



NORTH AMERICAN
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

MIDWESTERN AREA NEWSLETTER

July 2023



I invite you to submit material for inclusion in future newsletters, but keep your information concise, to the point, and use “links” if you want to provide the reader with access to “long readings”. – Jess Abbott, Midwestern Area Assistant to the Bishop (AAB), 513-314-2028, midwesternaab@thenalc.org

Latest and Greatest News!

Luther Week 2023, Oklahoma City

August 8-11, 2023. Don't know about you, but I'm looking forward to an “in person” week of fellowship, learning, and convocation after our stretch of Zoom meetings. See developing details and registration process on the NALC website, <https://lutheranweek.com/>

There will be a unique table at convocation this year. Chaplain (Major) Walter McCall (U.S. Army chaplain recruiter) will be available August 9-10. I know many of us are too old to join up, but Chaplain McCall likes to talk to all, just to inform pastors of this important ministry.

Celebrating Pastors

Boyden, IA – St. John. Welcome Pastor Jeremy Winter. [Pr. Winter is newly certified as an NALC pastor].

Monona, IA – Faith. Celebrates the 40 Anniversary of Ordination of Pastor Mel Harris (wife Jacki), June 11, 2023.

Marysville OH – First English. Welcome Pastor Kurt Luebke

Oconomowoc WI – Lord of Life. Welcome Pastor Michael Pickhardt

Jefferson, WI – St. Mark's. Welcome Pastor Chris Raiford

NC-OH Mission District Disaster Response

September 30th the NC-OH will have a Mission District gathering at Trinity Lutheran Church, Crestline, OH to build flood buckets for disaster response. For more information contact Pr. Pennington pinningtonkm@gmail.com

NALC Life Ministries

The NALC Life Ministries Team focuses on life issues - from conception to the end of life. In the past much of their attention was focused on the annual March for Life in January in Washington, DC. The Supreme Court's decision last year in Dobbs vs. Jackson shifted more attention to the state legislatures. Life issue legislation is being considered everywhere. There are now seven states in which there are Marches for Life - Arizona, California, Connecticut, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Virginia. It is likely other states will have marches too.

The NALC Life Ministries Team offers support for participation in life marches and responding to life issue legislation. Re the latter, ten states plus the District of Columbia already allow physician assisted suicide. At least a dozen more state legislatures are considering making it legal.

The Team is planning to develop educational materials based on Holy Scripture to help pastors and congregations address the entire range of life issues - reproductive technology, abortion, adoption, foster care, human trafficking, end of life and more. The Team is also willing to provide presentations on life issues at events in your Mission District or in your congregations. You may contact any on the Team for more information.

Rebecka V. A. Frontz (rebeckaandrae@gmail.com; 724-787-7780)
Pr. Dennis Di Mauro (dennisdimauro@yahoo.com; 703-568-3346)
Pr. Al Towberman (atowberman@zoominternet.net; 724-698-3644)
Pr Scott Licht (slicht@lutheransforlife.org; 515-238-5496)
Pr. Melinda Jones (revmhjones@yahoo.com; 843-270-3675)
Pr. Amy Schifrin (acschifrin@gmail.com; 563-929-0909)

Pr. Steve Shipman (prsteveshipman@gmail.com; 570-916-7780)
Pr. Mark Chavez (pastor@reformation-nalc.org; 717-823-7739)

Christian White, Institute of Lutheran Theology,
Pastoral Ministry certification, NE Ohio MD

Mission District Pastors Meetings

These are provided in case you happen to live closer to another MD's meeting and would like to attend for pastoral fellowship and support. Or, if you can't travel, you might consider joining a video conference call.

Michigan MD, July 8, Zoom, Pastors at 10am, 11am Lay Leaders. Email jessabbott@outlook.com for Zoom invitation

SW-Ohio MD, July 12, 9am, Living Water Lutheran Church, 667 Miamisburg-Centerville Rd., Dayton (Centerville) OH, 45459

NE-Ohio MD, **Every Monday** Pastor Pericope study, Zoom at 10am. Email Pr. Koch at mekoch46@gmail.com for Zoom invitation

NC-Ohio MD, July 20, Picnic at Pastor Mike and Jane Greenler's home, Bucyrus OH. Email Pr. Penninton for details pinningtonkm@gmail.com

If you know of any seminarians in the Midwestern Area not listed here, please email them to Jess with school, degree / certification being sought, and their Mission District.



Candidacy Seminarians in the Midwestern Area

Michelle Kouse, North American Lutheran Seminary network (NALS) / Fuller Seminary, M.Div program. SW Ohio MD.

Terese Whitten, Institute of Lutheran Theology (ILT), Interning in North Carolina. Michigan MD

Kent Haley, Ordination Under Special Circumstances Program. New Life, Gallipolis OH, SE Ohio MD.

Pam Grandmaison, Trinity School for Ministry (NALS), Ambridge PA, Michigan MD

Seminarians working on Certifications in the Midwestern Area

Rochelle Lemieux, St. Paul Lutheran Seminary, working on Pastoral Care certification, Heartland MD

Heidi Yahl, Institute of Lutheran Theology, Pastoral Ministry certification, NE Ohio MD

Youth Opportunities

July 16-22 **NEXUS Institute**, a week-long event for high schoolers, will be held at Grand View University, Des Moines, Iowa from July 16-22, 2023. Learn more at <https://www.grandview.edu/about/community/camps-clinics/nexus>.

July 24-Aug 1. **Iowa Mission District Youth Mission Trip**. Destination, Port Charlotte, Florida, to help with hurricane recovery. Cost is \$350: \$150 non-refundable deposit with registration (before May 1) and remaining \$200 due by July 1. Contact Pr. Barbara Wills barbaramwills@gmail.com.

July 1-4, **2024 NALC Continental Youth Gathering**, St. John's Lutheran Church, Boerne, TX (near San Antonio). See updates and information at <https://thenalc.org/cyg/>

Resources for Congregations Without Pastors

Online Confirmation Program - contact the Southern Area Assistant to the Bishop, Pastor Mark Braaten, 903-316-1594

mbraaten@oslctyler.org or Pastor Teresa Peters at tpeters@thenalc.org

Sermons for Lay Leaders to Deliver at Worship Services

Iowa Mission District sermon library www.iowamissiondistrict.com or contact Pastor Burkhalter at pgburkhalter52@hotmail.com

Pastor David Wendel posts sermons on YouTube https://youtu.be/gCcD_lvwCbA, he also posts them on his Facebook page and the NALC Fellowship group; or contact Pastor Wendel at dwendel@thenalc.org

Congregation Vacancies

The NALC website has a great section to see congregations looking for a full-time or part-time pastor <https://thenalc.org/call-process/>

Newsletter Distribution List

If you know someone who would like to receive this newsletter regularly, please provide name and email address. It will only be emailed, and they will be Blind copied (Bcc).

Midwestern AAB Schedule Contact me if you'd like me to suggest some short presentations I can make at event. For convocations, I can provide a short update on NALC priorities and recent efforts.

The following events are on my radar to attend:

- Aug 8-11.** Luther Week, Oklahoma City, OK
- Sep 16.** IA Mission District Convocation, Faith, Monona, IA
- Sep 17.** St. John, Sunman, IN. 190th anniversary.
- Oct 6-7.** WI-UP Mission District Convocation
- Oct 14, 2023** – Michigan Mission District Convocation, St. Thomas, Trufant, MI
- Oct 28.** SWOH MD Strategic Planning Mtg, Springfield
- Nov 8-9, 2023** – Bishop with Deans meeting

Jan 16-18, 2024 – Pastors Conference, Drury Plaza, Disney Springs, Orlando, FL

The following is my schedule to call each Pastor / Lay Leader in the Midwestern Area, as a pastoral outreach from the Bishop's staff.

JUNE-JULY	Iowa Mission District
AUGUST	NE Ohio MD
SEPTEMBER	SW Ohio MD
OCTOBER	Heartland MD
NOVEMBER	NW Ohio MD
DECEMBER	SE Ohio MD
JANUARY	Wisconsin/UP MD
FEBRUARY	NC Ohio MD
MARCH	Michigan MD

Prospective Specialized Ministries & Military Chaplains

If a seminarian or pastor asks you about the possibility of serving as a military chaplain (Active Duty, Reserve or National Guard), Civil Air Patrol Chaplain, Hospital / Hospice chaplain, or fire, police, para-church minister; direct them for assistance to Jess Abbott at militaryendorser@thenalc.org Jess is the NALC's official Military Endorsing Agent for all NALC clergy currently servicing or seeking to serve in the U.S. or Canadian Military. See the "Our Work" tab in the NALC website for more information; <https://thenalc.org/specialized-and-military-ministries/>

Midwestern Area Deans

- Pr. Jess Abbott, Midwestern Assistant to the Bishop 513-314-2028, midwesternaab@thenalc.org
- Pr. Bert Schultz, OH Mission Region & NW Ohio MD 715-418-1037, jcgracepastor@outlook.com
- Pr. Mark Daniels, OH South West Mission District 740-603-5287, markluth91@gmail.com
- Pr. Tom Jacobson, OH South East MD (co-dean) 740-242-2192, pastor@gracethornville.org
- Pr. Michael Koch, OH North East Mission District 330-635-8008, mekoch46@gmail.com
- Pr. Kathy Pennington, OH North Central Mission District 715-554-4658, penningtonkm@gmail.com
- Pr. Christopher Staley, IOWA Mission District 515-357-9052, cbstaley@netins.net www.iowamissiondistrict.com
- Pr. Jess Abbott, MI (lower peninsula) Mission District 513-314-2028, midwesternaab@thenalc.org
- Pr. Doug Gast, Heartland (IN-KY) Mission District 317-727-0612, dgast1950@gmail.com

Pr. Mark Knappe, WI & MI Upper Peninsula MD (co-dean)

262-844-2234, solideogloria1@icloud.com

Pr. Tom Reiff, WI & MI Upper Peninsula MD (co-dean)

715-892-9914, treiff@outlook.com