”?

Almost everyone, right? Regardless of who manufactured the PC, regardless of how the computer is configured, almost every PC here has, as the saying goes, “Intel inside.”

Let me suggest that WordAlone is the “Intel inside” of Lutheran renewal.

Speaking for Lutheran CORE, WordAlone’s ministries are critical to the flourishing of our future initiatives. Take publishing as an example. We have no intention of creating a new publishing ministry for the new church body we’re forming—we’ll rely on Sola Publishing instead—to provide Lutheran-centric materials alongside what’s available from other Christian sources. Or, consider assistance to congregations in the call process. We’d be nuts to replicate WordAlone’s Clergy Connect, considering its track record of success over the years.

Or, consider theological education. As our task force on theological education begins planning new educational pathways for pastors for the new church body, we are focusing on the Institute of Lutheran Theology as our partner for technology enabled theological education in the 21st century.

Of course, while these ministries are essential to the future of Lutheran CORE, you’re certainly not running them just for CORE. They are your gift to the entire spectrum of Lutheran renewal. All of us—individuals, congregations, associations of congregations and denominational bodies—benefit from and are blessed by these ministries.

All of us rely on this “Intel inside” to support our own work of renewal and mission. That’s why I’m personally so excited by WordAlone’s “new day.” It is generous, it is well thought out, and it is very, very much needed at such a time as this.

(Continues on page six)

(‘CORE...’ Continues from page five)

Many of you here may have attended the Lutheran CORE convocation in Fishers, Ind., last September.

At that convocation, Lutheran CORE committed to pursue a one-year process of study and planning aimed at catalyzing a “reconfiguration of North American Lutheranism.”

We pledged to get to work over this year first, to put forth a vision for Lutheran CORE’s role in this “new day” that has dawned for all of us, a plan to support faithful congregations and individuals whether they stay in or leave the ELCA and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. And then to do the organizational work needed to turn those plans into reality, so that our new direction can be launched at our convocation this coming summer in Columbus, Ohio.

So, what have we been doing?

A vision and planning group worked through the winter to develop a vision for the future of our ministry, in the process consulting with our 20 national and regional renewal movement partners. Separate working groups are meeting to develop plans for missions and evangelism, theological education, congregational life, organization and inter-Lutheran and ecumenical relations.

In mid-February, we released our Vision and Plan that calls for the formation of a new church body—the North American Lutheran Church—for congregations leaving the ELCA and the ELCIC, and for the re-formation of Lutheran CORE as a community of confessing Lutherans belonging to various church bodies, including the ELCA and ELCIC, who share a common commitment to orthodox Lutheran Christianity.

We arrived at the decision to form a new church body somewhat reluctantly, for at least a couple of reasons. For one, many of the members of the Lutheran CORE lead-

ership team place a high value on visible Christian unity, and consequently hesitate to take an action that involves the breaking of an existing fellowship.

But equally important, we are very mindful of the fact that a good alternative already exists for congregations that wish to leave the ELCA. For many congregations leaving the ELCA, LCMC is just the type of fellowship for which they are looking, and we rejoice each time a congregation makes that decision. I want to be very clear here, speaking for myself but also sharing the common sentiments of Lutheran CORE’s leadership.

We have tremendous respect for LCMC. From my perspective, they are some of the most mission-minded Lutherans you will ever meet, and their entire fellowship seems filled with a positive, hope-filled culture and a passion for the Gospel that certainly reflect the founders who stepped forward in faith to create LCMC 10 years ago.

If you are looking for competition or friction between LCMC and Lutheran CORE, you will not find it from me, you will not find it from the leadership of Lutheran CORE, and having met with them, I do not believe that you will find it from the leadership of LCMC either.

What transpired for us was that throughout the fall, we were approached by numerous congregational members and supporters of Lutheran CORE, asking us to form a new church body that would be evangelically minded but also more classically organized as a traditional denominational body.

After dialogue with these congregations to discern their specific desires and objectives, after prayerful consideration and after a leadership consultation between Lutheran CORE and WordAlone, we made the decision to form a new church body.

Our Vision and Plan articulates four unifying principles around which the ministries

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(‘CORE...’ Continues from page six)

of both the NALC and Lutheran CORE will be structured.

First, we will in all things be **Christ centered**. We will seek to orient our common lives around Jesus and will assert Him as the only pathway to salvation.

Second, we will be **mission driven**. The priority ministry of our common life will be Christ’s Great Commission to make disciples of all nations.

Third, both the NALC and Lutheran CORE will be **traditionally grounded**. We will include in our common life elements such as the office of the ministry, Sacraments, creeds, liturgy and the ministry of oversight that we receive from those who have gone before us.

Finally, our ministries and structure will be **congregationally focused**. The structure and organization of the NALC and Lutheran CORE will be designed to serve the congregation, not the other way around.

Let me share a little bit of what we presently envision for the North American Lutheran Church.

It will have a lean but vital infrastructure. A national assembly of representative delegates will make national decisions, with the most significant decisions subject to congregational ratification. It will have a national bishop and regional deans. Its core priority will be missions and evangelism.

The NALC will maintain a discipline process for congregations and clergy (and now I’m going to speak as a blunt layman) to deal with pastors that go off the reservation theologically and to deal with difficult congregations that chew up pastors.

And there’s one additional very important aspect of our vision for the future. For the members of Lutheran CORE who remain in the ELCA or ELCIC, this community will provide an ongoing connection to those orthodox Lutherans who leave their existing church bodies.

The NALC and its member congregations will be members of Lutheran CORE. To maintain and strengthen these connections across church bodies the NALC will carry out most of its ministry initiatives not on its own but rather, through the community of Lutheran CORE.

So let’s be very candid on this point. We are seeking to do something that has proven difficult in other Reformation traditions: maintain tangible unity and organic relationships between those who leave and those who stay. But we see no other path.

Our sense of calling is to support both groups, while finding ways to keep them connected for common ministry and common witness over the years to come.

A provisional constitution for the NALC and a revised constitution for Lutheran CORE will be released over the coming months. Task forces working on them will be eager to get comments.

And in late August, Lutheran CORE’s annual convocation in Columbus, Ohio, will be asked to approve constitutional and budgetary proposals and to formally constitute the NALC.

And I’d like to close by speaking about a challenge and an opportunity.

First, the challenge.

Traditionalist Lutherans have been quite united over the past several years in our opposition to the direction of the ELCA. That unity has been a real gift, and many of us have developed rich new friendships as a result.

But if we learn from the experiences of other denominations, we should know that it is much harder to remain united once we cease to be focused on what we collectively oppose, and instead face the need to chart a new course forward.

The need to chart a **new** course so easily brings out the flawed human desire to chart a **perfect** course. And that brings our

(Continues on page eight)

('CORE...' Continues from page seven)

differences in style, in theology and in practice to the fore.

It is no secret that there are noticeably different streams of thought and practice amongst traditionalist Lutherans. You probably know some or all of the names these go by: high church or low church, pietist, evangelical, charismatic, gnesio Lutheran, evangelical catholic.

And I certainly do not mean to suggest that any of these differences are trivial or unimportant matters.

However, it is a matter of simple fact that all these different streams stand within the bounds of historic confessional Lutheranism. There is nothing wrong with each of us wishing to promote our particular streams of ecclesiology, practice or style. Discussions on these matters can be quite healthy. But in a time such as this, we have a choice to make.

We can either see this as a time to fight out these longstanding differences, a time for one of them to prevail over the others, or we can see this as a time for finding new ways of cooperating despite our differences.

But make no mistake, fighting it out is the way of fragmentation. Surely we ought instead to strive for a generosity of spirit and a unity of purpose that keep us focused on the main thing, the Good News of Christ Jesus.

For if we can overcome the challenge I've just described, an enormous opportunity awaits us.

It is becoming clear that congregations who leave the ELCA and those who stay will be dwarfed by a far, far larger phenomenon: groups of traditional Lutherans estranged from congregations that cannot or will not leave the ELCA.

The predominance of pastors in the ELCA who favor theological innovation, and the high 2/3 vote requirement for a congregation to leave, together ensure huge numbers

of isolated traditionalist Lutherans.

And here's the opportunity: the result of this dislocation can be the most substantial period of Lutheran congregation planting in North America since the 1950s.

For each of these isolated groups of Lutheran Christians is the potential nucleus of a new preaching point, a future congregation, formed to serve not just themselves but rather the increasingly unchurched society in which we live.

This is perhaps the biggest challenge of all the developments that we call "reconfiguration." It is also the most important, if we take seriously the primacy of the Great Commission in the life of the church.

It is not a Lutheran CORE project, it is not a WordAlone project, it is not an LCMC project.

It is an "all of us" project. The time is now. The opportunity awaits. The call of our Lord is abundantly clear. Thanks be to God that we are all able to work in partnership in this most exciting time. ♦

We can either see this as a time to fight out these longstanding differences, a time for one of them to prevail over the others, or we can see this as a time for finding new ways of cooperating despite our differences.

Canadian church association to work with LCMC, LCORE, WordAlone

by Betsy Carlson, editor

The leader of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations recently described his group as a parallel organization to Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ, a 10-year-old association of churches mostly in the U.S.

CALC President Pastor Ed Skutshek, of Grace Lutheran in Kelowna, British Columbia, said his congregation joined CALC in December of 2008. Prior to that time, Skutshek was president of Solid Ground, an association that worked to oppose blessing same-sex relationships by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

Skutshek spoke at the WordAlone convention in mid-April in Minnesota.

"The writing was on the wall," he said in the interview. "We could see that the national church wasn't going to change so we took the action to leave the national church. LCMC and CALC are similar in structure, constitution and by-laws.

"We allow congregations to be members of a number of groups. We met with Bill Sullivan [former LCMC service coordinator] and our congregation resonated with LCMC. So we joined them too."

CALC is older than LCMC, having been formed in 1994 by pastors and lay persons who were dissatisfied with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, according to Skutshek.

LCMC was launched officially by WordAlone in 2001.

He said CALC's founders could see a "liberal trend" in the ELCIC, therefore they obtained a federal charter from the Canadian Parliament. So, as the ELCIC is, CALC also is a federally chartered group and is able to become a national church and

to organize across provincial boundaries without applying in each province.

He described CALC as an umbrella organization to empower congregations.

"Ministry always happens at the congregational level, so we see CALC as providing what the congregations need: training and mentoring of pastors and a theological framework. That is, doctrine, policies and theology rooted in the Lutheran Confessions.

"We have a high, high regard for Scripture as the only norm for faith and life. We take that seriously," Skutshek said. "In that sense, we see a great parallel between CALC and LCMC."

There are LCMC congregations in Canada in addition to his, but not an association or corporation for LCMC, he said.

"What we really would love CALC to be is a facilitator for LCMC and Lutheran CORE to become international organizations. We can work together," he said. "In Canada maybe we can supply the infrastructure for employee benefits, fellowship, mutual edification and opportunities for education."

CALC would like to be part of discussions going on "down south" among LCMC, Lutheran CORE and WordAlone, Skutshek said. The ELCIC is expected to follow the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in ordaining partnered, same-sex persons.

He said CALC wants to stand together with the three U.S. groups and to work together in the proclamation of the Gospel. CALC has eight congregations.

"We are microscopic," said Skutshek. "Just remember one thing. David was microscopic when it came to Goliath and you know how that story ended." ♦

African Lutheran leaders reject American, Swedish ‘unilateral action’ on marriage

by Betsy Carlson, editor

Leaders of a majority of Lutheran churches in Africa said recently that they oppose decisions by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Lutheran Church of Sweden to accept same-sex unions.

Speaking out first against a same-sex way of life were representatives of a majority of 31 African churches in the Lutheran World Federation who met in March in Nigeria. In a report on the meeting they criticized what they called “unilateral action” taken by “some [LWF] member churches” to accept same-sex unions.

And during his Easter sermon Presiding Bishop Alex Malasusa, of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania, said at the Azania Front Church in Dar es Salaam that the local church did not support decisions by Lutheran churches in the United States and Sweden to recognize “same-sex marriages” because they were against God’s Word.

Also speaking out was the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus that affirmed a 2006 declaration opposing same-sex behavior. The Rev. Dr. Wakseyoum Idosa, president of that church, in his opening remarks to its Executive Council in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, said in early April, the decisions of the Church of Sweden and the ELCA are a “clear disobedience to the Holy Scripture and the God ordained marriage.”

The executive council stated its position in support of the 2006 stand, issuing the following statement in a news release, “The EECMY [this Ethiopian church] believes that God clearly define that proper sexual relationship is only that [that] is practiced between a man and his wife (woman) who become one flesh, Genesis 2:24.”

These statements were in reaction to votes taken in the U.S. and in Sweden.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America assembly last summer made decisions to bless same-sex relationships and to allow persons in “committed, publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous” same-

sex relationships to serve as clergy or as professional lay ministers.

The Church of Sweden’s governing board voted last fall to allow their priests to marry same-sex persons.

“It’s time Africa preached to the rest of the world and remind them of God’s Word because it seems they have forgotten what the Bible says,” said Malasusa, according to a report in the April 5 edition of The Citizen of Tanzania. His statement was greeted with cheers from worshippers, the newspaper said.

The newspaper also reported that he urged financial and economic independence for churches in Tanzania and across Africa.

Malasusa said, “We should be independent so that they don’t use their money and wealth to threaten us. . . we should leave them with their money and stick to the Word of God.”

In response, Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson, of the ELCA, said the churches in the two countries share a rich relationship and he hopes the conversation when they meet in May in Chicago will explore how both churches can continue to accompany one another in God’s mission, according to an April 7 ELCA news release.

The ELCA said the American presiding bishop had not seen a transcript of Malasusa’s sermon, but only had read news reports of it.

Hanson was quoted as saying, “It is my practice to first communicate directly to colleagues in the leadership of our companion churches. I will share with Bishop Malasusa the ELCA’s strong commitment to the centrality of the Word of God in our faith and witness.”

He also said the ELCA does not use financial resources to coerce global companions.

The LWF African church leaders who met in March were preparing for the 11th Lutheran World Federation Assembly to be held this

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Lutheran Clergy Connect

Clergy Connect is a way for churches seeking a pastor or other leader to connect with candidates who believe that the Word of God is the authority for the church. More listings and details are posted at: www.wordalone.org/clergy.shtml

Send your request to list your search on church letterhead, signed by an officer or call committee chair, to: WordAlone Ministries, 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.

Faith Lutheran Church, LCMC Albuquerque, N.M.

Position: Associate pastor as managing director of youth and young adult ministries

Contact: Dr. Bruce Wilder, senior pastor, bwilder@faithabq.org

Christ the King Lutheran Church, Incorporated Dec. 17, 2009, unaffiliated Waseca, Minn.

Position: Solo pastor

Contact: Richard Dufault, church council president, rdufault@hickorytech.net

Christ Lutheran Church, LCMC

Whitefish, Mont.

Position: Full-time director of youth ministries

Contact: Rich Dolven, Christ Lutheran Church, 5150 River Lakes Parkway, Whitefish, MT 59937; Dolven phone, 406-862-2615; email, rich@clcwitefish.org

Brandon Lutheran Church,

WordAlone, in discernment process of options for future

Brandon, S.D.

Position: Associate pastor under a short-term contract with possibility of renewal into a call as associate or senior pastor for Brandon Lutheran Church/Split Rock Parish.

Contact: Mike Nitz, head of human resources at 605-212-5930 or dakotanitz@hotmail.com

Community of Hope Lutheran Church, ELCA Wilsonville, Ore.

Position: Director of student ministries and community outreach

Contact: Pastor Doug Adams, pastor@commhope.org or by writing him at Community of Hope Church, 27817 SW Stafford Road, Wilsonville, OR 97070; or at 503-682-8855.

(‘African Lutherans...’ Continues from page ten)

July in Germany. According to their report of the meeting, they discussed marriage, family and human sexuality; theological education and leadership development; youth; gender justice; and diaconal practices.

The report stated: “We strongly affirm our decision taken in Lund (Sweden) in an LWF Council Meeting and Church Leadership Consultation) in 2007 that ‘marriage is holy, ordained by God and is a relationship between a man and woman.’ Therefore, the majority of African member churches say, ‘NO’ to homosexual acts and regard it to be sinful. (Emphasis present in report.)

“Further to this affirmation of our position on this matter, we are extremely disturbed and deeply regret the recent developments taking place in some member churches of the communion who have taken unilateral

decision on same sex marriages, disregarding the strong sentiments expressed by other members of the communion.

“This unilateral action has negatively impacted our life together as a communion, something which could have been avoided.”

The section on marriage, family and human sexuality concluded with a prayer for “the Spirit of discernment and for the grace of God to abound as we seek to resolve those issues.”

Interestingly, the churches in Ethiopia at 5.3 million members and in Tanzania at 5.3 million members are each bigger than the ELCA, which has 4.6 million members. The Church of Sweden is the largest Lutheran church in the LWF with 6.8 million members. The Church of Sweden was a state church until its separation on Jan. 1, 2000. ♦