



Lutheran CORE - Coalition for Reform

"Working together for positive reform in the ELCA"

www.lutherancore.org

Lutheran CORE News 1.6

December 14, 2007

(Please copy and distribute as widely as possible.)

A blessed Christmas to you and yours from Lutheran CORE, the coalition for reform!

Most of us have other things on our mind than the struggles of our church body during this season, as we should. For the hope we claim is that the God who sent His Son to redeem our fallen humanity is the Lord of the whole Church, including that part of the Body of Christ in which we find ourselves. And we believe that just as the Holy Child was saved from the machinations of Herod and all the religious and political authorities, so the Bible's vision of the glorified Church will be fulfilled not because of our efforts but because God is faithful to all His promises.

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Preparing for Next Year

We still need coordinators in some synods. If you are willing to serve as a synod coordinator or as a part of a synodical team within your synod, please contact Pastor Paull Spring at pastorspring@pennswoods.net or Pastor Mark Chavez, Lutheran CORE director at wordalone@popp.net. All the members of the steering committee have agreed to provide guidance and support for synod coordinators. A job description is available from Pr. Chavez or Spring.

The most important work remains electing voting members for the churchwide assembly. In some synods this process has already begun. Now is the time to pray without ceasing for our church and for our cause. Now is the time for all of us to work hard and do our part for the sake of our church's fidelity to the Word of God. Lutheran CORE is all of us; we do not have a vast organizational structure or great resources of money or people just waiting to be used. Lutheran CORE will be effective only as we all work together to accomplish our goals.

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Welcome Lasting Word!

We are glad to welcome a new group in the coalition, Lasting Word, a reform group centered in Salisbury, NC. The group voted at their meeting in Nov. to join Lutheran CORE. Lasting Word has been at work in the North Carolina Synod for a few years to uphold the authority of God's Word over all matters of faith and life. Members of Lasting Word were very helpful at the past two churchwide assemblies and we are thankful that they have formally joined the coalition for reform.

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Regional meetings

The number of regional meetings in many areas is encouraging. Lutheran CORE members in Central/Southern Illinois had an organizing meeting in early November. Members from the Delaware-Maryland and Lower Susquehanna Synods held a joint meeting in mid-November. There are plans for meetings next year in Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area on Jan. 20; Upstate New York in the Buffalo area on Feb. 2; Indianan-Kentucky in the Indianapolis area on Feb. 9; Rocky Mountain in the Denver area on Feb. 24; and Southeast Michigan in the Detroit area in April.

Please send information (date, location, meeting details and a contact person) about regional meetings that you are planning to Mark Chavez (wordalone@popp.net) so that we can help publicize your events. Thanks to Jerry Youngquist, we will soon have a new Lutheran CORE web site with a calendar that will list all your meetings.

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This helpful reminder comes from our fundraising chair, Ryan Schwarz:

Remember CORE as Year-End Approaches

As the end of the year approaches, many people are planning their annual charitable contributions. This year, alongside the other worthy causes and ministries that you undoubtedly support, please consider a contribution to the work of Lutheran CORE. 2008 will be a pivotal year for our common ministry, with the election of all the voting members to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly and the release of the draft ELCA social statement on sexuality both occurring in the new year. We need your support, prayerfully, organizationally and financially.

We are most thankful for your prayers and welcome your financial contributions. We are grateful that the WordAlone Network, a member group of Lutheran CORE, provides administrative support. Tax-deductible donations may be sent to:

Lutheran CORE
c/o WordAlone Network
2299 Palmer Drive, Suite 220
New Brighton, MN 55112

Please make checks payable to WordAlone Network, and write "Lutheran CORE" on the memo line.

We can assist you with explanatory materials and procedural advice as you work to advance the cause of reform in the ELCA. Contact Ryan Schwarz at rschwarz@mba1994.hbs.edu, or any member of the Lutheran CORE Steering Committee. Informational resources are also available on our website www.lutherancore.org.

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From Other Battlefields

This is two years old now, but some of you may not have read the poignant message of an Episcopal senior warden named Bill Boniface as he explained why he and his family felt they needed to leave their Episcopal parish. Lutheran CORE advocates staying in the ELCA, and we believe the ELCA can be reformed if we work together. But we can pray that faithful Christians not be forced into such wrenching decisions in our congregations, and we can profit by his analysis of the nature of our struggle. Read his message at:

<http://philippians-1-20.us/pipermail/sarah_philippians-1-20.us/2005-May/000001.html>

If the link doesn't work, copy and paste into your browser the text between the brackets. It is a lengthy letter, but be sure to scroll about a quarter of the way down the page to "The Danger to our Church."

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Woody Allen once said, "Eighty percent of success is showing up." That is certainly true of congregations, synods, and denominations. Decisions are made by the people who show up and participate responsibly in meetings, assemblies, committees, and task forces.

Shock your pastor (if you are a layperson) by offering to represent your congregation at conference gatherings and synodical assemblies. Show up at events in your area and get to know the other people. Take advantage of opportunities to volunteer in the organizational structure, while not neglecting your ministries in your local congregation.

Pastors, shock your dean or bishop by actually showing up at assemblies (conference and synodical). Network with the others who are there; you will find more friends than you expect. Offer to help even with the ordinary little tasks that seem unimportant but build your credibility with the leadership and with other participants.

The ELCA will not be changed by grumbling or complaining. Decisions will be made by the people who show up. If we act on our concerns by our presence and involvement, we will make more of a difference than we can imagine.

Sort of the way the Almighty didn't sit in heaven complaining about His rebellious creatures. Instead He came in person in His Son Jesus, to bear our sins and finally win the victory over them. May the example of the Incarnation guide our efforts during the coming years as we prayerfully offer ourselves to the Father to be used, if He wills, in the reform and renewal of the Church which he purchased and redeemed at such great cost.

Pastor W. Stevens Shipman, steering committee member and communications committee
prstevshipman@gmail.com