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NETWORK NEWS

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40 non-bishop ordinations in ELCA since full communion pact with TEC

by Betsy Carlson, editor

Forty pastors have been ordained by pastors rather than bishops since a full communion agreement between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The Episcopal Church went into effect Jan. 1, 2001.

The full communion agreement, Called to Common Mission, included a requirement for ELCA bishops to become part of The Episcopal Church's "historic episcopacy" and for ELCA pastors to be ordained by bishops—provisions included at the behest of some ELCA leaders.

In response to a request for information from Mark Chavez, vice president of the WordAlone Network, ELCA Secretary David Swartling recently reported the 40 non-bishop ordinations, which were approved in 21 synods under a process that allows exemption from the Called to Common Mission requirement.

Chavez told the Network News that he knew also of two pastoral candidates who had been turned down in their requests for ordinations outside of constraints of the full communion agreement. The story of Ben Leese, whose request was refused in the Lower Susquehanna Synod appears on page 2.

The WordAlone Network began to form in 1996 to oppose the proposed ordination and historic episcopacy requirements. After the ELCA-TEC agreement was adopted, WordAlone continued to lead the charge to allow pastoral candidates to opt out of ordination by a bishop and to let new bishops decline installation into the historic episcopacy.

The 2001 ELCA Churchwide Assembly did approve a by-law amendment that provided the process for pastoral candidates to request freedom from the ordination-by-a-bishop rule. The amendment did not exempt new bishops from the historic episcopacy.

The 40 pastors ordained under the by-law amendment graduated from six of the ELCA seminaries: Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa; Trinity Lutheran Theological Seminary in Columbus, Ohio; Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn.; Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley, Calif.; Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago; and The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

The 21 synods where they were granted exemptions are widespread across the

(Continues on page eleven)

Young Pennsylvania pastor tells why he requested ordination by a pastor

by Betsy Carlson, editor

A Pennsylvania pastor has been concerned about the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's drive to have pastors ordained only by bishops in the historic episcopate of The Episcopal Church, whether from the ELCA or The Episcopal Church, since 1997 when he was only 17.

Surprisingly, he tried for an exception to that requirement but was turned down, apparently before Carol Hendrix, the then-bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, even had read his written request for an exception and his supporting reasons.

Pastor Ben Leese of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in York Springs, Pa., said in a recent telephone interview that he had been concerned about the historic episcopacy requirements ever since the presentation of The Concordat, a proposed full communion agreement between The Episcopal Church and the ELCA, at the 1997 churchwide assembly.

The Concordat was defeated in 1997 but brought back to the 1999 churchwide assembly as Called to Common Mission and was approved. The right to request an exception to the ordination requirement was granted by an ELCA constitutional by-law amendment approved by the 2001 churchwide assembly.

Accordingly, in early August 2007 Leese requested a non-episcopal ordination the day after he was called by Holy Trinity.

In a subsequent meeting, the bishop suggested to him that the process for requesting ordination in "unusual circumstances" was for people in the Midwest, according to Leese. The bishop noted that it was a long process and that there was no time to delay because the date for ordinations was set for Aug. 24 in 2007.

The bishop's practice had been to ordain groups of candidates twice a year, once

at the annual synodical assembly and again on a later date. Leese said he asked if his ordination could wait for his request to be reviewed and considered, and meanwhile

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Jaynan Clark Egland: president
Mark C. Chavez: vice president
Betsy Carlson: editor

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(“Young pastor...” Continues from page two)

he would serve as a layperson at the church that called him. The answer was “no.”

Could he be ordained by a bishop not in the historic episcopate at a service besides the Aug. 24 event? Again the answer was “no,” Leese said. After consulting with one of his seminary professors, his home pastor and Mark Chavez, WordAlone Network vice president, Leese decided to accept the Aug. 24 ordination.

He did think about leaving the ELCA, he said.

In regard to his request for a non-episcopal ordination, he said, “What pushed me over the edge was the (Lower Susquehanna) synodical ordination (ceremony) at which the bishop and just two pastors laid their hands on the ordinands instead of the usual multiple pastors.

“It’s just so violently opposed to everything I believe about the church and what I teach my people, that the church is the people of God gathered around word and sacrament. This requirement about being ordained by a bishop in ‘proper succession’ makes it appear that it is the bishop that makes the church.

“It looks as if pastors are given special powers by the bishop that other members of the church (don’t have) or that the church itself doesn’t have the power to make pastors. The Lutheran understanding is that the power to ordain rests with the whole church, not with the bishop.

“God has the power and has granted the authority to the church. We have all kinds of human practices that get in the way of the church doing its mission,” Leese explained.

“We teach it to the kindergartners,” he said, and then illustrated the lesson by singing a song titled, “We Are the Church” by Richard Avery and Donald Marsh, copyright to Hope Publishing Co. in Carol Spring, Ill.

“I am very proud that my kindergartners

know it (that the church is the people),” he said.

How did a youth of 17 come to have concerns about a requirement that new pastors must be ordained by a bishop? He said he guessed he had very good pastors and Sunday school teachers. And, working 10 seasons at a church camp through high school, college and seminary helped make him very aware of the ordination by a bishop situation.

“If you throw some Lutherans together in the woods, there you are and you have church,” he said.

Leese went to Valparaiso University in Valparaiso, Ind. He earned his Master of Divinity degree at Trinity Seminary in Columbus, Ohio.

He said Prof. Gordon S. (Tim) Huffman at Trinity explained his concerns about the ordination requirement and offered to meet with any interested student.

Huffman was supportive, Leese added, but noted that the professor never gave the impression that those who disagreed with him need not show up in his classes. He called Huffman, “even handed.”

Leese did not see his dealings with the then-bishop and staff as even handed. He wrote to Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson detailing problems he saw in how the synod officials dealt with him. He wrote that an assistant to the bishop “berated him mercilessly” when he phoned about making the request for an exception. He said the bishop hadn’t read his statements about his request before turning down the request.

Bishop Hanson responded with an apology “for any ways in which the institution and its leaders may have failed,” and he asked Leese for forgiveness. Hanson wrote that he does want to be informed of problems with the implementation of the exceptions bylaw. Leese’s letter is at www.wordalone.org/pdf/Leese-to-MHanson.pdf and Hanson’s reply is at www.wordalone.org/pdf/MHanson-to-Leese.pdf ♦

ELCA pastor reports on departure of Pittsburgh Episcopal Diocese from TEC

by Pastor Eric Ash, Sr., Good Shepherd, Monroeville, Pa.

Today, Oct. 4, the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh voted at its 143rd Annual Convention to secede from The Episcopal Church and realign with the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone in South America.

The Anglican Communion, of which The Episcopal Church is part, generally requires parishes to affiliate with the diocese in their geographic area.

Recently, the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh, Robert Duncan, was "deposed" by the Episcopal House of Bishops, essentially for leading the network of Anglican dioceses and parishes who are refusing to follow the North American church (see my September posting regarding this at <http://www.thesheepdogsspot.blogspot.com/>).

Analysis and comment

It is anticipated that 17 of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh's 70 plus parishes and a few clergy will choose to stay with The Episcopal Church.

Conventions are being planned for both groups. The group affiliating with the Southern Cone will not hinder those parishes that wish to remain as part of The Episcopal Church from doing so, it was reported. It is expected that Bishop Duncan will be elected bishop of the seceding diocese.

One other diocese in the U.S. already has affiliated with the Southern Cone and two more will be voting whether to do so in November.

Some individual parishes have also left The Episcopal Church, including several large, influential and historic ones in Northern Virginia. A new nationwide Anglican church body may be created by these dioceses and congregations that have voted to

secede, according to published reports.

I attended a portion of the convention as a visitor, not as an official Lutheran representative, but merely as an individual Christian. I saw one other Lutheran pastor there.

My Episcopal brothers and sisters gave me a warm welcome. Their hospitality was very gracious. The morning Eucharist was inspiring. The music incorporated traditional, American evangelical and contemporary styles, all within a Book of Common Prayer liturgy.

The Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh officials have recognized that it has catholic, evangelical and charismatic traditions existing within it side-by-side, and all were represented and appreciated in their worship. And I knew without a doubt that I was in a group of people who truly love our Lord and His church.

Not surprisingly, given the high emotions of the convention, I saw several people weeping and hugging during the Eucharist.

There are many issues dividing The Episcopal Church these days. Sexuality is often named as the number one issue, but it really is only the proverbial "tip of the iceberg." The greater issues include the nature of the Trinity, the historicity of the Virgin Birth and Jesus' Resurrection, the authority of Scripture and so on.

Those leaving The Episcopal Church have said at various times and in various settings and publications that they feel that the church has abandoned essential, traditional Christian teaching on several points.

Father Chris Klukas, rector of St. Martin's Episcopal Church in Monroeville (where the convention was held; my congregation,

(Continues on page five)

('departure...' Continues from page four)

The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church provided additional parking for the event — anything to help the cause!) has written an insightful piece comparing statements from Episcopal Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori and Anglican theologians (for example John Shelby Spong) with the words of Holy Scripture.

(This useful article, "The Problem of Heresy," is on the St. Martin's Web site at www.saintmartins.net/TheProblemofHeresy.pdf.)

It is ironic that Duncan was deposed for leading a network of dissident dioceses and parishes when a very strong argument can be made that The Episcopal Church, by long tolerating heresies by bishops John Shelby Spong, James Pike and others, has already left the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.

Where does all this leave Lutheran and

It is ironic that Duncan was deposed for leading a network of dissident dioceses and parishes when a very strong argument can be made that The Episcopal Church, by long tolerating heresies by bishops John Shelby Spong, James Pike and others, has already left the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.

Episcopal relations?

We have been reminded by our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America synod that our full communion agreement with the Episcopal denomination is a denominational-to-denominational agreement, not a synod-to-diocese agreement. So, officially, we are no longer in full communion with the churches who seceded; we remain in full communion with The Episcopal Church.

However, before any of us were Lutheran or Anglican, and long after denominational titles are forgotten, we are first of all Christians, and our "full communion" with one another is based on what Christ has done for us in Holy Baptism, not on decisions by church authorities.

Any church structure that impinges upon the sacred spiritual union of Christian brothers and sisters to one another is no longer serving the cause of Christ.

I will continue to embrace the Episcopalians of the Southern Cone with Christian love, support them in prayer and serve them however I can — and I urge everyone to do the same.

What does the future hold?

Lawsuits over the possession of property are sure to follow. And it is not impossible that similar scenarios like the one played out today could happen in the ELCA, especially after the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

The theme of the Episcopal convention was "A House Divided Against Itself Cannot Stand." In various ways it was said that it was time to "stop battling and start building" and time to "bless one another, separate and move on" for the sake of mission.

While many in the ELCA have said, "This is my church too and I will remain a member, even if part of the loyal minority," there will undoubtedly be those who also feel a separation — on matters of conscience — is unavoidable.

May God have mercy on us. ♦

Who is keeping sex on the front burner?

by Mark C. Chavez, vice president

Who keeps moving sex — outside of marriage — to the front burner and turning up the heat inside the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, to say nothing of all the other denominations and the nation?

Occasionally the WordAlone Network and other orthodox reform movements in the ELCA are accused of being obsessed with the sexuality issues and singling out homosexual behavior as particularly sinful. We are accused of constantly moving it to the front burner.

Those who accuse us of singling out homosexual behavior are often those who have most persistently advocated within the ELCA for the approval of same-sex sexual relationships. Some who've made that accusation, though, are not in favor of approving sex outside of marriage.

A little bit of history is in order, both of the WordAlone Network and the ELCA.

From the beginning of the first WordAlone email list in December 1996 until the conclusion of the 2001 ELCA churchwide assembly, WordAlone intentionally chose not to deal with the sexuality issues. The consensus of the movement was that we had more than enough to do to work for freedom from a mandatory historic episcopate (hierarchical structure) within the ELCA. We did not want to deal with sexuality as long as the ELCA churchwide organization was not revisiting the subject it had first tried to address, with disastrous consequences, in the 1990's (more below on that).

The 2001 ELCA churchwide assembly put sexuality on the front burner and turned up the heat. It called for sexuality studies, an answer to the questions about blessing same-sex sexual relationships and ordaining practicing homosexuals and for a social statement on sexuality. When the 2005 churchwide assembly didn't answer the questions as a minority of ELCA members wanted (only 22% of respondents to the

2004 ELCA sexuality study favored blessing same-sex sexual relationships or ordaining practicing homosexuals), the churchwide organization (the subsequent churchwide assembly and the ELCA Church Council) moved the questions back to the front burner so that the 2009 assembly must deal with them again.

Since 2001, WordAlone and the other reform groups in Lutheran CORE, the coalition for reform, have merely done what the churchwide assemblies have asked us to do as ELCA members — we've participated in the studies, discussions and the decision-making process. Frankly, there are many more urgent matters facing the ELCA that we would have preferred discussing all these years. However the churchwide organization has chosen to keep putting sex on the front burner and turning up the heat.

Churchwide leaders will protest and say that others have put sex on the front burner. They will point to the resolutions from synod assemblies and councils that have called for approval of sex outside of marriage.

Yes, Lutherans Concerned/North America (www.lcna.org) has kept it on their front burner since day one in the ELCA with its members' persistent efforts of introducing resolutions within their synods. It is more than a little disingenuous for Lutherans Concerned and its supporters to accuse all the rest of us of being obsessed with sexuality when all along they have pushed the ELCA to talk about sex above all else.

However, in my opinion, it is also unlikely that such a distinct minority within the ELCA would have been able to keep it boiling on the front burner without the support of the churchwide organization. Is it mere chance that the sexuality task forces appointed by the churchwide staff and Church Council have been lopsidedly in favor of sex outside of marriage?

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(front burner...' *Continues from page six)*

In the ELCA's first attempt at a social statement on sexuality in the early 1990's, only one of 17 members on the first task force, Dr. Larry Yoder, voted against the infamous 1993 first draft on human sexuality because the draft did not uphold the biblical norms for sexuality. The other 16 members voted in favor of a draft that was clearly open to approving of all kinds of sex outside of marriage. Despite strong opposition from the Conference of Bishops at the time, the churchwide church and society office insisted on releasing the draft, and released it to the news media before releasing it to ELCA members and pastors. The result was an immediate loss of members and mission support (benevolence funds) for the ELCA.

The current sexuality task force, appointed in 2002 by the churchwide organization, is again lopsidedly in favor of sex outside marriage. In the 2005 report from the sexuality task force, only two of 14 task force members signed the minority report that upheld the biblical norms, which proscribe same-sex sexual behavior. An overwhelming majority recommended an exception process for ordaining practicing homosexuals.

The two task force members who signed the minority report in 2005 both resigned from the task force after the churchwide assembly that year. So did a couple of task force members who voted with the majority. Even if the churchwide staff and Church Council had filled all the vacancies with people who wanted to uphold the biblical norms for sexuality, the current task force would still have a solid majority that wants the ELCA to approve of same-sex sexual behavior. However, from what is known of the public statements and positions of the new task force members, it appears that less than five on the current task force are in favor of the ELCA's current standards for its ordained ministry.

The actions of the ELCA Church Council are another reason why sex is kept on the front burner. In recent years fewer than five

members of the 37-member council have voted to uphold the biblical norms for sexuality.

Those of us who uphold the biblical norms have not singled out homosexual behavior. It is Lutherans Concerned/North America and its supporters in the ELCA who have singled it out and seemed determined to have the ELCA bless and approve behavior that the Bible clearly and consistently proscribes. Bound by our confession of faith, we would respond the same if a persistent group were advocating that the ELCA approve of any other sinful behavior proscribed by the Bible — greed, racism, polygamy or murder to name just a few.

Though sex appears to be the boiling pot on the front burner, ultimately a lot more is at stake than sexual norms. There are other simmering pots and in each case the authority of the Bible ("the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of [the ELCA's] proclamation, faith, and life" — ELCA constitution) is called into question.

For instance, the new ELCA hymnal provides ways to avoid invoking God's revealed name as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and uses "emended" (corrected or changed) texts for the Psalms to fit with a radical feminist agenda. There is preaching in some ELCA churches that does not call all sinners to repentance and faith in Christ. The 2007 churchwide assembly objected to calling all humans sinners in need of repentance. These are evidence of opposition within the ELCA to its own confession of faith in its constitution.

The real fiery pan on the stove is idolatry. When the Bible gets shoved aside and other authorities move to the forefront, we sinful human beings start molding false gods that suit our purposes and bless our wants and desires. The ELCA would be much better served if assemblies, councils and churches addressed this deeper problem head on, rather than caving into the pressure of those who persistently have made sexual behavior the hot issue. ♦

A bishop reports to his synod leaders on Conference of Bishops meeting

After the meeting of the Conference of Bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in early October, Bishop Michael Rinehart, of the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, sent a report on it electronically to leaders in his synod.

Here are portions of Rinehart's comments:

Sexuality study

I missed the conversation on the sexuality study because I was in Galveston for the work day, but here's what I've been gleaning since I returned: Many people wish there was a simpler, less academic version of this. There is positive response to the emphasis on trust. People who don't like it generally don't like it because it's too general. They're looking for something more prescriptive (Do this. Don't do that.) There was some conversation about whether the task force would be recommending changing our policy with regards to homosexuality or not in February. They're not even hinting as to what their recommendation will be. (Presiding) Bishop (Mark) Hanson recommended that synods have budgetary contingency plans in the event that the 2009 assembly changes the policy and congregations leave. I have already asked our staff to start working on this, since our income is likely to be down anyway, as congregations are struggling post-Ike.

(Presiding) Bishop (Mark) Hanson recommended that synods have budgetary contingency plans in the event that the 2009 assembly changes the policy and congregations leave.

ELCA stats

I'm at the Fall Conference of Bishops meeting. Secretary David Swartling's report, based on your parochial reports shows some bothersome stats I want to share with you. Once again our synod is at the bottom of the list of synod response rates. Please help me lead by giving me good information. Prioritize this report higher! In 2007 the ELCA lost 22 congregations, bringing us to 10,448. Membership is down 64,247 or 1.3%. Worship attendance is down 46,562 or 3.3%. This number more accurately reflects losses I believe. Congregations just haven't removed them from their rolls yet. In six years, ELCA worship attendance has declined 13.4%. Adding to all this, in 2007 the ELCA had 5,854 adult baptisms. Ouch. That's the whole country. In 2007 the ELCA had 45,239 confirmations. Down 23% from 2000. I know some think of this as a numbers game. I don't. These aren't numbers; they are people. Souls. Lives. Disciples. Missionaries. I can't begin to imagine not being bothered by this trend.

In contrast to worship attendance and membership, giving is up, marginally. Total receipts of the congregations

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THEY ARE PEOPLE. SOULS. LIVES. DISCIPLES. MISSIONARIES. I CAN'T BEGIN TO IMAGINE NOT BEING BOTHERED BY THIS TREND.

(Conference of Bishops... Continues from page eight)

that filled out parochial reports for 2007 are up 2.5%. Operating expenses were up 2.3%. Average giving per confirmed member is \$651, up 3.9%. Mission support increased 1%. Of course these rosy increases are tempered by the fact that the consumer price index rose 4.1%. The full statistical summary is available at <http://tinyurl.com/ELCAstatistics> 2007.

We are witnessing in our time the unraveling of American Mainline Protestantism. As people of the resurrection we can see in death the gate to new life. But make no mistake. This is a death. If I am to preside over the death of American Mainline Protestantism in my middle years, my burning questions are these: what will be the next expression of the body of Christ? Non-denominational mega-churches like Lakewood? The ultra-conservative Pentecostalism of the Global South? (Bishop (Peter) Akinola (in Nigeria) advocates the incarceration of homosexuals. Two hundred bishops boycotted the (Anglican) Lambeth Conference.) Will these become the dominant forms of Christianity as Western Roman Catholicism became the dominant form in the first two millennia (over and against Gnosticism)? How will we make disciples? I can live without Mainline Protestantism, but how are we going to grow followers of Christ?

Perhaps this Sunday's gospel [Matthew 22:1-14], is an appropriate corrective. The invited guests aren't coming. So perhaps it's time to throw open the doors to everyone and see what happens. ♦

A reminder — donations for 2008 must be received in the WordAlone office or postmarked on or before December 31, 2008.

Thank you for your support.

Institute of Lutheran Theology dean says students, faculty will study, work in churches

On behalf of the Institute of Lutheran Theology by Rev. Tom Walker, dean of administration

Are you worried about increasing shortages of strong, vibrant, Lutheran pastors and teachers to serve your congregations? If you are, we hope you will join with the growing number of Lutheran congregations partnering with the Institute of Lutheran Theology, based in Brookings, S.D., to do something about this disturbing issue.

The Institute of Lutheran Theology and its partner congregations are collaborating to create a new kind of seminary and to have it up and running by fall 2009.

It is planned as a seminary that will place Christian congregations at the heart of every aspect of its work. Students will live and learn, faculty teach and serve inside a community of congregations partnered with the Institute of Lutheran Theology. Pastors and church members will participate firsthand in the process to prepare future leaders of our congregations.

This exciting new approach is made possible through an innovative design that employs five distinctive features. The first feature is "partner congregations." Through creative use of existing resources and benevolence support, congregations partner with the Institute of Lutheran Theology to create a seminary. Together they will make affordable education available to students in a way that places congregations at the heart of the theological education process.

The second design feature is called, "two schools." The two schools will be an academy and a graduate school. The academy programs are to be designed to meet general parish needs for Christian education as well as to provide non-degree certifications for church staff and volunteers. The graduate school will provide curricular tracks that culminate in professional and academic degrees in theology.

The third design feature is called the "distributed residential campus." Using physical facilities in local congregations, the Institute of Lutheran Theology will connect students in virtual classrooms over an interactive video network. Traditional classroom activities will be carried out in real time via the network.

The fourth feature is "embedded faculty." Most faculty members will be called jointly by the institute and congregations to serve simultaneously as pastors or congregation staff and as professors. By locating faculty inside congregations, where they meet and work with students, this seminary will provide a high level of contextualization for the entire educational process. For instance, if a student is studying Bible, he or she will study in classrooms in the congregation. Then assignments will take the student out into the congregation, into his or her context; perhaps he or she will be assigned to lead a Bible study.

"Theological conferences" are the fifth feature. In celebration of its scholarly community, the institute will gather in conferences to facilitate crucial face-to-face academic processes at least twice each year. A majority of conference schedules will be open to the public, providing an ideal opportunity for new congregations and potential students to see how the new system will serve their needs.

Together, partner congregations and the Institute of Lutheran Theology possess an unprecedented design that will make the best use of today's methods to pass on the vital heritage of faith in Jesus for tomorrow's church. If you would like to learn more about this design, please download the "Design Document" from our home page on our Web site at www.instituteoflutherantheology.org. ♦

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.

St. John Lutheran Church Grafton, Wisconsin

Position: Pastor

Contact: Pat Semple, call committee chairman at lsemple@wi.rr.com or 262-618-4271.

Lutheran Church of the Master Omaha, Nebraska

Position: Coordinator of High School and Family Ministries

Contact: Send resumé or contact Pastor George Megard at george.megard@churchofthemaster.com or 402-333-4444.

St. John Lutheran Church Peabody, Massachusetts

Position: Tentmaking Pastor

Contact: Pr. Ray Phyles at raymond.phyles@verizon.net or 978-531-2264.

Immanuel Lutheran Church Waukee, Iowa

Position: Youth Director

Contact: Send resumé, references, and salary requirements to: Immanuel Lutheran Church, Attn: Doug Berner, P.O. Box 276, Waukee, IA 50263.

Keep asking 'By What Authority?'

('ordinations...' Continues from page one)

United States. They are: Indiana-Kentucky, Upstate New York, Delaware-Maryland, Southeastern, Northwest Washington, Central States, Southeastern Minnesota, Eastern North Dakota and Grand Canyon synods.

Others are: Montana, Saint Paul, East-Central Wisconsin, Minneapolis, Northwestern Minnesota, Southwestern Minnesota, Eastern Washington-Idaho, Oregon, South Dakota, Southwestern Texas and Northeastern Minnesota. ♦

Have you read this book yet?

"By What Authority? Confronting Churches Who No Longer Believe Their Own Message"

A compilation of essays and comments by concerned pastors, theologians and laypersons, which challenges denominations who are denying Christ's resurrection, 'demythologizing' Scripture, blessing same-sex relationships, ordaining non-celibate homosexuals.



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It's not too early to buy a Christmas gift for your pastor or bishop.