

Growth in size and reach

- ✚ WordAlone Network has more than 6,000 members in all of the ELCA's 64 geographic synods and 45 states. More than 1,000 of the members are ELCA pastors. There are 230 member churches and more than 100 other congregations are active with WordAlone.
- ✚ Participants from all ELCA predecessor denominations. Member pastors are graduates of all eight ELCA seminaries.
- ✚ Communicates through an email news list, wa-announce; www.wordalone.org; the bi-monthly Network News and some chapter newsletters.
- ✚ Affirms the Bible's teaching about sexual life and its vision for marriage. Rejects changes in standards for lay and ordained ministers that allow for sexual relationships outside of the marriage of one man and one woman.
- ✚ After the 2003 churchwide assembly, helped create Solid Rock Lutherans, an ad hoc group opposed to changing ordination standards to let practicing homosexuals serve in the ministry and to blessing of same-sex relationships.
- ✚ Helped defeat a proposal at the 2005 churchwide assembly to ordain persons in same-sex relationships and supported a vote to continue to uphold a 1993 Conference of Bishops statement that there is no basis in Scripture or tradition for blessing same-sex relationships.
- ✚ Later in 2005 helped form Lutheran CORE, Coalition for Reform. Works alongside 10 other reform groups in Lutheran CORE for reform within the ELCA to uphold the authority of God's Word over all matters.

WordAlone Network's beginning

- ✚ WordAlone Network emerged as an email list on the Internet in late 1996 because of concerns about a proposed full communion agreement between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The Episcopal Church.
- ✚ The concerns were not about full communion itself, but about required participation by ELCA bishops in an "historic episcopacy" and a loss of the freedom for ministerial candidates to choose who would ordain them. Neither mandate is biblical nor confessional.
- ✚ The proposed agreement failed at the 1997 churchwide assembly but squeaked by at the 1999 churchwide assembly as "Called to Common Mission."
- ✚ More than 1,000 persons attended a constituting convention in Mahtomedi, Minn., in 2000.
- ✚ By 2001 WordAlone garnered enough support and votes so that the churchwide assembly passed a by-law amendment allowing ordination candidates to request exceptions to the requirement that they must be ordained by bishops.

WordAlone Network is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation so donations to the Network are fully tax deductible. We depend upon donations for support. Mail them to WordAlone Network, 2299 Palmer Dr., Suite 220, New Brighton, MN 55112. For more information, call 888 551-7254.



“Word alone” is the core value for this movement—God's Word—incarnate in Jesus Christ, recorded in the Bible and the norm for all matters of faith and life.

Welcome!

The WordAlone Network welcomes individuals, local churches and other groups to join our work. Learn about this grassroots movement in this brochure or on our website at www.wordalone.org

As Lutherans, we are called to Reflect, Reform and Renew

Reflect

WordAlone's goal is an informed and active Evangelical Lutheran Church in America membership. Decisions on proposed policies and practices should be made based on sound biblical and confessional foundations, and should involve all ELCA members.

But, how will ELCA members gain biblical insights and confessional knowledge to consider churchwide questions or controversies?

WordAlone's response has been two-fold: first, developing educational resources through our publishing arm, Sola Publishing; second, has given birth to the now autonomous Institute of Lutheran Theology that will prepare new pastors and other ministers for service and offer continuing education for pastors and laypersons.

Sola Publishing – www.solapublishing.org – offers a fresh look at the Small Catechism and is developing a Sunday school curriculum for children. Sola also offers several Bible studies for adults, including a series on the Book of Concord and women's Bible studies.

The children's version of the Small Catechism is a simplified edition of the classic instructional booklet by Martin Luther, illustrated and written in easy-to-understand language, suitable for young students. A curious, sketched character, known as "Luther's Small Cat," follows the children through the readings, page by page.

Scripture texts are taken from the Contemporary English Version (CEV) of the Bible, which is written at a similar level.



Reform

Since the ELCA began in 1988, many changes have been made; shortcomings have been discovered; and necessary reforms have come to light. The smaller denominations that came together as the ELCA were more like extended families than formal organizations.

Less formal give-and-take discussion has been minimized by current ELCA governance. Choices should be generated with grassroots participation and consensus, not simply by a small fraction of ELCA members at churchwide assemblies. WordAlone seeks a more representative system.

WordAlone continues to resist requirements that new pastors and bishops must conform to an historic episcopate.

Since 2005, WordAlone has worked within Lutheran CORE, the Coalition for Reform, to bring about reform of the ELCA in five areas: maintain the authority of God's Word; reassert Christ's Great Commission to make disciples of all nations as a priority; uphold the use of God's revealed name – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – in worship and prayer; uphold the biblical norms for marriage, family and sexuality; and elect leaders who support all of the above.



Renew

The WordAlone Network works to renew the ELCA, local churches, pastors and laypersons. Renewing, in our case, means invigorating the church, its preaching and its members. How? Pray for the Holy Spirit to come in power to the church. Read the Bible with the eyes of faith and be changed by it.

Tell one another the story of Jesus.

Remind each other that when we still were in sin God loved us enough to send his Son to free us from sin and reconcile us to Him.

Then, we are ready to share the story of redemption with the unchurched near home as well as to support world evangelism more generously. As we see we are free of the self-centeredness of sin, we can live the Gospel of love without regard to what others may think—ready to serve each other and those who have been treated unjustly.

WordAlone intends to seek, lift up and prepare resources that will be helpful and available for churches, pastors and members to use in outreach and ministry. We intend to be a network of churches that work with each other to be more effective witnesses for Jesus in our communities and abroad.