



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!

Celebrating Pastors and Congregations

Laurens, IA – Bethany, honored their pastor, David Klappenbach, for the 25th anniversary of his ordination. An afternoon service of Holy Communion with renewal of ordination vows was held on August 27th, with Pastor Christopher Staley, Iowa Mission District, conducting the service.

Ashland, OH – Condolence. Our brother in Christ, Pastor Robert “Bob” Pflueger, went home to be with the Lord early Monday morning, September 25, 2023. Visitation is October 1st at Denbow-Gasche Funeral Home in Ashland from 1-3p.

Funeral services will be held on Monday, October 2, 2023, at 11:00 am in the Trinity Lutheran Church with the Reverend Kevin McClain presiding.

NALC Convocation & Luther Week in August

For highlights, see this month’s NALC newsletter at

<https://thenalc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/NALC-September-2023-web.pdf>

NALC Disaster Response – Stuff the Truck

October 30th 11am to noon, at Grace Lutheran Church, 65 E. Columbus St., Thornville, Ohio. Suggested donations: Bibles, quilts / blankets, flood buckets, school kits, healthcare kits, gift cards. For more information, contact Mary Bates, NALC Disaster Response 740-509-1132, disasterresponse@thenalc.org

NALC Disaster Response – Work Day

At Caldwell, OH at our disaster response center on Monday, October 23. You will see growth and direction there as you arrive. A new pavilion, a central gathering retreat center for worship and retreats, and two houses for individuals or couples to stay overnight.

Wisconsin/Upper Michigan MD Convocation

The Wisconsin/Upper Michigan MD will be having their Convocation on Oct 6-7 at Calvary Lutheran in Brookfield Wisconsin. Special guest will be Bishop Dan Selbo. The Convocation will close with the Bishop preaching at the Holy Eucharist on Saturday, October 7th. We pray the Holy Spirit will bless our time together to the Glory of the Lord.

Michigan MD Convocation

The Michigan (Lower Peninsula) MD will hold their convocation Oct 14 at St. Thomas, Trufant, MI. The Theme is “Communicating the Love and Mission of the Lord”.

Mission District Retreats

It is important for all NALC Pastors to maintain relationship with other pastors, especially within each Mission District (MD). Deans facilitate these relationships in a number of way; regular MD meetings in-person or zoom, pericope studies, etc. Another great way is doing an annual retreat of some kind. Pastor Jess has a number of subjects that could be injected into retreats, so feel free to call if you’d like to explore such possibilities.

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.

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

NC-Ohio MD, Pastors Fellowship 10am. Oct 19th Trinity, Monroeville. Nov 16th, Location TBD. Email Pr. Pennington for more information penningtonkm@gmail.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. Contact Dean, Pr. Christopher Staley for more information; cbstaley@netins.net

Candidacy Seminarians in the Midwestern Area

Michelle Kouse, North American Lutheran Seminary network (NALS) / Fuller Seminary, M.Div program. SW Ohio MD. *Not entranced yet subject to approval October 9-10.*

Terese Whitten, Institute of Lutheran Theology (ILT), M.Div program. Michigan MD. **Approved for ordination**

Jason Swartley, Luther House of Study at Kairos University, formerly Sioux Falls, M.Div program. *Not entranced yet subject to approval October 9-10.*

Monica Barman, Fuller Seminary, M.Div program. NC Ohio MD. *Not entranced yet subject to approval October 9-10.*

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. *Not entranced yet subject to approval October 9-10.*

Ethan Zimmerman, NALS Center at Trinity School for Ministry, M.Div program. NC 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). 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!

May 5-11, 2024 **NALC Young Adult Gathering**, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. For those age 18-28. Application deadline is Dec 1. For more information, contact Pr. Teresa Peters.

“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 mbraaten@oslctyler.org or Pastor Teresa Peters at tpeters@thenalc.org

Confirmation / Catechism Web Courses [Free] – Luther House of Study, <https://lutherhouseofstudy.org/courses/>

Sermons for Lay Leaders to Deliver at Worship Services
Iowa Mission District sermon library www.iowamissiondistrict.com or contact Pastor Burkhalter at pqburkhalter52@hotmail.com

Pastor David Wendel posts sermons on YouTube 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

Lutheran Center for Religious Liberties

Recommended by Pastor Jacobson, member of NALC Commission for Theology and Doctrine (an SE Ohio Mission District Dean)

Oct 18th, register for Zoom Video Conference at <https://forms.gle/uE5jkunEf8TgLEC48>
Rev. Mark Frith, Network Director, LCRL’s Champions Network will present an overview of the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberties work in Washington, DC, and the LCRL Two-Kingdom Academy. Presentation will cover: LCRL’s Advocacy in Washington DC; LCRL’s Education

for the local Church – The Two-Kingdom Academy; A Two-Kingdom engagement of the Culture for the sake of the mission of the Church.

State of the Midwestern Area

As of Sep 1, 2023

Congregations with Pastors.....	93
Pastors with Congregation calls.....	97
Congregations without Pastors.....	41
Interim Pastors (in congs w/o Prs.).....	10
Pastors of Specialized ministries.....	11
Retired Pastors (not Interim now).....	33
Seminary Students.....	5
Home Churches (not congs yet).....	2

Total Congregations	134
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/>

NALC Life Ministries

The NALC Life Ministries Team focuses on life issues - from conception to the end of life. The Team offers support for participation in life marches and responding to life issue legislation. The Team is planning to develop educational materials based on Holy Scripture to help pastors and congregations address the entire range of life issues - reproductive technology, abortion, adoption, foster care, human trafficking, end of life and more. The Team is also willing to provide presentations on life issues at events in your Mission District or in your congregations. You may contact any on the Team for more information.

- Rebecka V. A. Frontz (rebeckaandrae@gmail.com; 724-787-7780)
- Pr. Dennis Di Mauro (dennisdimauro@yahoo.com; 703-568-3346)
- Pr. Al Towberman (atowberman@zoominternet.net; 724-698-3644)
- Pr Scott Licht (slicht@lutheransforlife.org; 515-238-5496)
- Pr. Melinda Jones (revmhjones@yahoo.com; 843-270-3675)
- Pr. Amy Schifrin (acschifrin@gmail.com; 563-929-0909)
- Pr. Steve Shipman (prsteveshipman@gmail.com; 570-916-7780)
- Pr. Mark Chavez (pastor@reformation-nalc.org; 717-823-7739)

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:

Oct 3. Cross, Pigeon, MI. Interim Journey Consultation with Council.

Oct 6-7. WI-UP Mission District Convocation

Oct 14, 2023 – Michigan Mission District Convocation, St. Thomas, Trufant, MI

Oct 28. SWOH MD Strategic Planning Mtg, Springfield

Nov 8-9, 2023 – Bishop with Deans meeting

Jan 16-18, 2024 – Pastors Conference, Drury Plaza, Disney Springs, Orlando, FL

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

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, dgast1950@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, tireiff@outlook.com

Prospective Specialized Ministries & Military Chaplains

If a seminarian or pastor asks you about the possibility of serving as a military chaplain (Active Duty, Reserve or National Guard), Civil Air Patrol Chaplain, Hospital / Hospice chaplain, or fire, police, para-church minister; direct them for assistance to Jess Abbott at militaryendorser@thenalc.org Jess is the NALC's official Military Endorsing Agent for all NALC clergy currently servicing or seeking to serve in the U.S. or Canadian Military. See the "Our Work" tab in the NALC website for more information; <https://thenalc.org/specialized-and-military-ministries/>

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