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Will ELCA stay in reformers' steps?

by Robert Benne, theologian and a leader in Lutheran CORE

In mid-March the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Task Force on Sexuality released a draft document of what is supposed, finally, to become a social statement. For the ELCA a social statement is a theological and ethical teaching document, a basis for internal church policy, and a platform for advocacy in society. It must receive a two-thirds vote at a church-wide assembly to be accepted by the church.

Thousands of dollars and hours of effort have been put into an unending series of studies that have wrestled with the vexing problems of assessing the morality of homosexual relations, and from that assessment making further judgments about the blessing of gay unions and rostering homosexual clergy who are in committed partnerships. The basic theological/ethical challenge to assess homosexual conduct has never been addressed adequately in any preceding document. This draft social statement is no different in spite of expectations. It simply says that the church is divided on that issue.

However, the kind of theological/ethical argument in this draft document on sexuality is precisely the kind that will set the stage for a revision of Lutheran teaching on sexual ethics in the future.

Such a revision would mean that the ELCA is no longer a church following in the footsteps of the Lutheran Reformation.

In a later set of recommendations to appear in February of 2009, the Task Force is required to make a proposal about the rostering of gay and lesbian clergy in committed relationships. Since it has failed to come up with a theological/ethical assessment of homosexual conduct in this draft the church will have no direct theological rationale for what it must decide in the churchwide assembly of 2009. Unless, of course, there is so much strong feedback that the statement is either changed to adhere to traditional Christian teachings or, conversely, to revise those teachings to justify the ordination of gays and lesbians in partnered relationships.

My response to the draft statement starts on page five.

Betsy Carlson, editor of the Network News said she has included a second article (see page nine) on the draft statement because of the crucial significance of this denomination's decisions coming in 2009. She added that she has seen other ELCA social statements adopted with little attention paid to them by "the people in the pews." ♦

Lutheran worship: liturgical or confessional?

by the ReClaim Resources committee

An old mentor of the Swedish Augustana Lutheran Synod, Conrad Bergendoff, made the comment once that the Lutheran church was not a liturgical church, it was a confessional church that happened to have a liturgy.

It had been inherited from Luther's work revising the traditional Mass ever so slightly, and had remained pretty much the same from 1523 until the Enlightenment. This is when Christian Bastholm in Denmark produced a new, reformed liturgy in 1785 that he proposed would fit better with the times, and would attract people back into church. Attendance had plummeted in the Danish church and the clergy were frantic to get them back.

It turned out that with this new liturgy, and the revision of the hymnal to fit with contemporary thought, people stayed away in droves. Some scholars argue that Denmark never recovered from these revisions. It's a parable we think of often as we work on the ReClaim Hymnal.

We live in a time when pastors spend all kinds of time trying to write fresh liturgies for every Sunday, and printing tomes of material in the bulletin so people can read along. In doing so, perhaps they forget that it is the sermon that should be fresh, and the liturgy so deeply etched in the memory that one hardly thinks about it. As Enlightenment people, we think we should think about the liturgy so new versions are good.

In contrast to this thinking, Luther warns in his introduction to the Small Catechism that one should never change the words of the Lord's Prayer, say, once a version has been chosen. The wisdom of the church throughout the ages has been that it provided in its liturgy words that seldom changed and would stick with us until we die. By liturgy the ReClaim team does not mean music. We mean the words that were not changed in English from 1611 until the 1970s.

Since the 1970s, however, the modernization of the Tudor language and the abandonment of the Lutheran liturgy for an ecumenical one in the Lutheran Book of Worship has made people think that every generation should have a new set of texts and new practices.

The freshness of the service should come from the sermon, not the liturgy.

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two

The unanswered question, 'Did we preach a false Gospel?'

by Dr. Lothar Schwabe, retired pastor and theologian, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

Editor's note: This article by Lothar Schwabe appeared on www.solid-ground.ca/home.htm last fall. Dr. Schwabe generously allowed the Network News to shorten it slightly and print it here.

Our Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada is receiving a "faith transplant." The new set of beliefs, which is now inserted into our church, is incompatible with the faith we held at the time of the merger in 1986 and that we still "officially" hold today.

We cannot with integrity confess the faith of the Apostles and Nicene Creeds and, at the same time, allow and even promote the teachings of modern day "progressive" theologians Marcus Borg, John Shelby Spong, and John Dominic Crossan who deny Jesus' divinity and that He rose from the dead. One of those "faiths" preaches a false gospel.

On behalf of my generation of pastors I wrote a letter Sept. 6, 2007, and asked our bishops, "Did we preach a false Gospel?"

That question was never answered. I think I know why.

Our bishops were in a bind. They could have answered, "Yes." But that would have caused a problem with many pastors and lay people in the ELCIC who, like me, believed and still believe what we confess in the words of the Apostles Creed and the Nicene Creed. They could have answered, "No." But pastors and lay people in our church would have rightly asked, "How does that fit with the new theology that is allowed to be proclaimed in our church?"

By our constitution our bishops have the duty to be the guardians of our constitution and the faith of our church. Our bishops did what they thought to be prudent, they kept quiet and ignored my open letter of Sept. 6, 2007.

The ELCIC has to be transparent.

Is our church now accepting the new theology that contradicts our traditional Lutheran faith? Has our church succumbed to a left-brainish theology that not only cannot grasp that Jesus is indeed the Word of God but also that Scriptures are the true Word of God? Have we jumped on the bandwagon delighting to find faults in Scriptures? Was Jesus misguided in what He believed himself to be?

Left-brainish, logical and rational thinking will never understand what Luther, who used his whole brain, understood so well. Rational thinking only by itself fails to reach God's truth. To believe that Jesus was the Word of God does not have to lead to the logical conclusion that therefore Scriptures are not the Word of God but the words of men.

We did not preach a false Gospel when we proclaimed the Bible is the Word of God. Our constitution does not wrongly state, "This church confesses the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God" (Article II).

Many of us would like to be assured that we did not mislead our people and preached a false gospel. Can we get that assurance?

Our ELCIC is in a dilemma. How can we maintain the structure of our church body while changing the heart of it? How do we manage a theological paradigm shift that contradicts what we previously have confessed to believe? How do we prevent the many faithful members of our ELCIC from becoming alarmed and very upset once they find out what is going on? How do we prevent a mass exodus of members and congregations? Our church leadership does not have an economic hammer like our Anglican counterpart. Our synods cannot take away the property of any

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Prayer, or worship, should be like a dance that C. S. Lewis once noted in his "Letters to Malcolm: On Prayer," he wasn't doing so long as he was going one, two, three, four. It's an argument that needs to be made again and again.

ReClaim is a publishing ministry working to reform the Lutheran church through the reform of worship. To purchase ReClaim's newest musical setting of the updated Lutheran liturgy, composed by Pastor Doug Norquist, call 800-590-6001 or go to www.reclaimlutheranworship.org.



congregation that leaves the ELCIC.

It seems to me that our church has decided on a strategy of gradual change. The clear goal seems to be to embrace same gender union blessings and the ordination of homosexual, non-celibate clergy.

The first step is to introduce a new policy that replaces our current policy on "Sex, Marriage and the Family." Such policy will be designed to lay the groundwork to accept the blessing of same gender unions by incorporating the new revisionist theology. It will make every effort to find some statements (although out of context) in our Lutheran Confessions that open the door for new interpretations of Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. Will it have the effect of abandoning the faith we held at the time of our merger in 1986? The hoped-for outcome will be that the vast majority of our members and congregations will tolerate such changes.

To achieve their goal it would help if the British Columbia Synod would declare itself to be a Reconciled In Christ (RIC) Synod [which the synod came close to doing at its assembly this year. The convention passed a "welcoming" resolution, but did not name itself a "Reconciling in Christ Synod." However, Lutherans Concerned/North America said on its website: "These motions qualify the British Columbia to be listed by LC/NA in our roster of Reconciling in Christ (RIC) settings of the Lutheran communion. The roster now includes 26 synods, including the Eastern Synod and British Columbia Synod of the ELCIC. —Ed.]. Those who were shocked by the action of our delegates at the 2007 National Convention of our ELCIC in regards to the blessing of same gender couples would hail

this as a courageous act. It does not seem to matter that such action of the B.C. Synod would be in defiance of the will of the last ELCIC convention.

Strategists in our church seem to hope that traditional, good, Lutheran theology is not a priority in many congregations and that our people are willing to change anything.

A sociological analysis of our congregations may reveal that the true glue that holds many of our congregations together is not theological but sociological. Many of our members go to church to feel good. They are happy to see their friends on Sunday. Our members are not that interested in traditional Lutheran theology as long as they have a pastor who has good social skills and is friendly. Most members will rather tolerate such a move toward Revisionist theology than cause their congregation to be upset. Strategists are banking on our members' tolerating such a move toward Revisionist theology as long as it can be supported with some arguments even if it leads to a change away from the faith of generations before us.

There still remains one nagging problem that our church has to deal with. What are we to do with the article on "Confession of Faith" in our constitution? There may be a creative solution. Our church may decide to promote a merger with the Anglican Church of Canada. That will require a new constitution and allow our church to get rid of that pesky Article II of our current constitution. It may also allow a new constitution to be drafted that will lead to the transfer of all congregational properties to now become the properties of the new joined synods.

My dear Bishops, please, prove me wrong.



A sexual ethic for Teletubbies?—or, how Lutherans learned to embrace a formless world

by Robert Benne, director of the Center for Religion and Society, Roanoke College in Virginia

Editor's note: Benne's article appeared online earlier this year on First Things' blog at <http://www.firstthings.com/onthesquare/?p=1045>. Network News reprints it by their permission and appreciates their generosity in sharing this article.

One of the noticeably odd features of the new draft is its absence of "males and females," "women and men," "husbands and wives," "boys and girls" and "mothers and fathers." Instead one reads of "couples," "partners," "engendered persons," "parents" and "children." The subjects of the statement seem to have no distinct features, a bit like the amorphous Teletubbies of children's television. This reluctance to affirm definite forms extends to the statement's posture toward marriage and the family, commandments and law, guiding principles and especially toward rules. In fact, this aversion to specific forms seems to be the fatal flaw of the document, leading to a vagueness and fluidity that undermine its capacity for genuine guidance in the church.

This formlessness appears immediately in the statement's theological and ethical foundations. The law, though affirmed, remains a ghostly, abstract and empty category. No commandments are mentioned. No covenantal structures—such as God's gift of marriage to Adam and Eve—are affirmed. Indeed, there is no explication of male and female together being created in the image of God. Rather, the statement tries to derive its sexual ethic from the incarnation of Jesus and the justification His work has wrought.

One of most astounding statements in the document asserts that: "A Lutheran sexual ethic looks to the death and resurrection of Christ as **the** source for the values that guide it." (p. 11, boldface mine) Certainly Jesus makes relevant statements about sexual ethics, but these have little to do with incarnation or justification. He reaffirms the creation account of woman and man being created in the image of God; he upholds marriage and offers very strict conditions for divorce. He condemns all sorts of sexual sins—adultery, fornication, lust, etc. But all of these are built upon the law of God He inherited from Jewish tradition, which gives the basic form and content to the sexual ethics He teaches and sometimes sharpens.

This effort to derive sexual ethics from incarnation and justification is a very un-Lutheran way of making an ethical argument. Luther argued that marriage is located in the order of creation and should be guided by natural law, best summarized in the Ten Commandments. Given that, he thought marriage should be under the jurisdiction of the state for the common good of society. He criticized precisely the Roman Catholic tradition that kept marriage completely under ecclesial authority (governed exclusively by canon law) and that located it in the order of redemption (marriage as a sacrament imparts saving grace). Rather, Luther proposed that marriage is first of all a social estate open to all, non-Christian and Christians alike. (See John Witte's

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A review of the ELCA Draft Social Statement on Human Sexuality

A sexual ethic for Teletubbies?—or, how Lutherans learned to embrace a formless world

(‘A sexual ethic...’ Continues from page five)

elaboration of the Lutheran teaching on marriage in his “From Sacrament to Contract.”)

While it is true that God’s justifying work in Christ enables us to take up our callings in marriage, which can then be made into a Holy Estate in the church’s blessing, the form and content of marriage are given by the structure and guidance of the law. The form is very specific—a lifelong covenant of fidelity between a man and a woman oriented toward loving communion and procreation. It provides the “place of responsibility” where our vocation is lived out. No formlessness there.

The [ELCA] statement clearly de-centers marriage as the touchstone around which Christian sexual ethics are elaborated. It only takes up marriage as a topic near the end of the document. It is even equivocal about the God-ordained status of marriage. It affirms that “Marriage is a structure of mutual promises between a man and woman blessed by God,” (p. 33) yet later suggests that “marriage” (quotation marks in the original document) is accorded legitimacy merely by its “historic origin.” (p. 37) It tepidly allows that this church “does not wish to alter this understanding,” but then hurries on to dilute its affirmation by observing that some states already use “marriage” to refer to same-gender unions. (p. 38)

Likewise, the statement remains resolutely formless when it takes up family life. It grudgingly agrees that the nuclear family fosters the development of trust in children and youth, but immediately notes that it has not always done so effectively. (p. 23) Later it opts for a functional definition of the family and suggests that many arrange-

ments can get the tasks done, not just the “conventional one.” Its pastoral compassion for many in “broken” families overcomes the possibility of making a normative statement about the form of the family.

But the biblical and Christian moral traditions are not so reluctant. A child always has a mother and father: Jesus has Joseph and Mary, Cain and Abel have Adam and Eve. Though there may be extended and even “tribal” families, the Bible always depicts a child having a mother and a father. Great care is taken to affirm and nurture this triad. A Commandment is

One of the noticeably odd features of the new draft is its absence of ‘males and females,’ ‘women and men,’ ‘husbands and wives,’ ‘boys and girls’ and ‘mothers and fathers.’

devoted to it. It is biblically and traditionally normative, and no amount of appropriate pastoral accommodation to the fracturing or confusion of the modern family will change that.

The writers of the statement also make a strange move when they decide to use “trust” as the central ethical principle for human relations in marriage and family life (p. 32), while avoiding the use of “love” as a principle. Indeed, there is little reflection on the meaning and forms of love, yet another example of the aversion to specific forms.

Trust and love are two different things. The former is a more passive quality in which

one person allows his or her being to be dependent on the trustworthiness of another. Love is a more active principle that moves outward toward the other. There are distinct forms of love—*libido*, *eros*, *philia*, *agape*—that are expressed in different kinds of relationships. Some forms of love are inappropriate in some kinds of relationships. Libidinous love ought not be expressed toward children or those outside the marital bond. Chastity is the Christian virtue that leads to self-control in these matters. Agape love, the crown of Christian ethics, makes unconditional commitments

and heals and restores broken relationships. Sexual love—a lively mixture of libidinous and erotic love—is to be expressed fully only in marriage and is appropriate to form. The Bible and the Christian tradition clearly prohibit sexual love to be expressed between siblings, parent and children (incest), between different kinds of species (bestiality) and between those of the same sex (homosexuality).

These sorts of distinctions are deeply embedded in the biblical material as well as in the Christian moral tradition held by nearly all Christians throughout the ages. Sadly, the social statement does not draw upon that tradition to make such distinctions. There is, after all, more in

Christian memory than the New Testament, Luther and contemporary experience, the sources employed by the statement. Its amnesia contributes to its formlessness.

The statement promotes an ethic of responsibility—a good thing for mature people—but distances itself from any reliance on rules—another example of aversion to form—in this case, formalism in ethics. For example, it cannot bring itself to affirm a rule against pre-marital sex or co-habitation, let alone homosexual conduct. Rather, it pleads for responsibility in maintaining a level of sexual intimacy commensurate with the degree of commitment. (p. 32) While not favoring or giving approval to cohabitation, the statement does not proscribe it either. (p. 35) It inveighs against promiscuity but cannot proscribe pre-marital sex. Its ethic of responsibility might well allow both practices in certain circumstances. And what young person cannot find sufficient reason in his or her circumstances to justify both pre-marital sex and co-habitation? Clear rules might be important here, just as the rule against adultery makes things very clear for married couples. A solid ethic of responsibility would employ rules, some absolute in character.

The statement’s aversion to form gives it something of a Marcionite whiff. *[Editor’s note: The heretic Marcion, c. 160, asserted that the Gospel excludes all law and therefore rejected all of the Old Testament and much of the New Testament.]* That aversion represents a distinct distancing from our Old Testament heritage. Little development of the creation story and the instituting by God of marriage. Little mention of the Commandments as guidance for Christian life. Little mention of the rather strict rules

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A sexual ethic for Teletubbies?— or, how Lutherans learned to embrace a formless world

(*A sexual ethic...* Continues from page seven)

that undergirded life together in early Christian communities. No mention of the Old Testament—and New Testament—proscriptions of homosexual conduct. Indeed, little use of the law at all, in spite of its claim to honor it. It seems that whenever Christians want to release sexuality from its created forms and from the commandments that guide it, they move away from the faith of Israel and fasten to New Testament emphases on incarnation and justification. Without the law, such emphases quickly lead to the “gospel of inclusion,” one without repentance or amendment of life. And, in the case of this statement, weak and indeterminate guidance for moral life. It is not as if the old teachings are totally absent. They are not. But they are constantly qualified by an ethic of responsibility that shies away from forms of all kinds. I can’t say it better than the statement does itself: “A Lutheran sexual ethic deeply attuned to justification and incarnation extends well beyond the application of static principles, even biblical ones, to varying situations. This ethic is more about directing us to find a responsible place for sexuality in the service of God’s ongoing activity in the world than about containing its ambiguous power.” (p. 11)

Certainly the ELCA has not made a conscious decision to adopt the Marcionite heresy. But, it, like other mainstream Protestant churches, has been pushed in that direction by strong feminist and gay liberation movements within its membership. Those movements suspect that heterosexual males have been in charge of the historic faith from Abraham on down to the present time. And they want to call a halt to

that. Shouldn’t women and gays and lesbians refuse to allow those heterosexual males define what to them are oppressive forms and rules? If we remove the sharp edges from the forms and dispense with the rules, won’t our general ethic of responsibility be applicable to all sorts of relationships? The statement seems to be saying “yes” to both those questions. The trouble is, saying “yes” also abandons the specific moral teachings of the Bible and Christian tradition.

Though I expected the statement to make an attempt at assessing homosexual conduct, it didn’t. But if the foregoing argument is at all compelling, the writers of the statement might be in the process of embracing a formless creation, which is a necessary prelude for the positive assessment of homosexual relations.

This unsettling suspicion overshadows the many good features of the statement. Its analysis of our current sexualized society and its many victims is one with which I heartily agree. (However, it seems to me that the statement forgets about the millions of human beings eliminated by abortion, many of whom were the victims of irresponsible sexual behavior.) Its call for pastoral compassion for all is persuasive. Its spirit of civility and moderation is admirable. At times it speaks eloquently about marriage, though too little and too late. It makes an effort to take up the thorny questions of pre-marital sex and co-habitation, though it does so with less guidance than I think necessary. And, considering the difficulty of reaching consensus on these contentious issues, the statement proposes a serious line of argument, a subversive one with which I sharply disagree. ♦

Digging for the pony

by Norma Bruce, lay member Upper Arlington Lutheran Church, Columbus, Ohio

In a former life when I was a Democrat I wrote a few speeches for a member of the governor’s cabinet. I know how to write jargon and doublespeak and how to read it.

I am making it through the draft social statement on sexuality put out by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in March line by line because I’m supposed to speak on it to a group tomorrow. I’m very conscious these days both of the word **truth** and the biblical concept of **truth** because of our current small group Bible study. In this draft statement, the word **truth** appears only once, in a Bible quote (John 1:14).

The word **trust**, however, or a version of it (**trustworthy**, or **trusting**, or **entrusting**) appears 138 times! The phrases “husband and wife” and “mother and father” do not appear at all—just references to family and parents (which these days could be any mix and match, and in this context is a collection of negative images of violence, abuse and economic deprivation). There is **one** reference to a family headed by a married man and woman as we would recognize the term on line 673 “legally married, heterosexual ‘nuclear family.’” On line 641 the writers say that Scripture places family as secondary to the community! (It takes a village. . .?)

Maybe nine of the 19 uses of the word gender were to **“same-gendered”** or **“gendered.”** I had never heard or seen the word “gendered” before, implying it is a past participle of an active verb—and “same gender” would have the same meaning—unless of course, the implication

is that this is something done to the couple by someone—someone like God perhaps?

Examples from the first page only—as there are just too many to list:

Lines 13-15: *This social statement addresses the question: What does it mean for us as sexual creatures to love our neighbors as ourselves and thus fulfill God’s law of love in this time and society?*

Dogs and cats, horses and zebras are **also sexual creatures**. God’s law is for men and women, for human beings, one aspect of which is sexuality. Humans who have lost

sexual function from injury, birth defect, illness, age or immaturity are still men and women with other defining qualities and worth and can still fulfill God’s law of love, because that love is revealed most perfectly in the cross of Jesus, where He died for all sin, including misusing our sexuality, and in his resurrection in which we share as Christians.

Lines 21-22: *The past six or seven decades have seen immense changes in every aspect of human life, including human sexuality.*

Although we think we sense more changes, they are no greater now than our parents, grandparents, St. Paul or Moses experienced. My grandmother was born in 1896 and died in 1983—she experienced a **tsunami of change** just in communication, travel and health care with the advent of telephone, radio, television, print media,

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What this document doesn’t say, refuses to say, is that marriage is an exclusive lifelong pledge of fidelity between a man and a woman sealed in physical intercourse.

(‘Digging...’ Continues from page nine)

the automobile, air travel, vaccines, modern drugs, health insurance and nursing homes. For a woman who had all nine of her babies (all healthy and who grew to old age) at home and rode a draft horse to church when they were little, I’d say that’s much more mind bending change and societal chaos than I’ll ever see or experience.

This ELCA draft does **violence to our English language**—verbal abuse, noun abuse, adverb abuse and adjective abuse, to say nothing of **abusing our Christian faith**. It is Scripture twisting and gymnastics! This draft criticizes "Lutheran historical teachings concerning homosexuality" with no footnotes (Book of Concord? Luther? Lutheran Brethren? Missouri-Synod Lutheran? Wisconsin Synod? the old ALC?).

It does not analyze or reference any teaching, research or biblical criticism by known Christian homosexuals, theologians or Lutheran pastors who promote ordination and marriage for gays. It does find space to comment on and condemn children's clothing, playground bullying, consumerism, date rape, dangers of the Internet, early sex education, grandparents raising grandchildren and inappropriate touching of female pastors. If you throw in the kitchen sink maybe no one will notice there is no Biblical foundation?

I didn't find anything in this document about ordination of openly gay or closeted gay Lutheran pastors—which was in the original charge in 2001, as was church blessings of same-sex relationships—also not specifically addressed in this document. It's possible it is in there—as the saying goes, if you keep shoveling the ***** there's bound to be a pony in there somewhere. We know and love such a man—and his synod hasn't let him go after he left his marriage. It's apparently a local choice not addressed in this document.

Lines 1132-1135: *Although this church lacks consensus, it encourages all people to live out their faith in the community of the baptized. Following previous decisions of this church, we call on congregations to welcome, care for and support same-gender-oriented people and their families, and to advocate for their legal protection.*

What this document doesn't say, refuses to say, is that marriage is an exclusive lifelong pledge of fidelity between a man and a woman sealed in physical intercourse. In Genesis 2:24, Moses says, “a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh,” and Christ in Matt. 19:6 added, “Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.” It follows that Christ is talking about the marriage of a man and a woman, and He is commanding people of whatever culture and society in whatever century, that they are not to destroy marriage or pretend they have it harder than any previous era.

Marriage is not a human invention. God planned it from the beginning. He created a woman from a man's side and put them together in a perfect environment. God sent Jesus for our redemption to be born into a family of a man and woman. Since this was done in a miraculous way, he could have just as easily dropped him in the cabbage patch, but he didn't. The Bible uses marriage imagery to describe Yahweh's relationship with Israel, and Christ's relationship with the church, and when gay activists in the church enlist pastors, theologians and sociologists to twist that to mean something else, it is blasphemy.

[Editor's note: Norma Bruce originally posted this piece on her blog at <http://collectingmythoughts.blogspot.com/>. She retired as associate professor in 2000 from The Ohio State University Veterinary Medicine Library.] ♦

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's Lutheran Church Statesville, North Carolina

Position: Pastor

Contact: Tim Cress, Call Committee Chair, at teccress@statesville.net or 740 North Center Street, Statesville, NC 28677, or call at 704-878-9613 or 704-872-0507.

St. Paul Lutheran Church New Braunfels, Texas

Position: Interim Senior Pastor

Contact: Will Krieg, Congregational President, at willkrieg@sbcglobal.net or 830-625-9347.

Grace Lutheran Church Hayward, Wisconsin

Position: Coordinator of Youth Ministries

Contact: Pr. Tony Stoutenburg, P.O. Box 881, Hayward, WI 54843 or pastor.tony.grace@gmail.com.

King of Glory Lutheran Church Dallas, Texas

Position: Pastor of Adult Discipleship

Contact: Senior Pastor Jon Bustard, King of Glory Lutheran Church, 6411 LBJ Freeway, Dallas, TX 75240 or jbustard@kingofglory.com

Calvary Lutheran Church Brookfield, Wisconsin

Two Positions: F/T Music Director and P/T Organist

Contact: E-mail resumé to holly@calvarylc.com

Peace Lutheran Church Hazen, North Dakota

Position: Director of Youth Ministry

Contact: Pastor Walt Wolff, Peace Lutheran Church, 512 Central Ave. N., Hazen, North Dakota 58545, or (O) 701-748-2150; (H) 701-748-6517; (C) 701-870-1521

Morningside Lutheran Church Sioux City, Iowa

Two Positions: Teaching Associate Pastor and Connecting Associate Pastor

Contact: Send resumé to Morningside Lutheran Church Call Committee, Attn: Connie Luhman, 2000 Roundtable Rd, Sergeant Bluff, IA 51054 or call Connie Luhman, Call Committee Chair, at 712-253-5300

St. James Lutheran Church Niagara Falls, New York

Position: Pastor

Contact: Ted Washburn, call committee chair at LATed@roadrunner.com or 716-692-5821 or John Schultz, Council President at schultz001@juno.com or 716-695-6741.

Vision of Glory Lutheran Church Plymouth, Minnesota

Position: Pastor of Youth and Family Ministry

Contact: Vision of Glory Lutheran Church, 13200 Highway 55, Minneapolis, MN 55441, Attn: Pastor Scott McLaughlin or smclaughlin@vogchurch.com.