



NORTH AMERICAN  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

## MIDWESTERN AREA NEWSLETTER March 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!**

#### **Celebrating Pastors and Congregations**

**Le Mars, IA – St. John’s.** Congratulations Pastor Christian Meier as our newest NALC Chaplain in the U.S. Army Reserve. Pastor Meier took the oath as an officer February 2<sup>nd</sup> sworn in by Colonel Sonya Morrison, Wing Commander of the 185th Air Refueling Wing, Iowa Air National Guard. Pastor Meier was accessioned at the rank of Captain.



**Leipsic, OH – First.** Congratulations **Pastor Julie (Carey) Parsell upon her retirement**, effective April 1<sup>st</sup> 2024. First is hosting a celebration for her on Palm Sunday, March 24, 2024 from 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm Henry’s Restaurant, 810 N. Locust St., Ottawa, OH 45975. Please RSVP by March 17th to Holly Huber @ 419-890-9933

#### **New Congregation to the NALC**

**Alexandria, OH.** We welcome Saint John Lutheran Church of Ingomar, located in Alexandria, Ohio to the North American Lutheran Church and the SW Ohio Mission district! Saint John comes to us from the ELCA and was officially approved as a member of the NALC February 13<sup>th</sup> by the Executive Council.

#### **New Pastor to the NALC and Area**

**Newcomerstown, OH – St. Paul.** On February 19, 2024, the Executive Council approved the following clergy to the NALC.

Mark Brodbeck, and his wife Barbara  
1575 Yauger Road, #37, Mt Vernon,  
OH 43050; 567-525-6396

[pastormb75@gmail.com](mailto:pastormb75@gmail.com)

We welcome Mark and Barbara to the Midwestern Area and Mark’s new Call at St. Paul.

#### **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)

### **Pastoral Counseling Resource**

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)

### **Sola Publishing Needs New Roof**

Sola's roof at their building in Graham, NC needs replacing, and the leaks have been a long-term problem that have recently become more significant. They are estimating that it could cost about \$42K. Sola is an important part of the NALC, and many congregations are blessed by what Sola provides.

Deans, please consider bringing this important issue to your Mission District Councils for possible financial support.

See article on home page of their website  
<https://www.solapublishing.com/>

### **Disaster Response**

March 9, 9a-4p. NALC Disaster Volunteer Training at Peace Lutheran Church, Connersville, IN. Contact Dan Richards [dr7521@comcast.net](mailto:dr7521@comcast.net) or Mary Bates for further information and to register

April 30, 9a-4p. Train the Trainer for NALC Disaster Response training.

May 2. - Pastor Amy Little will dedicate the new NALC Volunteer Training & Retreat Center in Caldwell Ohio, time to be determined.

NEW 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)

### **Ohio Mission Region Convocaton**

May 3-4 at St. John, Grove City, Ohio. While the program is still in formation, Rev. Brad

Hales will be the principal speaker and will focus on ministry to senior adults. Visitors are always welcome to take advantage of key note speakers and workshops. For registration information, contact Pr. Michael Koch [mekoch46@gmail.com](mailto:mekoch46@gmail.com) (330) 635-8008, Ohio Mission Region Board.

### **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. Next: Feb 10<sup>th</sup>. Contact Pr. Abbott at [midwesternaab@thenalc.org](mailto:midwesternaab@thenalc.org) for Zoom invitation.

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

**SE-Ohio MD** pastors Text study, Mondays 10a, March 11, 18, 25 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 10am Feb 15<sup>th</sup> at St. Paul, Clyde, OH. Email Pr. Pennington for more information  
[penningtonkm@gmail.com](mailto:penningtonkm@gmail.com)

**NW-Ohio MD**, Pastors Fellowship 9am Feb 22<sup>nd</sup> at Zion, St. Marys, OH. Email Pr. Bert Schultz for more information  
[bertschultz2@outlook.com](mailto:bertschultz2@outlook.com)

### **Mission District 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 MD**, 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)

### **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)

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

Khrystle Sullivan, North American Lutheran Seminary network (NALS), Iowa 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.

Ethan Zimmerman, NALS Center at Trinity School for Ministry, M.Div program. NE 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.

Pam Grandmason, 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 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 Westchester”. 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)

**Global Worker Support**

**Rev. Valery Hryhoryk** has been an NALC Global worker for nearly a decade, ministering in Belarus, which has a communist / totalitarian government. He and his team do amazing work in preaching the Gospel and making disciples in a very tough place. He is launching a much needed **Ministry Center / Bible Camp project** for their ministry: Belarus Lutheran Missionary Fellowship (BLMF). They are seeking financial support to build a camp building.

For more information on how to support, contact Rev. Bill Moberly [Awakening Lives to World Missions \(alwm.org\)](http://AwakeningLivesToWorldMissions.org)

**Lutheran Adoption Conference April 10-12, 2024**

Join a gathering of Lutheran leaders at the Hyatt Regency Houston Intercontinental Airport at the Lutheran Adoption Conference. Enjoy

the testimony and talents of Dove Award-winning musician and adoptee Mark Schultz. Experience the fellowship and celebration (did somebody say, “Banquet!?”). Discover the expert information and exciting opportunities.

Join faith leaders, policy makers, adoption experts, life advocates, and more. Participants will explore possibilities for increasing distinctively Lutheran adoptions across the United States. For developing information and updates, visit <http://lutheransadopt.org/>

**State of the Midwestern Area**

These numbers constantly change based on new information each month, or corrections to prior erroneous information. As time passes the number are expected to become increasingly accurate.

Congregations with Pastors.....	92
Pastors with Congregation calls.....	100
Congs w/o Pastors, IN Call process ....	26
Congs w/o Pastors NOT in Call process	18
Interim Pastors (in congs w/o Prs.).....	8
Pastors of Specialized ministries.....	10
Retired Pastors (not Interim now).....	36
Seminary Students.....	8
Home Churches (not congs yet).....	3

Total Congregations .....	136
Total non-retired Pastors .....	118

**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:

**Apr 8-10, 2024** – NALC Seminarian Interns retreat, Mount Pleasant, PA.

**May 3-4, 2024** – Ohio Mission Region (and all Ohio Mission Districts) Convocation. St. John, Grove City

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

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

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

**Oct 1 or 2 (tentative)** – Wisconsin / UP Mission District Convocation, Wausau

**Oct 14 (tentative)** – Michigan Mission District Convocation, Trufant

513-314-2028, [northernaab@thenalc.org](mailto:northernaab@thenalc.org)

**Director of Area Support & Development**

Bp. John Bradosky,

614-684-8484, [jbradosky@thenalc.org](mailto:jbradosky@thenalc.org)

**Midwestern Area Deans**

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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)

[www.iowamissiondistrict.com](http://www.iowamissiondistrict.com)

Pr. Jess Abbott, MI (lower peninsula) Mission District

513-314-2028, [midwesternaab@thenalc.org](mailto: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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