

Glossary of ELCA Jargon and Acronyms

Assembly – legislative bodies of the ELCA, which can be at churchwide, synodical or a more local level

Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible – the ELCA’s Bible reading initiative and study of the Lutheran understanding of the authority and interpretation of the Bible

Churchwide (aka Higgins Road) – the national offices in Chicago, including the national decision-making bodies of the ELCA

Churchwide Assembly (CWA) – Highest legislative churchwide body composed of 66 bishops and about 1,000 other ELCA members; meets for one week every two years in August

Church Council – 2nd highest legislative churchwide body composed of 4 ELCA officers and 33 others from synods; meets at least twice per year in spring and fall

Conferences/Clusters – geographic subdivisions of the 64 geographic synods; some synods call them conferences, others clusters; some synods may have further subdivisions of the conferences into clusters or districts

Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline (D&G) – a juridical document adopted by the Church Council that states the grounds for which pastors and other rostered church leaders may be disciplined; states: “Practicing homosexual persons are precluded from the ordained ministry of this church.”

Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW) – the new, cranberry red ELCA hymnal that was published in 2006 and is intended to replace the green Lutheran Book of Worship (LBW)

Journey Together Faithfully (JTF) – the series of sexuality studies (three) produced the ELCA sexuality task force and churchwide staff in the process of making decisions on homosexuality and leading up to a proposed social statement on sexuality in 2009

Memorial – a special type of resolution used by a synod assembly to address the churchwide assembly

Quota system – applies to all assemblies, councils, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units at churchwide and synodical levels: 50% female, 50% male, 60% lay, 40% clergy and 10% people of color or primary language other than English

Program Units – the seven major units of the churchwide offices in Chicago, each of which is assigned a major program: Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission unit; Global Mission, Vocation and Education, Church in Society, Multicultural Ministries, Publishing House of the ELCA (Augsburg Fortress) and Women of the ELCA

Recommendations 1, 2 and 3 – recommendations from the ELCA sexuality task force and Church Council to the 2005 churchwide assembly on the questions of blessing same-sex unions and ordaining practicing homosexuals; 1 (unity of the ELCA) and 2 (intentionally ambiguous on the blessing question) were approved, 3 (proposed exception process for ordaining practicing homosexuals) was defeated

Regions – 9 geographic subdivisions of the ELCA

Resolution – formal motion passed by assemblies or councils

Synods – 64 geographic and 1 non-geographic subdivisions of the ELCA, grouped into 9 regions

Synod Assembly – highest legislative body of a synod; most meet annually between April and June; synods set number of people each congregation may send depending on the size of the congregation, but each congregation may send at least its pastor and one male and one female layperson

Synod Council – a synod’s 2nd highest legislative body; each synod sets size and frequency of meetings

Social Statement - social policy documents, adopted by a churchwide assembly, addressing significant social issues; requires a two-thirds vote of a churchwide assembly to be adopted

Voting Member – members of assemblies who make decisions and elect leaders; congregations send voting members to their synod assemblies, and synods send voting members to the churchwide assembly

Visions and Expectations (V&E) – a policy document adopted by the Church Council that states the ELCA’s expectations for conduct and behavior for pastors and other church leaders; states: “Ordained ministers who are homosexual in their self-understanding are expected to abstain from homosexual sexual relationships”

Glossary of Reform Groups in ELCA

Lutheran CORE - Coalition for Reform

Led by a nine-member steering committee that works with volunteer coordinators in the ELCA synods
Pastor Paul Spring — pastorspring@pennswoods.net — www.lutherancore.org

Lutheran CORE Partner Reform Groups

Call to Faithfulness

NE Iowa
Pastor Gary Hatcher
ggh@omnitelcom.com

Evangelical Lutheran Confessing Fellowship (ELCF)

Primarily in the Northeast
Pastor Ralph Boyer
rsboyer@ptd.net
www.elcf.net

Evangelical Mission Network (EMN)

So. Calif. West Synod
Pastor David Berkedal
dberkedal@unidial.com
<http://evangelicalmissionnetwork.blogspot.com/>

Fellowship of Confessional Lutherans (FOCL)

Publishes *FOCL Point*
Pastor Jeffray Greene
docgreene@illicom.net
www.foclnews.org

Indiana-Kentucky Renewal Network (IKRN)

Pastor David Shockey
dave@hebronlutheran.org
www.ikrn.org

Lasting Word

Salisbury, NC area
Pastor Carl Haynes
pastorcarl@velocenet.net

Lutheran Churches of the Common Confession (LC3)

Pastor Bryan Anderson
forbry@hotmail.com
www.lutherancore.org/lc3-index.shtml

Lutherans Reform!

Lower Susquehanna
Pastor Paul Gausmann
Pastor.Paul@comcast.net
www.lr-elcf.org

WordAlone Network (WA)

In all ELCA synods
Publishes *Network News*
wordalone@popp.net
www.wordalone.org

Other Important Organizations

American Lutheran Publicity Bureau (ALPB)

Publishes *Lutheran Forum* and *Forum Letter*
dkralpb@aol.com
www.alpb.org

Lutheran Quarterly (LQ)

LQinc@aol.com
www.lutheranquarterly.com

Pauline Fellowship

Pacifica Synod
Pastor John Steward.
psteward@cox.net

Society of the Holy Trinity (STS)

Pan-Lutheran society for N. American and Australian pastors
www.societyholytrinity.org/

Solid Ground

Concerned Lutherans in Canada
takingastand@solid-ground.ca
www.solid-ground.ca/home.htm

Truth In Love Lutherans (TILL)

New Jersey and surrounding area
Pastor Rudy Schneider
HSpirit@Comcast.net