



NORTH AMERICAN  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

## MIDWESTERN AREA NEWSLETTER September 2025



### Latest and Greatest News!

#### Pastors and Congregations

**Installations.** Pastor Jason Cooper will be installed at 4:00pm, Saturday, September 13, at First Lutheran, Manchester, Iowa.

#### Annual Deans and AABs Meeting with the Bishop

November 11, 8a to November 12, 12p., Dallas Fort Worth, TX. All **new Deans** are invited to arrive a day early for the New Dean Orientation, November 10, 1-5p

#### Quarterly Midwestern Area Deans Zoom

Sundays 3:00pm, Next zoom September 14  
Future zooms: 14Dec25, 8Mar26,  
14Jun26, 13Sep26  
Pr. Jess will send zoom link to everyone's email 15 minutes prior to the meeting.

#### Quarterly NALC Military & Clinical Chaplain Zoom

Sundays 4:30pm, Next zoom September 14  
Future zooms: 14Dec25, 8Mar26,  
14Jun26, 13Sep26  
Pr. Jess will send zoom link to everyone's email 15 minutes prior to the meeting

#### Retreats, Studies, Meetings

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.

**September 9, SE-Ohio MD** Pastors Fellowship 9 AM at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Westerville, OH. Contact: Pr. Kurt Luebke [padrekurterik@gmail.com](mailto:padrekurterik@gmail.com)

**September 18, NW-Ohio MD** Pastors Fellowship 10 AM at First English Lutheran

Church, Mansfield, OH. Contact: Pr. Kathy Pennington [penningtonkm@gmail.com](mailto:penningtonkm@gmail.com)

**September 24, NW-Ohio MD** Pastors Fellowship 9 AM at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jackson Center, OH. Contact: Pr. Bert Schultz [jcgracepastor@outlook.com](mailto:jcgracepastor@outlook.com)

#### Convocations

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

**Iowa MD** September 20, 2025 Contact Pr. Staley [cbstaley@netins.net](mailto:cbstaley@netins.net)

**Michigan MD** September 27, 2025, at St. Thomas, Trufant MI. Contact: Pr. Jess [midwesternaab@thenalc.org](mailto:midwesternaab@thenalc.org)

**Wisconsin-UP MD** October 11, 2025 at Caroline, WI. Contact: Pr. Mark Knappe [solideogloria1@icloud.com](mailto:solideogloria1@icloud.com)

**Heartland MD** October 18, 2025 at St. John's, Ft. Wayne, IN. Guest speaker Jim Halstead of "Go & Tell Ministries". Contact: Pr. Doug Gast [dgast1950@gmail.com](mailto:dgast1950@gmail.com)

#### 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 Ndimieshi 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**

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| 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.                                       |
| Joanne Gallagher, Joanne, St. Paul Lutheran Seminary, Vicar at Hope, Hubbard Lake, Michigan 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**

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| 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**

**NALC Southwest Ohio Youth Worship Night**  
6:30p September 7<sup>th</sup> at Living Water Lutheran Church, Centerville, OH. Contact Trisha

Vulgamore for more information  
[tvmore@outlook.com](mailto:tvmore@outlook.com)

### **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.**

<https://lomik.org/>

**Camp Frederick, Rogers OH**

<https://www.campfrederickohio.com/>

### **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 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\\_lwCbA](https://youtu.be/gCcD_lwCbA), 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)

### **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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://thenalc.org/giving) or mailed to: North American Lutheran Church, 2113 Harwood Road, Suite 309; PMB 409; Bedford, TX 76021-4703

### **Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries Inc. (NALC partner, Ft. Wayne, IN)** [www.lmvfm.org](http://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](http://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](mailto:midwesternaab@thenalc.org)

### **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. Kurt Luebke, OH South East MD, Dean  
503-522-0216, [padrekurterik@gmail.com](mailto:padrekurterik@gmail.com)  
Pr. Matt Cox, OH South East MD, Asst. Dean  
614-327-4328, [mcox54@hotmail.com](mailto:mcox54@hotmail.com)  
Pr. Cathy Ammlung, OH North East Mission District  
443-472-0480, [cammlung@gmail.com](mailto:cammlung@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  
317-727-0612, [dgast1950@gmail.com](mailto:dgast1950@gmail.com)  
Pr. Mark Knappe, WI & MI Upper Peninsula MD (co-dean)  
262-844-2234, [solideogloria1@icloud.com](mailto:solideogloria1@icloud.com)  
Pr. Tom Reiff, WI & MI Upper Peninsula MD (co-dean)  
715-892-9914, [tireiff@outlook.com](mailto:tireiff@outlook.com)

### **Director of Area Support & Development**

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

### **Area Assistants to the Bishop**

Pr. Jess Abbott, Midwestern Assistant to the Bishop  
513-314-2028, [midwesternaab@thenalc.org](mailto:midwesternaab@thenalc.org)  
MI, OH, IN, KY, WI, IA  
Pr. Bill White, Eastern Assistant to the Bishop  
901-569-1428, [easternaab@thenalc.org](mailto:easternaab@thenalc.org)  
Pr. Mark Braaten, Southern Assistant to the Bishop

903-316-1594, [southernaab@thenalc.org](mailto:southernaab@thenalc.org)

Pr. Marv Combs, Western Assistant to the Bishop

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

Pr. Kevin Ree, Northern Assistant to the Bishop

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