



## Lutheran CORE - Coalition for Reform

*"Working Together for Positive Reform in the ELCA"*

[www.lutherancore.org](http://www.lutherancore.org)

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### **Lutheran CORE News 1.5**

November 8, 2007

(Please copy and distribute as widely as possible.)

#### **Boundaries and discipline**

by Mr. Gary Diers

[Note: Gary Diers is an active Lutheran from Waverly, Minnesota, who was a lay voting member to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Churchwide Assembly in Chicago this year. He spoke these powerful words as part of the debate.]

First I would like to say that listening to the debate on this [homosexuality] issue this week just breaks my heart, but having said that, Mr. Chairman:

In this post-modern world in which we now live, which says everyone defines what is right or wrong for himself or herself, the idea of discipline by someone else for violating boundaries is viewed as an injustice. We however cannot, whether young or adult, live our lives without boundaries.

I'm a farmer and work daily around large animals and, especially today, large equipment. My wife and I raised five children in that environment, and those children always wanted to be with Dad. But because I loved them and was concerned for their safety, I built a fence in the front yard and they had to stay within the boundaries of that fence even if they begged, cried, threw a tantrum, etc. They could, however, with some effort climb out. When that happened they were disciplined and returned to the fenced-in yard. It did not matter how much they wanted to be with me, nor in fact did it matter how much I wanted them to be with me.

Our Creator has given us boundaries within which to live our lives and if we could just live our lives within those boundaries, most if not all evil and need for discipline would not exist.

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#### **Lutheran CORE steering committee update**

by Pr. Paull E. Spring, steering committee chair

The Steering Committee of Lutheran CORE met September 28 and 29, immediately following the Lindenhurst gathering. We were all very encouraged by the attendance at Lindenhurst and the spirit of commitment to our concerns that was so evident.

Our most important work at the steering committee meeting was to complete a strategy for the 2009 churchwide assembly in Minneapolis. Our chief goals are to focus on the social statement on human sexuality and the elections for the churchwide assembly and the Church Council.

Our most urgent need now is to identify synod coordinators in all sixty-five synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Effective synod coordinators are key contacts within the synods. The coordinator's job, for now, is to work for the election to the churchwide assembly of voting members who share our perspectives on marriage and the Bible.

If you are willing to serve as a synod coordinator or as a part of a synodical team within your synod, please contact me at [pastorspring@pennswoods.net](mailto:pastorspring@pennswoods.net) or Pastor Mark Chavez, Lutheran CORE director at [wordalone@popp.net](mailto: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 me if it will help you make your decision.

Right now, the most important work is to elect voting members for the churchwide assembly. In some synods this process has already begun. We need your help. 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.

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### **Will your congregation support Lutheran CORE?**

by Mr. Ryan Schwarz, steering committee member and fundraising coordinator

In many congregations, it is now budget season. Council, finance teams and staff are hard at work preparing financial plans for 2008. Could Lutheran CORE become one of your benevolence initiatives in 2008? We have a most ambitious action plan for the next two years, a critical time for the future of the ELCA. We must assist synod organizers across the country, pay our staff, prepare newsletters, produce teaching materials, organize local events, and do all the things that are necessary to have an impact. All this costs money, and our opponents are raising literally millions of dollars for their efforts.

Lutheran CORE needs your congregation's support. Even a relatively modest contribution is quite meaningful to us. Beyond financial support, we are also seeking to grow the number of congregations that formally join Lutheran CORE. Can you help us? Are you willing to advocate for Lutheran CORE in your congregation?

We can assist you with explanatory materials and procedural advice. Contact me at [rschwarz@mba1994.hbs.edu](mailto:rschwarz@mba1994.hbs.edu), or any member of the Lutheran CORE Steering Committee. Informational resources are also available on our website [www.lutherancore.org](http://www.lutherancore.org).

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### **Consider forming a Lutheran CORE chapter**

by Pr. Mark Chavez, director

If there is not an organized group in your area, you might consider following the example of the Ebenezer Conference Committee on Sexuality in Georgia. Pastor Don Rieder, the Southeastern synod coordinator for Lutheran CORE, reported that the committee was formed in 2004 to consider all the groups that were opposed to the trend in the ELCA to move away from our biblical foundations. Pastor Rieder has chaired the group since it began and it had met 15 times in the past few years. At their meeting in October, when they reviewed their group's history and the present situation in their area and in the ELCA, the members of the committee decided to

form an Ebenezer Chapter of Lutheran CORE. If you would like suggestions for how you might start a chapter in your area, contact me at [wordalone@popp.net](mailto:wordalone@popp.net).

New groups of Lutheran CORE supporters have begun meeting in two synods, Rocky Mountain and Indiana-Kentucky. Pastor Tom Renquist in Aurora, CO, has helped convene two meetings in the Denver area this fall and Pastor Blair Fields in Florence, KY, helped convene a meeting in the Indianapolis area last month. These are encouraging developments in areas where there have not been many public meetings in the past. If you know of other new groups being formed or meeting, please report the news to the Lutheran CORE steering committee.

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### **How can you make a difference in 2009?**

It is urgent that you contact your synod office NOW to learn what the election procedures are for 2009 CWA voting members, and then getting yourself or other confessional folk who fit the criteria in a position to be elected. Do the same for conference and synod positions. Until we get a significant number of our people in places of influence, nothing much is going to change.

An anonymous saying (often wrongly attributed to Edmund Burke) reminds us, "All that is needed for the triumph of evil is for enough good people to do nothing." Now is the time for you to do something. Decisions are made by the people who show up for meetings. Be there in your congregation, your conference or district, your synod, and if possible at churchwide assembly. Take the profound yet kind and simple speech by Gary Diers (reported above) as your example. Speak the truth in love. And pray constantly for this Church and all its leaders.

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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.

Pastor W. Stevens Shipman, steering committee member and communications committee  
[prstevanshipman@gmail.com](mailto:prstevanshipman@gmail.com)