



MIDWESTERN AREA NEWSLETTER

May 2025



Latest and Greatest News!

Global Workers to Visit the Midwestern Area This Summer

Global workers Ndumieshi and Tunsubilege from Tanzania will be with us in August and September and are available to visit congregations throughout the Midwest area. Please contact Pr. Bert Schultz at 715-418-1037 BertSchultz2@outlook.com if you would like more information or to schedule them.

Pastors and Congregations

Retirement. Congratulation Pastor Ken Kimball, Old East Paint Creek, Waterville, IA and Old West Creek. Waukon, IA (Iowa MD). Pastor Ken's retirement party will be at Watherville, IA on June 1st.

Retirement. Congratulation Pastor Jerry Rhea, Trinity, Jeromesville OH, where he has served for the last 15 years (NE-OH MD). Pastor Jerry's will retire on June 1st.

Closure. Abundant Life, Hilliard, OH (SE-OH MD). Abundant Life left the Mission District with a sizeable financial gift, which they have designated for the support of future pastoral internships in the MD.

This and That

Free Lutheran Books of Worship (LBWs). If interested in receiving any, contact Pr. Jess Abbott at midwesternaab@thenalc.org

Midwestern AREA Mission District

Newsletters. You'll note that Pr. Jess has begun attaching Mission District newsletters to his email distribution of the Area newsletter. Deans – if you have a newsletter you'd like included, sent it to me by the 2nd of each month. Thought others across the Area might benefit by reading Mission District NEWS.

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.

Iowa MD Retreat. May 19-20 Lake Okoboji Resort and Conference Center. Contact Pr. Staley cbstaley@netins.net

Young Adult Inner City Mission Trip June 1-6, 2025. Young adults ages 18 to 30 are invited to join other young adults from across North America for a week-long gathering to study the Word and witness to some of the most vulnerable, physically, socially and spiritually in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Participants will have the opportunity to serve in schools, shelters, food banks, soup kitchens, and on the street. The cost to take part is only \$50, plus personal travel to Winnipeg. All costs for accommodations, food and transportation at the gathering are being sponsored by the Canadian Mission District. If the cost of travel is prohibitive, speak with your mission district about the financial assistance. To register or for more information, contact Pastor Teresa Peters, director of Youth and Family Ministry for the NALC, at tpeters@thenalc.org

Society of the Holy Trinity

Date: Monday through Wednesday – **May 5-7, 2025.** **Time:** 1:00 PM Monday – 1:00 PM Wednesday. **Location:** **The Spiritual Center of Maria Stein** 2365 St. Johns Road Maria Stein, OH 45860, Phone: 419-925-7625 E-mail: robin@spiritualcenter.net Website: www.spiritualcenter.net **Participants:** Northern Illinois, Great Rivers, Passavant, and Indiana Chapters

NALS (Seminary) Intensive Week. June 9-13. The course is open to everyone, however, and is incredibly valuable in all contexts of ministry. We welcome auditors, pastors for continuing education, congregational leaders,

students in other tracks, and anyone interested in diving into our rich heritage. Come learn with the NALS community! See the [2025 June Intensive Week FACT SHEET](#) for details.

Convocations

If your MD convocation is not listed, please provide dates to Pr. Jess

Ohio Mission Region and the Five Ohio Mission Districts May 2-3, 2025 at Grace Springfield OH. Contact: Pr. Kathy Pennington penningtonkm@gmail.com

NALC Luther Week and biannual in person convocation August 3-8, 2025 See: [Lutheran Week 2025 - North American Lutheran Church](#)

Iowa MD September 20, 2025 Contact Pr. Staley cbstaley@netins.net

Michigan MD September 27, 2025, at St. Thomas, Trufant MI. Contact: Pr. Jess midwesternaab@thenalc.org

Global Workers Supported by the Midwestern Area

Aleksandr Gross in **Ukraine**

Sending Agency: Spiritual Orphans Network

Gemechis Buba in **Ethiopia**

Sending Agency: Spiritual Orphans Network

Tunsubilege Mwasongwe and Ndumieshi Nkya in **Tanzania**. Sending Agency: One Plus God

Stephen Katterhenrich in **Tanzania**

Sending Agency: Wycliffe

Please keep our Global Workers in your personal and congregational prayers. Information about these global workers can be found on our NALC website and on the websites of their sending agencies:

Candidacy for Ordained Ministry **Seminarians in the Midwestern Area**

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 Grandmaison, 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

BYLD (Building Youth as Leaders who are Disciples of Christ) July 7-12, 2025, is a week-long event for high school students that focuses on leadership skills, theological education, and discernment all from the perspective of the NALC's four Core Values: Christ Centered, Mission Driven, Traditionally Grounded, and Congregationally Focused. BYLD will take place July 7-12 at Geneva College, only 14 miles from the North American

Lutheran Seminary Center at Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pennsylvania.

The cost for students is \$100 and the cost of their transportation to Pennsylvania. A travel subsidy is available for those coming from further away. Spaces are limited to 24 youth, so be sure to register soon. For more information or to register contact Pastor Teresa Peters, director of Youth and Family Ministry, at tpeters@thenalc.org

The 2026 NALC Continental Youth Gathering will be July 7-10, 2026, at St. John Lutheran Church in Roanoke, Virginia. Save the date and plan to attend. The gathering is for youth ages 12-18.

"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.

Lake Luther, Angola, IN.

July 17-20 families will be gathering at Lake Luther. LOMIK Summer Staff will be there to lead exciting activities and engaging worship. There will also be free time to do what you want. All meals will be provided. The program focus for the weekend is on how to strengthen your family at home in the faith. We will have practical teaching that helps all ages to share the faith. \$200 per family includes all meals and activities.

Register online: <https://lomik.org/> – "Register for Camp"

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 Aaron Frey, St. Thomas, Trufant, MI posts sermons on YouTube. Go to <https://www.youtube.com/@stlctrufant763>

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

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 if you'd like to schedule a class; or for more information at midwesternaab@thenalc.org

Disaster Response

To schedule a mission trip, please contact Mary Bates, NALC Disaster Response coordinator, at 740-509-1132 or disasterresponse@thenalc.org Flood buckets, disaster response kits and supplies should go to your area disaster warehouse or sent to: NALC Disaster Response; 16500 Noble Ave.; Caldwell, Ohio 43724. Monetary donations may be made online at thenalc.org/giving or mailed to: North American Lutheran Church, 2113 Harwood Road, Suite 309; PMB 409; Bedford, TX 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

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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Pr. Tom Jacobson, OH South East MD
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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

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

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Director of Area Support & Development

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Area Assistants to the Bishop

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