



NORTH AMERICAN
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

MIDWESTERN AREA NEWSLETTER

May 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

Latest and Greatest News!

Pastors and Congregations

New Pastoral Support: We welcome Deacon Joshua Ruiter, an Anglican Deacon, began his ministry at Greenford Lutheran Church in Greenford (NE OH Mission District).



Joshua will be taking courses at the North American Lutheran Seminary in Ambridge, PA to complete his M. Div. degree and join the roster of the NALC. Installation of Pr. Ruiter as was conducted by Rev. Michael Koch (MD Dean) and Rev. William Beck (LCMC) on April 14.

Condolence: Our brother in Christ, Rev John Moffett, died April 5 at his home in Ashland, OH at age 77. Judy Moffett provided his care in his last days. She resides at 1407 Township Road #1596 in Ashland OH 44805-9728. John Graduated from Ohio State Univ. in 1968. Ohio State Law School in the early 70s. Then from

Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, OH in 1986. He served 38 years of ordained ministry. John was buried in Magnolia, OH, his home town.

NALC 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

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

Disaster Response

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

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 (330) 635-8008, Ohio Mission Region Board.

Interim Pastor and Stewardship Workshops

The Ohio Mission Region will be hosting an Interim Training event on Friday, October 18th and a full day RESET workshop on the 19th. Both events will be hosted by Grace Lutheran Church in Thornville, Ohio. For more information contact Pastor Bert Schultz, Bert Schultz, BertSchultz2@outlook.com

"Cabrini" Movie Review **by Pr. Michawl Koch**

Angel Studios, producer of the CHOSEN series, has now produced a full-length movie about the life of Mother Cabrini, an Italian nun who came to New York City in ca. 1890 and opened a home to parentless children in New York City. The story begins in Italy where she asks the Pope to travel to the USA and help children. The Pope grants her wish and she arrives in New York like so many immigrants with nothing except the blessings of the Pope. The Bishop of New York is hostile to her, and advised her to return to Italy. She stayed in New York City and founded a children's home in the deepest of slums. Italians were generally hated and treated very poorly. Mother Cabrini faced incredible odds but pushed ahead and built the children's home, a major hospital and numerous institutions. This is a true story and you will be touched by her love for her children through Jesus Christ.

It is almost a three-hour movie, but an energizing story for teens and adults in your congregation. It is in local theatres, or you may be able to watch it on the Angel Studios website in May or June.

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 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 if interested.

NC-Ohio MD, Pastors Fellowship 10am May 16th at location TBD. Email Pr. Pennington for more information penningtonkm@gmail.com

SW-Ohio MD, Pastors Fellowship 10am May 8th at Grace Lutheran Church, West Carrollton, OH. Contact Pr. Daniels for more information 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

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

Khrystle Sullivan, North American Lutheran Seminary network (NALS), Iowa MD. **Approved for ordination**

Sandy Thompson, M.Div 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 Grandmason, 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 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 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

Marital / Premarital Counseling Tool

Zoe 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

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 Prep

A four-session class (over 4 weeks) that introduces Lutheranism and prepares people to join the membership of a congregation. Classes can be scheduled for groups of 4 or more. Contact Pastor Jess at for more information at 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

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.

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:

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 12 – Michigan Mission District Convocation, Trufant

Midwestern Area Deans

Pr. Jess Abbott, Midwestern Assistant to the Bishop
513-314-2028, midwesternaab@thenalc.org

Pr. Bert Schultz, OH North West MD
715-418-1037, jcgracepastor@outlook.com

Pr. Mark Daniels, OH Mission Region & SW Ohio MD
740-603-5287, markluth91@gmail.com

Pr. Tom Jacobson, OH South East MD
740-242-2192, pastor@gracethornville.org

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
515-357-9052, cbstaley@netins.net
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
317-727-0612, dqast1950@gmail.com

Pr. Mark Knappe, WI & MI Upper Peninsula MD (co-dean)
262-844-2234, solideogloria1@icloud.com

Pr. Tom Reiff, WI & MI Upper Peninsula MD (co-dean)
715-892-9914, treiff@outlook.com

Area Assistants to the Bishop

Pr. Jess Abbott, Midwestern Assistant to the Bishop
513-314-2028, midwesternaab@thenalc.org
MI, OH, IN, KY, WI, IA

Pr. Bill White, Eastern Assistant to the Bishop
901-569-1428, easternaab@thenalc.org

Pr. Mark Braaten, Southern Assistant to the Bishop
903-316-1594, southernaab@thenalc.org

Pr. Marv Combs, Western Assistant to the Bishop
513-314-2028, westernaab@thenalc.org

Pr. Kevin Ree, Northern Assistant to the Bishop
513-314-2028, northernaab@thenalc.org

Director of Area Support & Development

Bp. John Bradosky,
614-684-8484, jbradosky@thenalc.org