



NORTH AMERICAN  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

## MIDWESTERN AREA NEWSLETTER

June 2024



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](mailto:midwesternaab@thenalc.org)

### Latest and Greatest News!

#### Pastors and Congregations

##### **NALC Midwestern Area Clergy Retreat**

The Midwestern Area Assistant to the Bishop is hosting a Clergy retreat at St. John Lutheran Church, Greenville, Ohio, 1pm 19Aug to 12pm 21Aug, 2024. Clergy from Michigan, Indiana and Ohio are especially invited, but any others are also welcome to register. **Cost:** travel to retreat, lodging cost (if not provided a scholarship), meals other than those provided during the event. (No registration fee for materials or presenter). **Subject of presentations:** Pastors functioning in Congregations as “emotional systems of families”; an application of Family Systems Theory for clergy. For more information or to **Register**, email Pr. Jess Abbott, [midwesternaab@nalc.org](mailto:midwesternaab@nalc.org) Please register not later than 11Aug, 2024.

##### Without a Pastor and Need a Non-Member to Attend a “New Member” Class?

Pastor Jess doing a New Member Lutheran education zoom 7-8pm ET, Wednesdays July 3, 10, 17, 24. Register with Pr. Jess at [midwesternaab@thenalc.org](mailto:midwesternaab@thenalc.org) by providing your name, congregation, phone # and email address. Pr. Jess will send the zoom link at 6:45pm to your email address prior to each zoom meeting. This is also an opportunity for any current members to join in for a “Lutheranism 101” experience.

#### Interim Pastor and Stewardship Workshops

The Ohio Mission Region will be hosting an Interim Training event on Friday noon to 5p, October 18<sup>th</sup> and a full day RESET workshop on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Both events will be hosted by Grace Lutheran Church in Thornville, Ohio. For more information contact Pastor Kathy Pennington, [penningtonkm@gmail.com](mailto:penningtonkm@gmail.com)

#### Online Confirmation Classes

Do you only have one or two confirmation-age youth in your church? Or is your congregation currently without a Pastor? Are you wondering how to offer confirmation? Consider the NALC online confirmation program. Students meet for two years, once a week, during the school year. In addition to weekly classes students meet monthly with a mentor and are asked to serve their church at least twice a month.

Our next class begins in September, registration is open now. Email Pastor Teresa Peters (Director of Youth and Family Ministry) [tpeters@thenalc.org](mailto:tpeters@thenalc.org)

#### Interterm 2024 For Pastors at NALS

June 10-14. Join us this summer in Ambridge for an engaging classroom experience as we meditate upon what it means for the NALC to be “mission driven” at such a time as this. Our professor for this course is the Rev. Canon Dr. Dan Alger, a seasoned pastor, an experienced church planter, and celebrated author of the recent book *Word and Sacrament: Ancient Traditions for Modern Church Planting*. The final day of course content and discussion groups throughout the week will be facilitated by pastors from the NALC with a passion for mission within our contemporary context. Auditors and pastors seeking continuing education opportunities are most welcome! Registration opens March 25.

[www.thenals.org/interterm](http://www.thenals.org/interterm)

## Disaster Response

Volunteer Training and Retreat Center, Caldwell, Ohio. The center is on the property of the national disaster warehouse and is available for service projects, and retreats. Contact Mary Bates for more information and how to get involved, 740-509-1132, [disasterresponse@thenalc.org](mailto:disasterresponse@thenalc.org)

### **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** 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](mailto:midwesternaab@thenalc.org) for Zoom invitation.

**SE-Ohio MD** **Every Monday** pastors Text study, at 10a, with Pr. Thomas Jacobson, Ph.D. Hosted online via Microsoft Teams. Please contact Pr. Tom [pastor@gracethornville.org](mailto:pastor@gracethornville.org) if interested.

**NC-Ohio MD**, Pastors Fellowship Family potluck picnic tentatively set for Thursday, September 19th at 5pm at Mike & Jane Greenler's barn. Email Pr. Pennington for more information [penningtonkm@gmail.com](mailto:penningtonkm@gmail.com)

**SW-Ohio MD**, Pastors Fellowship 10am July 19<sup>th</sup> at Grace Lutheran Church, West Carrollton, OH. Contact Pr. Daniels for more information [markluth91@gmail.com](mailto:markluth91@gmail.com)

**SW-Ohio MD**, The Faith Festival, August 10, at Grace / Eaton, OH. Contact Pr. Daniels for more information [markluth91@gmail.com](mailto:markluth91@gmail.com)

### **Pastor Retreats**

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 Mission District**, Jun 10-11, 2024. Best Western Holiday Lodge in Clear Lake, IA. Contact Dean, Pr. Christopher Staley for more information; [cbstaley@netins.net](mailto:cbstaley@netins.net)

**Midwestern Area Clergy Retreat**, Aug 19-21, 2024 at St. John, Greenville OH. Clergy from Michigan, Indiana and Ohio are especially invited, but any others are also welcome to register. For more information or to **Register**, email Pr. Jess Abbott, [midwesternaab@nalc.org](mailto:midwesternaab@nalc.org)

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

Khrystle Sullivan, North American Lutheran Seminary network (NALS), Iowa MD. <b>Approved for ordination</b>
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 Barman, Fuller Seminary, M.Div program. NC Ohio MD.
Scott Stine - Fuller Seminary, M.Div program. SE Ohio MD. Keith Deak, NALS Center at Trinity School for Ministry, M.Div program. SE Ohio MD.
Molly King, St. Paul Lutheran Seminary, M.Div program. SE Ohio MD
Kent Haley, Ordination Under Special Circumstances Program. New Life, Gallipolis OH, SE 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.

### **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**

July 1-4, 2024 **NALC Continental Youth Gathering**, St. John's Lutheran Church, Boerne, TX (near San Antonio). **We Belong "I know my own and my own know me"**.

Registration now open. See updates and information at <https://thenalc.org/cyg/>. This four-day gathering provides opportunities for NALC youth to grow in faith and relationship with others as the body of Christ. Youth will worship together, study God's Word, participate in large and small group sessions, reach out to the community through mission events, and engage in fellowship and fun!

July 21-27, 2024 **NEXUS Institute**, at Grand View University, Des Moines. The week is being sponsored by the NALC. For more information: <http://www.grandview.edu/NEXUS>

### **"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](mailto:southernaab@thenalc.org) or Pastor Teresa Peters at [tpeters@thenalc.org](mailto: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](mailto:midwesternaab@thenalc.org)

Pastor David Wendel posts sermons on YouTube [https://youtu.be/gCcD\\_lvwCbA](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](mailto:dwendel@thenalc.org)

### **Marital / Premarital Counseling Tool**

Zoe [www.zoescore.com](http://www.zoescore.com). Currently, the tool is used by approximately 10,000 pastors/therapists around the country and world.

Pastor Brian Salminen would gladly welcome the opportunity to train any NALC pastors / lay leaders on the use of the tool for free. If interested, contact Pr. Salminen at [drsal\\_123@yahoo.com](mailto:drsal_123@yahoo.com)

### **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](mailto:midwesternaab@thenalc.org)

### **On Line New Member Class**

Wednesdays, 7p ET, July 3, 10, 17, 24  
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](mailto:midwesternaab@thenalc.org)

### **Lutheran Chapel Week**

Fall: Oct. 21-25, 2024 Spring: Mar. 17-21, 2025  
Trinity School for Ministry is a seminary in the Anglican tradition and, as such, uses the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) for all its liturgies in Trinity Chapel. However, once per semester, our Anglican brothers and sisters grant "we Lutherans" the opportunity to lead all the liturgies over the course of one week using the historic liturgies for Matins, Vespers, The Eucharist, and Compline; it becomes **Lutheran Chapel Week!** There is an open invitation for anyone to visit the residential campus any time, but you might consider Lutheran Chapel Week as a special opportunity. For more

information on any visit to campus, contact Frontz, Rebecka [rebecka.frontz@tsm.edu](mailto:rebecka.frontz@tsm.edu)

### **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](http://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).

**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 schedule to attend:

**Jun 10-11, 2024** – Iowa Mission District Pastors Retreat

**Aug 9, 2024** – NALC online Convocation

**Aug 19-21, 2024** – Midwestern Area Clergy Retreat, Greenville, OH

**Sep 21, 2024** – Iowa Mission District Convocation, St. John, Western Douglas

**Oct 5** – Wisconsin / UP Mission District Convocation, Wausau, WI

**Oct 12** – Michigan Mission District Convocation, Trufant, MI

### **Midwestern Area Deans**

Pr. Jess Abbott, Midwestern Assistant to the Bishop  
513-314-2028, [midwesternaab@thenalc.org](mailto:midwesternaab@thenalc.org)

Pr. Bert Schultz, OH North West MD  
715-418-1037, [jcgracepastor@outlook.com](mailto:jcgracepastor@outlook.com)

Pr. Mark Daniels, OH Mission Region & SW Ohio MD  
740-603-5287, [markluth91@gmail.com](mailto:markluth91@gmail.com)

Pr. Tom Jacobson, OH South East MD  
740-242-2192, [pastor@gracethornville.org](mailto:pastor@gracethornville.org)

Pr. Michael Koch, OH North East Mission District  
330-635-8008, [mekoch46@gmail.com](mailto:mekoch46@gmail.com)

Pr. Kathy Pennington, OH North Central Mission District  
715-554-4658, [penningtonkm@gmail.com](mailto:penningtonkm@gmail.com)

Pr. Christopher Staley, IOWA Mission District  
515-357-9052, [cbstaley@netins.net](mailto:cbstaley@netins.net)  
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Pr. Jess Abbott, MI (lower peninsula) Mission District  
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Pr. Doug Gast, Heartland (IN-KY) Mission District  
317-727-0612, [dgast1950@gmail.com](mailto:dgast1950@gmail.com)

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

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Pr. Tom Reiff, WI & MI Upper Peninsula MD (co-dean)  
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### **Area Assistants to the Bishop**

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MI, OH, IN, KY, WI, IA

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Pr. Kevin Ree, Northern Assistant to the Bishop  
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### **Director of Area Support & Development**

Bp. John Bradosky,  
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