



Latest and Greatest News!

Pastors and Congregations

Condolence. Vickie Groenke, wife of Rev. Robert Groenke of Ashland, Dec 28th in North Carolina. Vickie had battled various cancers for several years. No funeral arrangements have been announced.

Anniversary. Pastor Norm Dew of Peace Lutheran Church in Connersville, Indiana celebrated 30 years of ordained ministry in November. Prayers, blessings, and congratulations to Pastor Norm!

Great Commission Vetting Team. Pastor Doug Gast, HMD Dean, becomes the Chairperson of the NALC's Great Commission Vetting Team in 2025. God's blessings on this new role!

Support of Mission Congregations!

Praise God for partnerships with Young Mission Congregations or New Start Worship communities in the Midwestern Area. If you don't already have one, consider entering into a partnership. Contact Pastor Jess for more information, midwesternaab@thenalc.org

Faith Landing, Davison, MI

Current Partner: Redeemer, Owasso
Trinity, St. Charles, MN

Current Partner: **none**

Mission in Christ, Strawberry Point, IA

Current Partner: **none**

First Grace, Osage, IA

Current Partner: Servants of Christ, Robins IA

We will keep a running list of young and new start congregations in the Midwestern Area. Email Pr. Jess with additions if you have any.

2025 NALC Clergy Retreat January 28-30

"Generous Confessionalism". Holiday Inn San Antonio Riverwalk, San Antonio TX. See details and registration at: <https://thenalc.org/clergy-retreat-2025/>

Retreats and Studies

These are provided in case your MD doesn't have a retreat, or if you'd just like to get away from your area and enjoy the environs of other wonderful places.

Retreat for Council Members, Jan 11, 2025
time and location TBD

The SW Ohio Mission District is sponsoring this retreat and invites any in the Midwestern Area to attend. For more information or to

Register, email Pr. Mark Daniels, markluth91@gmail.com

Society of the Holy Trinity Retreat, Feb 24-26, 2025 St. Augustine House Lutheran Monastery, 3316 Drahner Rd., Oxford MI.

www.staugustineshouse.org

Contact Pastor Norman Drew for more information and to register;

normandrew@gmail.com

Discussion will be on the nature Byzantine Christology, the full scandalous nature of Christ being fully God and Fully Man and a bit of Luther as a Chalcedonian theologian.

Michigan MD pastors and lay leaders via zoom, generally the **second Saturday** of each month at 10a. Pericope devotion followed by sharing of faith journey and concerns for prayer. Contact Pr. Abbott at midwesternaab@thenalc.org for Zoom invitation.

Candidacy for Ordained Ministry Seminarians in the Midwestern Area

Dale Staley - Fuller Seminary, M.Div program. St. John, Grove City, SE Ohio MD. **Approved for Ordination**

Sandy Thompson, Diaconate program. Grace LC, Springfield, SW Ohio MD.

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

Monica Nufer, Fuller Seminary, M.Div program. NC Ohio MD.
Scott Stine - Fuller Seminary, M.Div program. SE Ohio MD.
Molly King, St. Paul Lutheran Seminary, M.Div program. SE Ohio MD
Keith Deak, NALS Center at Trinity School for Ministry, M.Div program. NE Ohio MD.
Ethan Zimmerman, NALS Center at Trinity School for Ministry, M.Div program. NE Ohio MD.
Pam Grandmason, Ordination Under Special Circumstances Program Trinity School for Ministry (NALS), Ambridge PA, Michigan MD.
Wade Weaver, Ordination Under Special Circumstances Program, Living Faith, Wabash IN, Heartland 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, NW Ohio MD
Christian White, Institute of Lutheran Theology, Pastoral Ministry certification, NW Ohio MD

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

Youth News and Opportunities

Iowa Mission District Youth Trip destination TBD; July 27-Aug 3, 2025

“Solid” Lutheran Bible Camps

- * Ingham Okoboji in Milford, Iowa, which is near Minnesota, South Dakota, and Nebraska.
- * Riverside in Story City, Iowa nearer the middle of the state.

Resources for Congregations Without Pastors

Online Confirmation Program - contact the Southern Area Assistant to the Bishop, Pastor Mark Braaten, 903-316-1594 southernaab@thenalc.org or Pastor Teresa

Peters at tpeters@thenalc.org The current plan is to start new groups next September.

Confirmation / Catechism Web Courses

[Free] – Luther House of Study, <https://lutherhouseofstudy.org/courses/>

On Line Sermons

Pastor Jess Abbott posts services / sermons on YouTube. Go to YouTube and search “Abundant Grace Lutheran Church West Chester OH”. Or contact Pastor Jess at midwesternaab@thenalc.org

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

Remote Pastoral Care

If you are a congregation without a pastor, you ALWAYS have a pastor. Contact your Mission District Dean for pastoral advice. Or, your Area Assistant to the Bishop (Pr. Jess) is always available to provide pastoral counseling midwesternaab@thenalc.org

On Line New Member Class

A four-session class (over 4 weeks) that introduces Lutheranism and prepares people to join the membership of a congregation. It is also a “Lutheranism 101” class for any who want to attend a to refresh their knowledge (and fellowship with people just joining a Lutheran church). Future classes can be scheduled for groups of 4 or more. Contact Pastor Jess to register for July classes or for more information at midwesternaab@thenalc.org

Disaster Response

Since Hurricane Helene devastated western North Carolina, NALC Disaster Response has been responding. The challenge is now the costs of the rebuilding, since so many homes are absolutely destroyed and need to be rebuilt from the ground up. NALC Disaster Response volunteer teams are currently booked into August 2025, but your prayers and support are

needed to purchase the thousands of dollars of materials that are needed.

On this Giving Tuesday, please consider making a donation to NALC Disaster Response by going online at www.thenalc.org/disaster or sending a check to NALC Disaster Response, 2113 Harwood Rd. Suite 309, PMB 409, Bedford, Texas 76021-4703

Intentional Interim Pastor Training

If you are a pastor interested in becoming a trained Intentional Interim Pastor, contact Pastor Marty Ramey pastormr@gmail.com and Pastor Keith Lessrevkeith54@gmail.com They are the NALC Interim coordinators and will be able to provide information about this intentional ministry as well as dates and locations of training.

Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries Inc. (NALC partner, Ft. Wayne, IN) www.lmvfm.org

If you are a veteran, contractor or family member of the Armed Services who is feeling overwhelmed by life experiences, please give LMVFM a call at: 260-755-2239.

If you'd like to support LMVFM donating your Thrivent Choice Dollars is easy Call 1-800-847-4836 and when prompted say "Thrivent Choice" which will connect you to a friendly Customer Care Agent and tell them that you would like to donate your Thrivent Choice Dollars to: Lutheran Military Veterans & Families Ministries.

Series Devotional on 52 Hymns

Pr. Tom Jacobson decided to write a year-long series of devotional articles on his fifty-two favorite hymns, one for each week of the year. You can find these articles on his blog.
www.theelectronicconventicle.weebly.com

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).

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

Midwestern Area Deans

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