

# NEWS RELEASE

Feb. 19, 2009

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## WordAlone Network responds to ELCA human sexuality proposals

Calling the report and recommendations on human sexuality proposed by a task force of the largest Lutheran denomination in the United States too lengthy and confusing, leaders of the WordAlone Network, the faithful opposition, compared its recommendations to smoke and mirrors.

President of the grassroots network, Pastor Jaynan Clark Eglund commented Thursday, “When voters in many states uphold traditional marriage better than church leaders and the mainline denominations as a whole, then you know something is really out of whack.”

The WordAlone Network will work to defeat all the recommendations of the task force, she said.

The task force report says the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America should consider date rape “an egregious violation of friendship,” should discourage “co-habitation arrangements outside of marriage” and should learn to live with its disagreements over homosexual behavior.

As for same-sex relationships and allowing persons in same-sex relationships to serve as ordained or lay ministers in the ELCA, the task force recommends that the delegates at this August’s churchwide assembly in Minneapolis vote on four resolutions in a certain order.

If the assembly defeats one of the resolutions, or questions, the task force says the voting would stop on any remaining question.

The first two ask the assembly to accept “in principle” same-sex, monogamous, lifelong relationships and to allow persons in such relationships to serve as ministers. The third question admits the church does not have consensus on the issues and asks the ELCA to respect members’ differing opinions on same-sex questions, which it says are based on individuals’ consciences.

The fourth question, in fact, asks the denomination to be flexible and allow persons in same-sex relationships to serve as ministers in some congregations, synods and ministries. This opens the door to local option.

“The first three questions are just smoke and mirrors for the last one. If we accept something ‘in principle,’ haven’t we accepted it indeed,” asked Pastor Mark Chavez, vice president of WordAlone.

Clark Eglund asked, “Is consensus our new ‘way’ for finding ‘truth’? I thought Jesus was the Way and the Truth. That doesn’t change whether we agree or not.

“Local option is, ironically, the negation of their entire desire to reach consensus. With individual, congregational and synodical option, there is no standard at all, just the celebration of self over against the Christian understanding of community and true freedom.”