



Lutheran Week 2023  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

## SCHEDULE & PROGRAM

*"Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation!"*

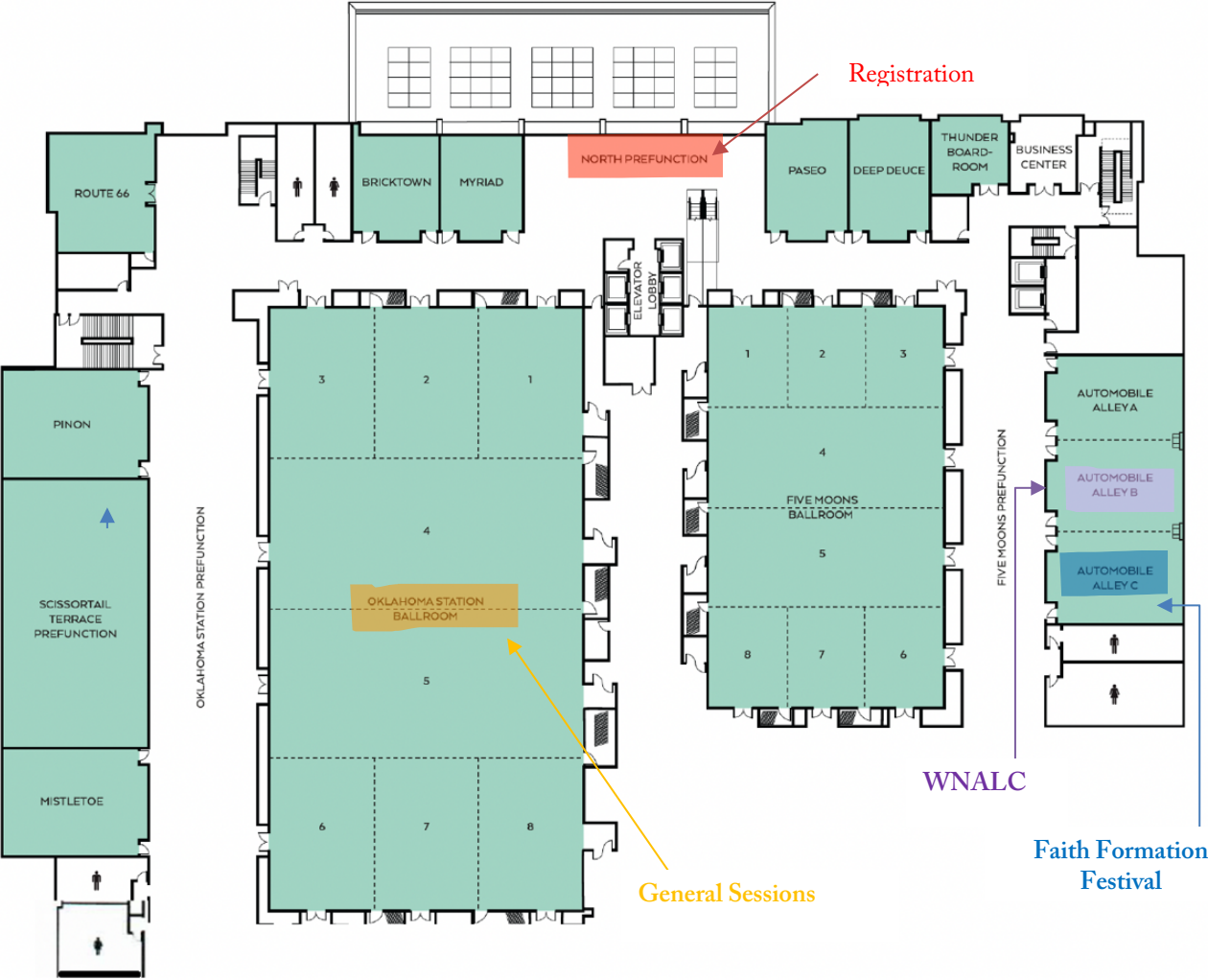
*—Mark 16:15*



NORTH AMERICAN  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

# OMNI OKLAHOMA CITY HOTEL

LEVEL TWO



Deep Deuce  
Mistletoe  
Pinion  
Bricktown  
Oklahoma Station Prefunction

*Prayer/Confession Room*  
*Global Confessional & Missional Lutheran Forum*  
*Lutheran Theologians for the Church*  
*Booksellers*  
*Ministry Displays*

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# A WELCOME FROM BISHOP DAN SELBO



Welcome to Lutheran Week in Oklahoma City! This biennial gathering of the North American Lutheran Church is an encouraging time for pastors and lay leaders throughout our church body. United in the commission and commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ and grounded in the authority of the Scriptures, we come together for the purpose of deepening our relationships, strengthening our mission and ministry connections, and making decisions for the life we share as a denomination.

Opportunities this year include a Faith Formation Festival for those passionate about youth ministry, a gathering of the Women of the NALC for renewed fellowship and support, and the Braaten-Benne Lectures in Theology—this year under the theme “God the Father Creates...In His Image.”

The culmination of the NALC Lutheran Week is our Mission Convocation. This year’s theme, “*Missio Dei*—The Work and Mission of God,” completes a six-year focus on the Holy Trinity. The mission of our Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—has not changed since the beginning of time. From before the foundation of the world, God has been on a mission to save the world in Jesus Christ.

Along with the work of adopting a budget and the election of a bishop and other denominational leaders, our time together will focus on the calling and commission we have been given in the Church to share in the work and mission of God.

We are glad you are here, and we look forward to the time we will share. My prayer is that our time together will challenge and inspire us to take a more active involvement in the life of our congregations and our church body—as well as in speaking the name of Jesus and making known what God has done for all people, through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son.

It is a joy and a privilege to serve together in the North American Lutheran Church—welcome to Lutheran Week 2023!

**Bishop Dan Selbo**

# A WELCOME FROM THE NORTH TEXAS MISSION DISTRICT



Welcome! I welcome all our colleagues—spouses, lay members, friends and visitors—in the ministry of Christ.

I especially want to extend a special welcome to those who have traveled from other countries to attend this North American Lutheran Church Mission Convocation. We pray that you will be blessed by this experience, and that you will enjoy meeting as many people as possible—for we are all truly brothers and sisters in Christ!

Our North Texas/Oklahoma mission district includes nine congregations, three of which are Spanish-speaking, and all are represented here at this Convocation. We are also home to the NALC offices, located in the Dallas area. We are meeting for the first time here in Oklahoma City, which is the capital of the state of Oklahoma and the home of at least 39 Federally recognized Native American nations and tribes. We are also located in the midst of active oil fields, as well as our nation's aviation industry. It is a land of rich human history, and if you get a chance to explore some of the local museums here in the city, it will be worth your time.

## **LOST? QUESTIONS?**

Our mission district churches have provided helpers to answer your questions, help you find the location of meeting rooms, and assist you in any way possible. These helpers are wearing **red NALC vests**, and they have been equipped to point you in the right direction.

## **FIRST AID/MEDICAL HELP**

Help is available, should the need arise. Those with **red caps and red NALC vests** are trained medical responders and can work with the hotel and local emergency resources as needed to provide the care you need.

Again, welcome! Enjoy your time with us and be blessed!

In ministry together,

**The Rev. Kris Brower**

Dean, North Texas Mission District

## ABOUT THE THEME

### *MISSIO DEI*—THE WORK & MISSION OF GOD

The American Lutheran missiologist, James A. Scherer, says, “For Luther, mission is always pre-eminently the work of the triune God—*missio Dei*—and its goal and outcome is the coming of the kingdom of God. Luther sees the church, along with God’s word and every baptized believer, as crucial divine instruments for mission. Yet, nowhere does the reformer make the church the starting point or the final goal of mission, as 19th-century missiology tended to do. It is always God’s own mission that dominates Luther’s thought, and the coming of the kingdom of God represents its final culmination” (James A. Scherer, *Gospel, Church, & Kingdom: Comparative Studies in World Mission Theology* [Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1987], 55).

As one of the Core Values of the North American Lutheran Church is Mission Driven, it is important for us to be reminded that this is not only our mission, our vision, our strategy, but it is “pre-eminently the work of the triune God—*missio Dei*!”

This year’s NALC Lutheran Week completes a six-year focus on the Holy Trinity, concluding now with “God the Father Creates...in His Image,” as the theme for the Braaten-Benne Theological Lectures. However, it seems appropriate to conclude this cycle with the theme, *Missio Dei*, as we celebrate the fact that everything we do as a mission-driven Lutheran body comes from God and His mission—that we are to go into all the world, empowered by the Holy Spirit, preaching the good news of salvation in and through Jesus Christ—to the whole creation!

Our prayer is that this year’s Mission Convocation will indeed be a mission-oriented and Mission-Driven gathering! While there will be necessary times dedicated to reports, actions and elections—including the election of a bishop—highlights will be the several “On Fire for Mission” sessions, focusing on domestic mission, international mission and mission related to congregational life. These will begin with brief Bible study and devotional periods, followed by presentations on the theme, with extended time for table talk, reflection, breakouts, and strategies for taking it home. We are also excited to hold a Faith Formation Festival and the Gathering of the Women of the NALC earlier in the week.

The hope and prayer of all involved is that this will light a spark, or fan the flame, for mission. We pray that we will return home inspired and excited about *Missio Dei*—the work and mission of God in our local congregations, in North America and throughout the whole creation!

# ABOUT THE NORTH AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

The North American Lutheran Church (NALC) is a growing Christian church in the Lutheran tradition, uniting more than 142,500 Lutherans from 490+ congregations across the United States and Canada. The NALC embodies the theological center of Lutheranism in North America and stands firmly within the global Lutheran mainstream. The NALC is a church family committed to the authority of the Bible as the inspired Word of God, and, in keeping with the Lutheran Confessions, believes all doctrines should and must be judged by the teaching of Scripture.

The NALC has embraced four Core Values which shape its common life: Christ Centered, Mission Driven, Traditionally Grounded, and Congregationally Focused. As a church centered on the unique Gospel of Jesus Christ, the NALC is animated by missions and evangelism, grounded in the 2,000-year tradition of Christian faith, and organized chiefly to serve our congregations. A renewed Lutheran community moving forward in faith, the NALC is focused on living out Christ's Great Commission to go and make disciples in North America and around the globe.

## OUR CORE VALUES

### **CHRIST CENTERED**

We confess the apostolic faith in Jesus Christ according to the Holy Scriptures. We affirm the authority of the Scriptures as the authoritative source and norm, “according to which all doctrines should and must be judged” (Formula of Concord). We accept the ecumenical creeds and the Lutheran Confessions as true witnesses to the Word of God.

### **MISSION DRIVEN**

We believe that the mission of the Church is to preach the Gospel and to make disciples for Christ. We believe that making disciples—in our congregations, in our communities and nations, and around the world—must be a priority of the Church in the present age.

### **TRADITIONALLY GROUNDED**

We affirm the ecumenical creeds and the faithful witness of the Church across time and space. We endorse the form and practices of the universal Church that are consistent with Scripture, particularly the office of the ministry and the tradition of worship under Word and Sacrament. We seek dialogue and



fellowship with other Lutheran churches and with faithful Christians of other confessions.

### **CONGREGATIONALLY FOCUSED**

We strive to be a church that is organized to facilitate the ministries of local congregations in a posture of servanthood and a spirit of partnership, through the provision of resources, connections and information.

### **OUR PURPOSE**

The North American Lutheran Church exists for the purpose of offering a witness to the saving work of God the Father, in Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, in order that all people would come to know and trust and believe in what God has accomplished for them in His Son. Consistent with Holy Scripture, the apostolic teaching and the Lutheran Confessions, our work as a church body and as individual congregations is based upon our Lord's Great Commandment—"to love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, strength and mind...and to love your neighbor as yourself " (Matthew 22:37–39)—and His Great Commission—"to go into the world and make disciples of all nations, baptizing and teaching in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19–20).

### **OUR CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP**

The call to discipleship and to making disciples is in our DNA. It identifies us as followers of Jesus Christ—we are disciples, desiring to grow each day as followers of His who live the sacrificial way of the cross in community with one another. It also defines what we do. Our calling is to make disciples—to live as witnesses of our faith to others, to proclaim to them what God has done for them in Jesus, to baptize them in His name and bring them into His family, and to support and encourage them as they grow in their relationship with Him and grow in their ability to share their faith with others.

### **OUR LEGACY**

As a body of believers who trust in the promises of God in Jesus Christ and who follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit, our primary purpose of proclaiming the Gospel message of the kingdom of God will never change. We will, however, as the result of living in an ever-changing world, regularly review our strategies and commitments in carrying out that primary task of being ambassadors of the Kingdom—of forgiveness, healing, deliverance and wholeness—to a confused and broken world around us.

# LEADERSHIP

## BISHOP & STAFF

### Executive Staff

**The Rev. Dr. Daniel W. Selbo**  
**The Rev. Dr. Amy C. Little**

*Bishop*  
*General Secretary*

**The Rev. Dcn. Andrew S. Ames Fuller**  
**The Rev. Dr. Gemechis Buba**

*Director of Communications*  
*Assistant to the Bishop for*  
*International Mission*

**The Rev. Phillip Gagnon**  
*(Currently on medical leave)*  
**The Rev. Dr. Eric Riesen**

*Assistant to the Bishop for*  
*Domestic Mission & Discipleship*  
*President, North American*  
*Lutheran Seminary*

**The Rev. Dr. David Wendel**

*Assistant to the Bishop for Ministry*  
*& Ecumenism*

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### Area Assistants to the Bishop

**The Rev. Dr. Jess Abbott**

*Midwestern Area Assistant to the*  
*Bishop; Specialized Ministries and*  
*Military Endorsing Agent*

**The Rev. Mark Braaten**

*Southern Area Assistant to the*  
*Bishop*

**The Rev. Marv Combs**

*Western Area Assistant to the*  
*Bishop*

**The Rev. Kevin Ree**

*Northern Area Assistant to the*  
*Bishop*

**The Rev. Dr. Bill White**

*Eastern Area Assistant to the*  
*Bishop*

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### Program Staff

**The Rev. Dr. David Baer**  
**Mary Bates**  
**Melanie Corn**

*Newsletter Editor*  
*Disaster Response Coordinator*  
*Youth & Family Ministry Specialist*

**The Rev. Brad Hales**  
**The Rev. David Keener**  
**The Rev. Jeff Morlock**  
**The Rev. Teresa Peters**  
**The Rev. Shelly Schultz**

*Director of Church Planting &  
Aging Ministries*  
*Director of Renewal & Discipleship*  
*Director of Vocational Discernment*  
*Director of Youth & Family Ministry*  
*Call Process Coordinator*

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## **Administrative Staff**

**The Rev. Wendy Berthelsen**  
**Alana Brooks**  
**The Rev. Susan Fox**  
**Rebecka Frontz**  
**The Rev. Carol Fryer**  
**Anne Gleason**  
**Sarah Louis**  
**Steven Neaton**  
**Ariel Wicker**

*Assistant for Certification*  
*Communications Assistant*  
*Office Administrator*  
*Administrative Coordinator, NALS*  
*Missions Specialist*  
*Financial Administrator*  
*Office Administrator*  
*Communications Specialist*  
*Communications Specialist*

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## **North American Lutheran Seminary Faculty**

**The Rev. Dr. Eric Riesen**  
**Dr. David Luy**  
  
**Dr. Alexander Pierce**  
  
**The Rev. Dr. Amy Schiffrin**  
  
**The Rev. Dr. Nathan H. Yoder**  
  
**The Rev. Dr. Maurice Lee**  
  
**The Rev. Dr. Mark Mattes**  
**The Rev. Dr. Orrey McFarland**  
**The Rev. Dr. Andrew Weisner**  
**Dr. David Yeago**

*President*  
*Associate Professor of Systematic  
Theology, Co-host, Cardigan &  
Collar Podcast*  
*Assistant Professor of Historical  
Theology; General Editor, Word &  
Sacrament Magazine*  
*President Emeritus; Associate  
Professor of Liturgy & Homiletics*  
*Director of Lutheran Studies,  
Gordon-Conwell Theological  
Seminary*  
*Adjunct Professor, Co-host,  
Cardigan & Collar Podcast*  
*Adjunct Professor*  
*Adjunct Professor*  
*Adjunct Professor*  
*Adjunct Professor*

# CHURCH GOVERNANCE

## Executive Council & Church Officers

The Rev. Dr. Bassam Abdallah  
The Rev. Theresa Jacobson  
Michael Johnson, *Treasurer*  
Lynn Kickingbird  
Scott Kramer  
The Rev. Carl Rasmussen  
Jerry Roehr  
The Rev. Mark Werner, *Recording Secretary*  
Joel Williams

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## Court of Adjudication

The Rev. Dr. George Black  
Samuel Duncomb  
The Rev. Jennifer Gold  
The Rev. Jeffray S. Greene  
The Rev. Leslie Haines  
The Rev. Ronald Hoyum  
Matthew Lind

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## Inquiry Panel

The Rev. Todd Cook  
The Rev. Mac de Waal  
Carol Lattier  
The Rev. Tom Lurvey  
The Rev. Lisa Peterson

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## MISSION DISTRICT DEANS

### ATLANTIC MISSION REGION

#### Regional Dean

The Rev. W. Stevens Shipman Jr.



**Central Mission District**

The Rev. Rodney W. Lilley

**Northeast Mission District**

The Rev. Gregory E. Davidson

**Maryland/Virginia Mission District**

The Rev. Dennis Di Mauro

**Western Mission District**

The Rev. Paula L. Murray

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**Canadian Mission District**

The Rev. Charles Jackson

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**CAROLINAS MISSION REGION**

**Catawba Valley Mission District**

The Rev. Stephen Johnson

**Piedmont-East Mission District**

The Rev. Carl M. Haynes

**South Carolina Mission District**

The Rev. Melinda H. Jones

**Southern Piedmont Mission District**

The Rev. Steven Paul King

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**Central Pacific Mission District**

The Rev. Taylor Marie Stempniak

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**Eastern South Dakota Mission District**

The Rev. Thomas L. Christenson

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## **GREAT PLAINS MISSION REGION**

### **Regional Dean**

The Rev. Dennis Beckmann

### **Great Plains Mission District East**

The Rev. Franz Bradenburg

### **Great Plains Mission District West**

The Rev. Jeffrey T. Cottingham

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### **Great Rivers Mission District**

The Rev. Carlin W. Ours Jr.

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### **Heartland Mission District**

The Rev. Douglas C. Gast

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### **Iowa Mission District**

The Rev. Christopher B. Staley

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### **Michigan Mission District**

The Rev. Jesse J. Abbott

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### **Mid-Northeast Mission District**

The Rev. Nila G. Cogan

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### **Mid-South Mission District**

The Rev. Scott M. Ness

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### **Minkota Mission District**

The Rev. Steven M. Bliss

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**Northwest Mission District**

The Rev. Ian J. Wolfe  
The Rev. Jody Becker

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**OHIO MISSION REGION**

**North Central Ohio Mission District**

The Rev. Katherine Pennington

**North Eastern Ohio Mission District**

The Rev. Michael E. Koch

**North West Ohio Mission District**

The Rev. Hilbert A. Schultz

**Southeastern Ohio Mission District**

The Rev. Thomas E. Jacobson

**Southwest Ohio Mission District**

The Rev. Mark J. Daniels

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**Rocky Mountain Mission District**

The Rev. Kenneth D. Hohag

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**Sonshine Mission District of Florida**

The Rev. The Rev Alan W. Peacock

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**Southwest Pacific Mission District**

The Rev. Randal L. Ouimette

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## **TEXAS MISSION REGION**

### **North Texas Mission District**

The Rev. Kris Brower

### **Southeast Texas Mission District**

The Rev. Jared Allen Stillions

### **Southwest Texas Mission District**

The Rev. Ralph W. Reitmeyer Jr.

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### **Western Dakotas, Montana & Wyoming Mission District**

The Rev. Dr. David Baer

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### **Wisconsin & Upper Michigan Mission District**

The Rev. Mark W. Knappe

The Rev. Thomas E. Reiff



## CHAPLAIN

### **THE REV. MAC DE WAAL**

*Canadian Mission District, Outlook, Saskatchewan*



Pastor Mac de Waal and his wife Lila are both serving Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Outlook, Saskatchewan. They have two adult children and one grandchild. Pastor Mac has been ordained for 21 years (which makes him legal to serve in each state) and besides parish ministry, has served as a police and college chaplain, dean of the mission district and on the inquiry panel for the NALC.

## LUTHERAN WEEK PLANNING TEAM

### **THE REV. WILL HARTFELDER**

*Chair, Lutheran Week Planning Team*



The Rev. Will Hartfelder retired in 2018 after 31 years of parish ministry. His experience includes parish, campus and ecumenical settings. He continues to serve as a chaplain for the Columbus Division of Police, Columbus, OH, and as an instructor in the Critical Incident Training program at the Academy. He and his wife Julie are the parents of two sons, one daughter and the grandparents of one granddaughter and five grandsons.

# MINISTRY EXPO

Each year, many parachurch ministries, seminaries, publishers and mission organizations attend lutheran week to provide a wealth of resources and partnernship opportunities for our churches and leaders. Here is a list of some of our partners in attendance this year.

American Lutheran Publicity  
Bureau (ALPB)

Awakening Lives to World Mission  
Call, Inc.

Concordia Publishing House  
Cramer & Associates

Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch

Friends of Madagascar Mission  
(FOMM)

Hahn Financial Group, Inc./NALC  
Lutheran Benefits

India Transformed!

Institute of Lutheran Theology (ILT)

Kuwala Girls School

Luther House of Studies

Lutheran Collegiate Bible Institute  
(LCBI) High School

Lutheran CORE

Lutheran Lay Renewal

Lutheran Military Veterans and  
Families Ministries, Inc.

Lutheran World Relief

Lutherans for Life

Malwai Orphan Care

Moved to Missions (M2M)

NALC Disaster Response

NALC Life Ministries

NALC Living and Giving  
Stewardship/NALC Foundation

North American Lutheran Seminary  
(NALS) Network

One Plus God

Riverside Lutheran Bible Camp

Sola Publishing

Spiritual Orphans Network (SON)

Sundouloi Ministries (SMI Haiti)

The You Matter Tour (Heather R.)

U. S. Army Chief of Chaplains Office

Women of the NALC

World Mission Prayer League  
(WMPL)

# WOMEN OF THE NALC GATHERING

# WOMEN OF THE NALC GATHERING SCHEDULE

## Tuesday, August 8

8:30 a.m.	Registration and Fellowship	<i>Automobile Alley B</i>
9:00 a.m.	Welcome and Gathering Song Greeting and Introduction of Council Members  Opening Prayer and Update from General Secretary <i>The Rev. Dr. Amy Little, General Secretary</i>  Introduction of NALC Mission Staff Prayer for Missions  Break/Stretch and Sing  Business Meeting Ministry Reports and Team Updates  Devotion Table Grace and Transition to Lunch	
12:30 p.m.	Lunch	<i>Automobile Alley A</i>
1:30 p.m.	Group Photo  Introduction of Nominees for Council Vote by Ballot  Mission District Breakout  Guest Speaker <i>Rachel Raborn Norris, Joy Pottery</i>  Election Results  Installation of the New WNALC Council <i>The Rev. Dr. Daniel W. Selbo, Bishop</i>	
5:00 p.m.	Closing	



## GUEST SPEAKER

### **RACHEL RABORN NORRIS**

Joy Pottery



Rachel Raborn Norris is a gifted artisan who creates beautiful and functional stoneware pieces. As a speaker, Rachel shares her testimony of God's grace, mercy and redeeming love demonstrated through Jesus Christ. Rachel uses the pottery making process to illustrate these biblical truths.

Rachel's pottery studio in Bryan, Texas, was built by her husband Bob on property that has been in Rachel's family for five generations. They opened the studio in 1997, and this is where you will find Rachel hard at work creating her beautiful, functional works of art.

# NOTES

# FAITH FORMATION FESTIVAL

# FAITH FORMATION FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

## Tuesday, August 8

8:00 a.m.	Registration	<i>Automobile Alley C</i>
8:30 a.m.	Opening Devotion and Prayers	
9:00 a.m.	Introductions: Where do you serve and in what capacity?	
10:00 a.m.	Youth and Family Ministry in the NALC <i>The Rev. Teresa Peters</i>	
10:45 a.m.	Break	
11:00 a.m.	Keynote Speaker <i>Heather Ruesch</i>	
12:30 p.m.	Lunch	<i>Automobile Alley C</i>
1:15 p.m.	Keynote Speaker <i>Heather Ruesch</i>	
2:15 p.m.	Questions and Discussion	
2:45 p.m.	Break	
3:00 p.m.	Guest Speaker <i>The Rev. Jeff Milsten</i>	
4:00 p.m.	Guest Speaker <i>Emily A.</i>	
5:00 p.m.	Questions and Discussion/Close with Prayer	

## Wednesday, August 9

8:30 a.m.	Opening Devotion and Prayers
9:00 a.m.	Solid Rock <i>Melanie Corn</i>
9:30 a.m.	Guest Speaker <i>Wondmagegn Udessa Bidire</i>
10:45 a.m.	Break
11:00 a.m.	Discussion and Takeaways
12:00 p.m.	Lunch

# FAITH FORMATION FESTIVAL

## GUEST SPEAKERS

### **EMILY A.**

*Discipleship & Mobilization, World Mission Prayer League*



Emily has experience in discipleship and mobilization and is a part of the World Mission Prayer League.

### **Wondmagegn Udessa Bidire**

*Children & Youth Ministry Director, Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus*



Wondmagegn is the Children and Youth Ministry director for the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, spiritual radio program producer, Gospel preacher and teacher, and youth leadership trainer.

### **MELANIE CORN**

*Youth & Family Ministry Specialist, North American Lutheran Church; Christian Education Director, St. Peter Lutheran Church*



Melanie Corn is the christian education director at St. Peter Lutheran Church (Chapin, SC) and a youth and family ministry specialist for the NALC. She is also the creator of the new Solid Rock Day Camp.

## **THE REV. JEFF MILSTEN**

*Pastor, North American Lutheran Church/Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ*



The Rev. Jeff Milsten is a pastor in the North American Lutheran Church and Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ.

## **THE REV. TERESA PETERS**

*Director of Youth & Family Ministry, North American Lutheran Church; Associate Pastor, Joy Lutheran Church (Winnipeg, Manitoba)*



The Rev. Teresa Peters is the director of Youth and Family Ministry for the North American Lutheran Church and an associate pastor at Joy Lutheran Church in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

## **HEATHER RUESCH**

*Founder and Speaker, You Matter Tour*



Heather Ruesch is the founder and speaker of The You Matter Tour™ and executive director of L3 Resources, a 501(c)3 Christian, nonprofit organization.

Heather leads assemblies and retreats, produces educational resources for the church on life issues and sexuality, and oversees the tour's Mentorship Program.

BRAATEN-BENNE  
LECTURES IN  
THEOLOGY

## ABOUT THE BRAATEN-BENNE LECTURES IN THEOLOGY

The Carl E. Braaten and Robert D. Benne Lectures in Theology have been an integral part of Lutheran Week since 2009. The event originated as the Lutheran CORE Theological Conference, and came under additional sponsorship from the North American Lutheran Church in 2010. In 2015, it was renamed in honor of Carl E. Braaten and Robert D. Benne, prominent Lutheran theologians who organized and conducted the theological lectures for the first five years (2010-2014). The Lectures reflect a commitment on the part of the North American Lutheran Church, the organizers of Lutheran Week, and the series steering committee to the significance of theology for the future of North American Lutheranism.

Each year the series brings together leading theologians, biblical scholars and ethicists from across confessional and ecumenical boundaries to address key issues of Christian faith and practice. While the papers are scholarly in nature, presenters are asked to keep the local church in mind. Each paper is followed by a question-and-answer session, with audience members determining the course of the discussion. One of the highlights of the annual event is the roundtable panel session at the close of the lectures. This yearly event gathers an audience composed of laypersons, students, pastors, professional scholars and denominational leaders.

The conference theme for 2023 is God the Father Creates in His Image (Genesis 1:27). This is the second half of a study on God the Father begun in 2021, and the final installment of a six-year focus on the Holy Trinity. Theological anthropology will be at the forefront: to be created in the image of God – what does this mean for us? According to the apostolic faith, what is the nature of humanity, and what kinds of moral challenges does the church face in this respect when it comes to being in, but not of, the world?



# BRAATEN-BENNE LECTURES IN THEOLOGY SCHEDULE

## Tuesday, August 8

- 1:00 p.m.      **Greetings and Opening Prayer**  
*The Rev. Dr. Daniel W. Selbo, Bishop*
- 1:10 p.m.      **Introductory Lecture**  
*Dr. David Luy*  
A Remedy for the Mind and a Gymnasium for the Soul:  
Why Theology Conferences are Good, but Not Enough for What  
Ails Us
- 1:30 p.m.      **Lecture I**  
*Dr. Bob Benne*  
Diversity, Inclusivity, and Equity: The New Trinity that  
Undermines Christian Anthropology and What the Church Can  
Do About It
- 2:45 p.m.      Break
- 3:00 p.m.      **Lecture II**  
*Dr. Gilbert Meilaender*  
A Blessing Love Gives Into Our Arms: the Meaning of  
Procreation
- 4:15 p.m.      **Lecture III**  
*Dr. Mickey Mattox*  
Ratzinger v. Luther? Logos, Cosmos, Anthropos
- 5:30 p.m.      **North American Lutheran Seminary Reception or  
On your own; Free Evening**

## Wednesday, August 9

- 8:30 a.m.      **Opening Prayer**
- 8:45 a.m.      **Lecture IV**  
*Dr. Paul Blowers*  
A Christoform and Cruciform Cosmology: The Shaping of the  
Doctrine of Creation in the Early Church

10:00 a.m.	<b>International Responses</b>
10:30 a.m.	<b>Break</b>
10:50 a.m.	<b>Speaker's Forum</b>
11:30 a.m.	<b>Closing Prayer</b>
11:45 p.m.	<b>Lunch (Included in registration fee for Braaten-Benne Lectures)</b>

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## BRAATEN-BENNE CHAIR

### THE REV. DR. NATHAN H. YODER

*Director of Lutheran Studies, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (Charlotte)*



Pastor Yoder graduated with his Ph.D. degree from the University of Regensburg (Germany) in 2011. Yoder also holds the S.T.M. degree from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (2009), and the M.Div. degree from the Wake Forest University School of Divinity (2002).

Yoder has been heavily involved in the NALC since 2011. He currently serves on the Commission on Theology and Doctrine, as a member of the Lutheran Theologians for the Church (formerly called the "Younger Theologians Colloquium") and former dean of the Catawba Valley Mission District. He is also a member of the NALC Life-to-Life Discipleship team.

## GUEST LECTURERS

### DR. BOB BENNE

*Jordan-Trexler Professor of Religion Emeritus and Research Associate in Religion and Philosophy, Roanoke College*



Dr. Robert Benne is the Jordan-Trexler Professor of Religion Emeritus and Research Associate in the Religion and Philosophy Department of Roanoke College in Salem, Virginia. He has taught for 58 years and is currently Professor of Christian Ethics for the online

Institute of Lutheran Theology based in Brookings, SD. In 1982 he founded the Roanoke College Center for Religion and Society, which the College named in his honor in 2012.

He was Jordan-Trexler Professor of Religion and Chair of the Religion and Philosophy Department at Roanoke College for 18 years. Before that he was Professor of Church and Society at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago for 17 years. A native of Nebraska and a graduate of Midland University, his graduate degrees are from the University of Chicago. He has lectured and written widely on the relation of Christianity and culture. Two of his fourteen books are relevant to the discussion below: *The Paradoxical Vision: A Public Theology for the Twenty-first Century* (Fortress Press, 1995) and *Good and Bad Ways to Think about Religion and Politics* (Eerdmans, 2010). Bob and his wife, Joanna, have been married sixty-four years. They have four children and eight grandchildren.

## **DR. PAUL BLOWERS**

*Dean E. Walker Professor of Church History, Emmanuel Christian Seminary*



Dr. Paul Blowers is the Dean E. Walker Professor of Church History. He is a scholar of patristics and early Christianity and has written also on the Stone-Campbell heritage. He is a former president of the North American Patristics Society and associate editor of the *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, and in 2017-18 was a Henry Luce III Fellow in Theology.

His authored and edited works include *Visions and Faces of the Tragic: The Mimesis of Tragedy and the Folly of Salvation in Early Christian Literature* (2020), *Maximus the Confessor: Jesus Christ and the Transfiguration of the World* (2016), *Drama of the Divine Economy: Creator and Creation in Early Christian Theology and Piety* (2012), *Exegesis and Spiritual Pedagogy in Maximus the Confessor* (1991). He is co-editor of *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Biblical Interpretation* (2019) and has two works of translation of early Christian texts, *Moral Formation and the Virtuous Life* (2019), and *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ: Selected Writings of St. Maximus the Confessor* (2003).

He also has articles in the *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, *Vigiliae Christianae*, *Studia Patristica*, *Pro Ecclesia*, *Church History*, *Modern Theology*, and *Studies in Christian Ethics*. He has also produced long essays for *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, the *Cambridge History of*

*Christianity, The Oxford Handbook to Maximus the Confessor, and The Oxford Encyclopedia of Biblical Interpretation.* He edited and translated *The Bible in Greek Christian Antiquity* (1997) and was a general editor of *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement* (2004). Paul and his wife Sandy, a nurse and teacher, have four children and sixteen grandchildren.

## **DR. DAVID LUY**

*Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, North American Lutheran Seminary*



Dr. David Luy is the Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at the North American Lutheran Seminary in Ambridge, Pennsylvania. He has published a book entitled *Dominus Mortis: Martin Luther on the Incorruptibility of God in Christ* (Fortress, 2014), has contributed to various theological journals and encyclopedias (e.g., *Luther Digest*, *The International Journal of Systematic Theology*, *Modern Theology*, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Martin Luther*, and the *Oxford Handbook of Deification*), and is currently at work on a monograph project entitled *The Fate of Christocentrism in Modern Theology* (Oxford University Press). In his spare time, Dr. Luy enjoys music, reading, hiking, and fishing.

## **DR. MICKEY MATTOX**

*Flack Family Foundation Chair and Professor of Theology, Hillsdale College*



Dr. Mickey Mattox is Flack Family Foundation Chair and Professor of Theology at Hillsdale College. His interests include Martin Luther, the history of biblical exegesis, the doctrine of creation, and ecumenical theology. He is a member of the Academy of Catholic Theology and the International Congress for Luther Research. His authored and edited books include *Luther at Leipzig* (Brill, 2019), *Iohannes Oecolampadius: An Exposition of Genesis* (Marquette, 2013), *Changing Churches* (Eerdmans, 2012), and *Defender of the Most Holy Matriarchs* (Brill, 2003). Mattox is Deputy Editor of *Reformation & Renaissance Review*. He was Associate Editor for the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Martin Luther* (2017) and is a contributing translator for *Luther's Works* (CPH). He is presently writing a book on Luther's cosmology entitled *Sacred Cosmos: Martin Luther's Medieval Catholic Worldview*. He and his wife Pamela are members of St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Hillsdale, MI.

## DR. GILBERT MEILAENDER

*Senior Research Professor of Theology, Valparaiso University*



Dr. Gilbert Meilaender is Senior Research Professor at Valparaiso University. He taught at the University of Virginia (1975-78), at Oberlin College (1978-96), and at Valparaiso University (1996-2014), where he held the Duesenberg Chair in Christian Ethics. He holds the M.Div. (1972) from Concordia Seminary (St. Louis) and the Ph.D. (1976) from Princeton University.

Dr. Meilaender is the author of many books and articles in the field of Christian ethics. Among his books are *Friendship: A Study in Theological Ethics*; *Bioethics: A Primer for Christians*; *The Way that Leads There: Augustinian Reflections on the Christian Life*; *Not by Nature but by Grace: Forming Families through Adoption*; *Thy Will Be Done: The Ten Commandments and the Christian Life*; and (an edited volume of readings) *Working: Its Meaning and Its Limits*. He is co-editor (with William Werpehowski) of the *Oxford Handbook of Theological Ethics*. He has served on the Board of Directors of the Society of Christian Ethics, as an Associate Editor of *Religious Studies Review*, as a Consultant Editor of *Studies in Christian Ethics*, and as an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Religious Ethics*.

Professor Meilaender's work in the area of bioethics is well known. He is a Fellow of the Hastings Center and was a member of the President's Council on Bioethics from 2002 to 2009.

# INTRODUCTORY LECTURE NOTES

## **DR. DAVID LUY**

*A REMEDY FOR THE MIND AND A GYMNASIUM FOR THE SOUL: WHY THEOLOGY CONFERENCES ARE GOOD, BUT NOT ENOUGH FOR WHAT AILS US*

- I. Why are we doing this?
  - a. A perennial question
  - b. Theology and theological anthropology
  - c. Necessary, but insufficient
- II. Entropic Anthropology
  - a. A matins mishap
  - b. Wide angle lens
  - c. Righteousness and rupture
  - d. Entropic anthropology
- III. A Remedy for the Mind
  - a. Pitch pipe
  - b. Irenaeus
  - c. Contemplation
- IV. A Gymnasium for the Soul
  - a. We are more than minds
  - b. Against theological hubris
  - c. Theories of change
  - d. The Psalms

# LECTURE I NOTES

## **DR. BOB BENNE**

*Diversity, Inclusivity, and Equity: The New Trinity that Undermines Christian Anthropology and What the Church Can Do About It*

- I. Critical Race Theory
  - a. Christian Anthropology
  - b. What the Church Can Do about it
  
- II. Gender Ideology
  - a. Christian Anthropology
  - b. What the Church Can Do about it

# LECTURE II NOTES

## **DR. GILBERT MEILAENDER**

*A Blessing Love Gives Into Our Arms: the Meaning of Procreation*

- I. A revolution in reproduction
  - a. Changed technology? Changed thinking?
  - b. IVF
    - 1. No longer simply for infertile couples
    - 2. Desire for a child of one's own
    - 3. Desire for a child of a certain kind
  - c. The problem of "spare" (frozen) embryos
  - d. Genetic testing
    - 1. Of fetuses in utero
    - 2. Of unimplanted embryos
  - e. Gametes from induced pluripotent stem cells?
- II. Competing narratives
  - a. Child as blessing and body as the place of personal presence
  - b. Child as project and body as the instrument to produce a desired result
- III. What if there is no blessing?
  - a. No obligation for Christians to have children
  - b. The church's need for those who are unmarried or married but childless
  - c. The lesson of baptism



# LECTURE III NOTES

## **DR. MICKEY MATTOX**

*Ratzinger v. Luther? Logos, Cosmos, Anthropos*

- I. Introduction: Joseph Ratzinger, friend to Lutherans but not to Luther?**
  - a. Reading Ratzinger's Introduction to Christianity alongside his Genesis sermons
  - b. The "un-catholic" Luther in Ratzinger's day
- II. Ratzinger, Luther, and the Doctrine of Creation**
  - a. Ratzinger and Luther's Cosmology
  - b. Genealogies of Luther and Modernity
  - c. Ratzinger's Genealogical Luther Reception
- III. Not Luther's Cosmology**
  - a. Ratzinger in the Friar's Den
  - b. Contextualizing Ratzinger's Shot Across the Lutheran bow
- IV. Unser Martin: Twelve Theses on God's Good Creation**

# LECTURE IV NOTES

## **DR. PAUL BLOWERS**

*A Christoform and Cruciform Cosmology: The Shaping of the Doctrine of Creation in the Early Church*

### **Introduction**

1. Contrasting the “linear” reading of “salvation history” with early Christian “thick” reading of the Bible
2. Patristic approaches to the Bible in terms of an *oikonomia* and “Christo-drama”

### **Reading the End into the Beginning**

1. Reading “backwards” from Jesus Christ
2. Creation as staging point for the revelation of Jesus Christ
3. Christ as the true “Beginning” (ἀρχή) in Genesis 1:1, interlaced with Colossians 1:18, Proverbs 8:22, John 1:1, etc.
4. Christ as the End, or τέλος, already immanent in the “Beginning” according to Revelation 21:6

### **Creation as an Unfolding Christ-Drama**

1. Creation and Salvation as seamlessly interrelated in divine performance of the Christo-drama
2. Subplot 1: The divine providential (and Christocentric) plan for creation and theories of a “double creation”
3. Subplot 2: The deeper meanings of creation ex nihilo

### **Christ Cognito and Incognito in Genesis 1**

1. Christ/Wisdom/Word as Beginning
2. Christ as the Light in the original creation and the new
3. Christ as the perfect Image according to whom humanity is created (Gen. 1:26-27)

## **The Continuing Creative Work of Jesus Christ in the Incarnation and Beyond**

1. Genesis 2:2 and John 5:17: Christ continuing the creative work of the Father
2. Virgin birth as Christ's creation of a renewed, eschatological humanity
3. Baptism of Christ and the re-creative agency of water
4. Miracles of Jesus as gestures toward new creation
5. Death of Christ as transformation of the power of death into the power of life
6. Christ's resurrection, ascension, and glorification as vindication of the Creator's original plan for the world (the subjection of "all things" to Christ, 1 Cor. 15:28).

# INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES NOTES



# MISSION CONVOCATION

# MISSION CONVOCATION PROPOSED AGENDA

## Wednesday, August 9

- 1:30 p.m.     **Service of the Word**     *Oklahoma Station Ballroom*
- 2:30 p.m.     **Session I**
- Adoption of Rules of Procedure
  - Approval of Agenda
  - Introduction of Lutheran Week Planning Team
  - Introduction of the Committee of Reference and Counsel
  - Introduction of Staff
  - Introduction of Area Assistants to the Bishop
  - Introduction of Executive Council
  - Introduction of NALS Board of Regents
  - Introduction of Deans
  - Introduction of Mission Partners
  - Introduction of Interim Ministry Coordinators
  - Introduction of Ecumenical and Inter-Lutheran Guests
  - Report of Nominating Committee
  - Bishop Nominations from the Floor
  - Review of Process for Election of Bishop
  - Bishop's Report
- 3:45 p.m.     **Break**
- 4:00 p.m.     **On Fire for Mission Focus: Congregational Life**
- Bible Study: *Dr. David Luy*
  - Presentation & Discussion
- 6:00 p.m.     **Youth and Family Ministry**
- 6:10 p.m.     **Deadline for Submission of Bishop Floor Nomination Materials & New Resolutions**
- 6:10 p.m.     **Dinner**     *On Your Own*
- 7:30 p.m.     **Session II: Mission District/Region Gatherings**

## Thursday, August 10

8:00 a.m. **Session III**

*Oklahoma Station Ballroom*

8:00 a.m. **On Fire for Mission Focus: Domestic Mission in the NALC**

- Bible Study: *Dr. David Luy*
- Presentation & Discussion

10:00 a.m. **Report on Lutheran Benefits Plan**

10:15 a.m. **Break**

10:45 a.m. **Session III (continued)**

- Recognitions of Ordination Anniversaries
- Recognition of Military Chaplains and Personnel
- Brief Comments by Chaplain Endorser
- Recognition of Chaplains Serving in Other Contexts
- Introduction of Ministry Candidates
- Introduction of Newly Ordained and Clergy New to the NALC
- Remembrance of the Clergy Who Have Died in the Lord
- Congregational Anniversaries and Congregations New to the NALC
- 2020 Vision

For the list of Recognitions of Clergy and Congregations, visit:

[lutheranweek.com/recognitions](http://lutheranweek.com/recognitions)



12:00 p.m. **Lunch (included in registration fee)**

*Oklahoma Station Ballroom*

1:30 p.m. **Session IV**

- NALS Presentation
- Recognition of Mary Havens and appointment of Nathan Yoder
- Introduction of Electronic Voting
- First Ballot for Bishop and Other
- Ecumenical and Inter-Lutheran Guests Greetings
- Report of the First Ballot
- Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel

3:00 p.m. **Nominees for Bishop (15 minute each)**

4:15 p.m.     **Break**

4:30 p.m.     **Workshops (See pages 71–77 for workshop descriptions)**

**Looking Through the Global Mission Window**

The Rev. Dr. Gemechis Buba | Route 66

**Sexual Slavery—Call It What It Is**

The Rev. Dona Johnson | Double Deuce

**NALC Life-To-Life Discipleship**

The Rev. David Keener | Five Moons 5

**How You Can Become Part of the 2020 Vision**

Mike Schmidt & Makenzie Freshly (Cramer & Associates)  
Five Moons 6

**The NALS and Discerning a Call to Ministry**

The Rev. Dr. Eric Riesen | Five Moons 7

**Effective Parish Communication—Session 1: Principles and Theories**

The Rev. Dcn. Andrew S. Ames Fuller | Five Moons 3

**Youth and Family Ministry in the NALC**

The Rev. Teresa Peters & Melanie Corn | Five Moons 2

**Every Congregation Renewing: Real Life Processes & Strategies For Strengthening & Growing Congregations**

The Rev. Brad Hales & the Rev. Dr. David Wendel | Five Moons 4

5:30 p.m.     **Workshops (See pages 71–77 for workshop descriptions)**

**Legacy Giving: An Expanded View of Giving**

The Rev. Dona Johnson & Michael Johnson | Double Deuce

**How Congregations Can Address the Range of Life Issues**

The Rev. Mark Chavez | Route 66

**NALC Life-To-Life Discipleship**

The Rev. David Keener | Five Moons 5

**How You Can Become Part of the 2020 Vision**

Mike Schmidt & Makenzie Freshly (Cramer & Associates)  
Five Moons 6



**The NALS and Discerning a Call to Ministry**

The Rev. Dr. Eric Riesen | Five Moons 7

**Effective Parish Communication—Session 2: Applying Principles and Solving Real-Life Problems**

The Rev. Dcn. Andrew S. Ames Fuller | Five Moons 3

**Youth And Family Ministry in the NALC**

The Rev. Teresa Peters & Melanie Corn | Five Moons 2

**Every Congregation Renewing: Real Life Processes & Strategies For Strengthening & Growing Congregations**

The Rev. Brad Hales & the Rev. Dr. David Wendel | Five Moons 4

6:30 p.m. **Banquet (*included in registration fee*)**

*Oklahoma Station Ballroom*

**Friday, August 11**

6:00 a.m. **Dean's Breakfast**

*Mistletoe*

8:00 a.m. **Session V**

*Oklahoma Station Ballroom*

8:00 a.m. **On Fire for Mission Focus: International Mission**

- Bible Study: *Dr. David Luy*
- Presentation & Discussion

10:00 a.m. **Break**

10:15 a.m. **Session V (continued)**

- Second Ballot
- Treasurer's Report
- Report of Second Ballot
- Third Ballot
- Presentation of Budget and Approval
- Report of the Third Ballot
- NALC Foundation
- Report of NALC Living and Giving Stewardship Task Force
- NALC Life Ministries
- WNALC Report
- NALC Disaster Response

12:00 p.m. **Lunch (*included in registration fee*)**

*Oklahoma Station Ballroom*

- 1:30 p.m.    **Session VI**
- Fourth Ballot
  - Report of the Fourth Ballot
  - Announcement of Future Events
- 3:00 p.m.    **Closing Service of Holy Communion & Installation of a Bishop**
- 5:00 p.m.    **Close of Convocation**

# MISSION CONVOCATION

## PROPOSED RULES OF PROCEDURE

1. The business of this Convocation shall be as outlined in the official agenda distributed to the Convocation.
2. The rules set forth in the current edition of “Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised,” shall govern this Convocation in all applicable cases, to the extent consistent with these rules and the agenda adopted by this Convocation, and according to the constitution of the North American Lutheran Church (NALC).
3. Once adopted, these rules shall not be amended or suspended — except by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at this Convocation.
4. The voting body for this Convocation includes as delegates: 1) all ordained ministers of the NALC, who are properly registered to attend; and 2) those laypersons who have been elected by congregations of the NALC as voting members, who are properly registered to attend.

4.1 **A QUORUM** for conducting business is 50% of all delegates (see 4.0) certified in accordance with the process established in advance by the Executive Council.

4.2 The Bishop or the Bishop’s designee shall preside over this Convocation.

5. Each NALC officer and each person serving in a position subject to election by a Convocation will have the right of voice and vote, at this Convocation.
6. **Motions from the floor.** All motions addressing subject matter not included in the agenda, AND all amendments to motions of a complex nature must be submitted in writing to the Committee on Reference and Council no later than 6 pm on Wednesday evenings of the Convocation. See Rule 10 below.

## 7. Discussion during the Convocation

- a. Unless otherwise determined by a majority of those attending the Convocation, all speeches during discussion shall be limited to **two minutes**.
- b. Delegates who wish to request to speak to a motion or make a point of personal privilege may do so at one of the microphones on the floor of the convocation stating *full name, congregation, "I would like to speak (for or against) the motion" or "I would like to make a point of personal privilege."* Those requesting to speak to a motion will be recognized by the Bishop in the order received, alternating those speaking for and against.
- c. Delegates may ask a question of the Chair in the same way, by approaching a microphone, stating their *full name, congregation, "Question for the Chair"* and their question. The Bishop will respond as appropriate.

## 8. Nominations

*8.1 Nominating Committee.* The Executive Council shall submit to each Convocation for confirmation not more than five names of persons to serve as members of the Nominating Committee until the subsequent Convocation. The Nominating Committee oversees the nominating process for the elected positions of the NALC and solicits names of potential candidates from congregations. The Nominating Committee ensures that (1) all required information it deems necessary is disseminated, received, complete and in order; and (2) that each nominee, if elected, is willing to serve in the specified office for which s/he is nominated. Regarding open positions on the Executive Council, the Nominating Committee shall place in nomination at least two candidates for each open seat. The Nominating Committee submits to the Convocation a report that includes a complete ballot of candidates meeting all requirements including those in 8.2 below.

*8.2 Nominating Process and Deadlines.*

- a. Nominations for the *Office of Bishop* shall be made by an NALC congregation or the Executive Council and all required

information received not less than 90 days prior to the Convocation. A Convocational delegate may nominate an additional candidate *from the floor* on the first day of the Convocation *provided that* required information provided by other candidates *is received by* the Nominating Committee the first day of the Convocation and the latter is assured the candidate is willing to serve if elected, allowing a reasonable time to inform the voters prior to the first vote.

- b. Nominations for the election to open seats on the *Executive Council* and the *Court of Adjudication* may be made by an NALC congregation upon all required information having been received not less than 90 days prior to the Convocation. As an alternative, nominations for these positions may be made by a group of three delegates from three different NALC churches upon submission of letters of support and other required information 45 days prior to the Convocation.

## **9. Elections**

9.1 For any ballot, a majority of the legal ballots cast shall be necessary for election.

9.2 For ballots *other than for Bishop*, if no candidate receives a majority of votes on the first ballot, the candidate receiving the least number of votes, plus ties, shall be eliminated. Thereafter, in each round of voting, if no candidate receives a majority, the candidate receiving the least number of votes, plus ties, shall be eliminated.

9.3 For ballots *for the Court of Adjudication*, if no candidate receives a majority of votes, the two candidates with the most votes shall be elected.

9.4 For ballots *for Bishop*, if no candidate receives a majority on the first ballot, all but the top four candidates by votes received, including ties, shall be eliminated. Thereafter, if no candidate receives a majority, the candidate receiving the fewest votes, plus ties, shall be eliminated until two candidates remain. When two candidates remain, voting shall continue until one candidate receives a majority.

9.4.1 Before the second ballot, the top four remaining candidates, plus ties, will give a 15-minute devotion, “The Missio Dei” and

the Future of the NALC to include one of the key scripture texts of the convocation.<sup>1</sup>

9.4.2 b. If no one receives a majority of votes on the second ballot, the top three candidates, plus ties, remaining will have the opportunity to respond to written questions from the floor prior the *third* ballot.

9.4.3 If no candidate receives a majority of votes on the third ballot, voting shall continue until one candidate receives a majority of votes.

**9.4.4 The exception** to the above rule occurs only if there are just **two nominees** for Bishop. In that case, **before the first ballot**, candidates will give a 15-minute devotion, “The Missio Dei<sup>2</sup> and the Future of the NALC,” to include one of the key scripture texts of the convocation, AND the two candidates will have an opportunity to respond to written questions from the floor. All of this will occur **prior to the first ballot**.

9.4.5 There will be a time limit of 20 minutes during the question-and-answer portion of the election of Bishop process. All questions shall be posed to all candidates.

## 10. Committee on Reference and Counsel

10.1 This committee will serve during this Convocation, and include the General Secretary, a member of the Court of Adjudication, a member of the Executive Council, and two additional delegates to the Convocation, one clergy and one lay, appointed by the Bishop.

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<sup>1</sup> **Acts 1:8** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (ESV)

**Romans 10:13-16** <sup>13</sup> For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” <sup>14</sup> How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? <sup>15</sup> And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” <sup>16</sup> But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” (ESV) **Ephesians 2:19-22** <sup>19</sup> So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, <sup>21</sup> in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. <sup>22</sup> In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.” (ESV)

<sup>2</sup> Missio Dei (sounds like *miss-ee-oh day-ee*) is a theological term referring to the “Mission of God” in the world.

- 10.2 Suggested items for consideration by the Convocation **outside the adopted agenda** shall be presented to the Committee **no later than 6:00 pm on the first day of the Convocation**. The committee will present a report to the Convocation in which the Committee will recommend a time for the Convocation to consider the proposals. This Committee will also receive and review all motions from the floor of a substantial or complex nature for grammar, clarity and to ensure it says what the offeror meant it to say, before the motion may be returned to the floor for action.
- 10.3 This committee shall sort the questions for the Bishop's election, as there likely will be questions that are similar in nature.

11. A parliamentarian and assistant parliamentarian shall be appointed by the Bishop. A chair of elections, appointed by the Executive Council, shall oversee the elections process. Election observers shall witness each ballot. The NALC Communications Director will instruct the convocation members on voting technology.

# PLENARY SESSION SPEAKERS & PREACHERS

## **THE REV. DR. GEMECHIS BUBA**

*Assistant to the Bishop for International Mission, North American Lutheran Church*



The Rev. Dr. Gemechis Buba lives in Ethiopia with his wife and three children. In addition to academic study and ordained ministry, Dr. Buba participates in multiple international ministries through speaking, leading revivals, leadership development conventions and evangelical mission events.

## **THE REV. CAROL FRYER**

*Mission Specialist, North American Lutheran Church*



The Rev. Carol E. A. Fryer, Mission Specialist for the NALC, lives in New York City where she also serves as Pastoral Associate (non-stipendiary) at Immanuel Lutheran Church in New York City along with her husband, the Rev. Gregory P. Fryer, who has served Immanuel since 1991. She began her ministry there in August of 2019.

Pastor Fryer's previous call was to United Lutheran Church of Mount Vernon, NY, and Wartburg (a residential community for the elderly) where she was the Director of Spiritual Care and Church Relations. She served there for twelve years. Prior to coming to Wartburg, Pastor Fryer was the Assistant Pastor at Saint Peter's Church in New York City for 13 years. Ordained in 1985, her first call was to the Stewartstown Lutheran Parish in south central Pennsylvania as co-pastor with her husband, Gregory Fryer.

Pastor Fryer is a graduate of the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg, PA in 1985. In 2001 she received an STM (Master of Sacred Theology) in Spiritual Direction from the Center for Christian Spirituality at The General Seminary of the Episcopal Church in New York City. She serves as a Spiritual Director for both individuals and groups.



## **THE REV. BRAD HALES**

*Director of Church Planting & Aging Ministry, North American Lutheran Church*



Pastor Brad Hales is a native of Delta, Ohio and, in his 24 years of ordained ministry, has focused on renewing, redeveloping, and starting new churches for growth and greater involvement in their communities. He currently serves Reformation Lutheran Church in Culpeper, Virginia, and has also served parishes in Maryland and upstate New York.

## **THE REV. DAVID KEENER**

*Director of Renewal & Discipleship, North American Lutheran Church*



The Rev. David Keener has served congregations in Michigan and Georgia. He currently is serving as the director of renewal and discipleship. As a certified discipleship coach with the Navigators, he has assisted pastors and lay leaders in developing ways to become more intentional in their personal and congregational discipleship.

## **THE REV. DR. AMY LITTLE**

*General Secretary, North American Lutheran Church*



Amy is married to Jeff and they have two grown children, Noah (Alyssa) in Pasadena, CA and Anna (Palo Alto, CA). Amy is passionate about bringing health and well being to churches and pastors in the NALC. She oversees Candidacy, Certification of Pastors, Colloquy of Pastors, and First Five pastoral continuing education. In her spare time she likes to swim, take long walks, and make quilts and other projects.

## **DR. DAVID LUY**

*Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, North American Lutheran Seminary*



Dr. David Luy is the Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at the North American Lutheran Seminary in Ambridge, Pennsylvania. He has published a book entitled *Dominus Mortis: Martin Luther on the Incorruptibility of God in Christ* (Fortress, 2014), has contributed to various theological journals and encyclopedias (e.g., *Luther Digest*, *The International Journal of Systematic Theology*, *Modern Theology*, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Martin Luther*, and the *Oxford Handbook of Deification*), and is currently at work on a monograph project entitled *The Fate of Christocentrism in Modern Theology* (Oxford University Press). In his spare time, Dr. Luy enjoys music, reading, hiking, and fishing.

## **THE REV. DR. DANIEL W. SELBO**

*Bishop, North American Lutheran Church*



Bishop Selbo has been married for 35 years. He and his wife, Mary, have been blessed with four children and just recently with two grandchildren. Bishop Selbo graduated from San Jose State University in 1982 with a Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies. He received a Master of Divinity degree in 1986 and earned a Doctorate of Ministry in Biblical Preaching in 2013, both from Luther Seminary. He enjoys golfing, fishing, working in the yard and spending time with family and friends.

## **THE REV. DR. DAVID WENDEL**

*Assistant to the Bishop for Ministry & Ecumenism, North American Lutheran Church*



Pastor Wendel was born and raised in Columbus, Indiana. He graduated from Indiana University, in Bloomington, IN, with a B.A. in Speech Communication. He is a 1981 graduate of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, having served his internship at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Los Alamos, N.M. He earned a Doctor of Ministry in Preaching degree from the Association of Chicago Theological Schools in 2001 and completed the course "Ecumenism and Inter-Faith Relations" in Rome, offered

by the Atonement Friars in 2011. Pastor Wendel and his wife, Susan, currently live in Jacksonville, FL, and are members of Shepherd of the Woods, NALC. They have two adult children, Christopher, an NALC pastor serving as an active duty Army chaplain (Captain) Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, and Rebekah, married to a U.S. Army Sergeant Major (James), Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas. Susan and David have four grandchildren. David enjoys walking for exercise and reading!

# NALC MISSIONS RESOURCES

## Staff Directory

### DOMESTIC MISSION

**The Rev. Philip Gagnon—Assistant to the Bishop for Domestic Mission and Discipleship** The Rev. Gagnon is currently on medical leave. Please keep him in your prayers.

**The Rev. Brad Hales—Director of Church Planting and Aging Ministries**

The Rev. Hales helps start new congregations and house churches, assists churches in starting senior and middle age ministries, and using these age groups as a catalyst for outreach and renewal. He can be contacted at [bhales@thenalc.org](mailto:bhales@thenalc.org).

**The Rev. David Keener—Director of Renewal and Discipleship**

The Rev. Keener works in the areas of congregational renewal and integrating discipleship into all areas of our NALC mission strategy. He can be contacted at [dkeener@thenalc.org](mailto:dkeener@thenalc.org).

**The Rev. Dr. David Wendel—Assistant to the Bishop for Ministry and Ecumenism** The Rev. Dr. Wendel leads our Fresh Eyes for Mission Summits. If you would like more information about the summits, you may contact him at [dwendel@thenalc.org](mailto:dwendel@thenalc.org).

### INTERNATIONAL AND MULTINATIONAL MINISTRY

**The Rev. Dr. Gemechis Buba—The Assistant to the Bishop for International Mission** leads efforts on behalf of the NALC in coordinating international mission activities and providing—support for our multinational congregations. You may contact him at [gbuba@thenalc.org](mailto:gbuba@thenalc.org).

**The Rev. Carol Fryer—Missions Specialist** The Rev. Fryer works on the mission's team with the Assistants to the Bishop for international and Domestic missions, the Great Commission Society, Ministry partners and our Global workers to strengthen connections with our domestic and international communities. You may contact her at [cfryer@thenalc.org](mailto:cfryer@thenalc.org).

General questions can be directed to the missions office at [missions@thenalc.org](mailto:missions@thenalc.org).

## FOR MORE INFORMATION ON OUR WEBPAGE

### **NALC Life-to-Life Discipleship**

[nalclifetolife.org](http://nalclifetolife.org)



### **Church Plants/New Starts**

[thenalc.org/new-mission-starts](http://thenalc.org/new-mission-starts)



### **Ministry by and for Seniors**

[thenalc.org/aging-ministry](http://thenalc.org/aging-ministry)



### **Small and Rural Church Ministry**

[thenalc.org/renewal/](http://thenalc.org/renewal/)



### **International Mission and Global Workers**

[thenalc.org/missionpartners](http://thenalc.org/missionpartners)



### **Multinational Missions**

[thenalc.org/multinational/](http://thenalc.org/multinational/)



# ON FIRE FOR MISSION FOCUS DOMESTIC MISSION

## **Discipleship & Renewal Worksheet**

### **VISION—What do we see?**

Take a few moments to silently think and pray about your vision for discipleship and renewal in your congregation.

#### **Questions you may want to consider:**

What new discipleship and outreach ministries would you like to see in your congregation?

Is there a particular demographic that you would like to reach?

What new outreach ministries would you like to see?

**Share your vision with your table mates.**

### **MISSION—What will we do?**

*In light of the vision you received, take some time to discuss possible actions steps you could take to make the vision a reality.*

#### **Questions you may want to consider:**

What do I see as the top priorities in my vision for discipleship and renewal?

Are there specific ministries that we might want to consider in order to better reach those outside of the church?

In what new or creative ways might we reach out to those in our community with the Good News of Jesus by word and deed?

What actions might we take to encourage discipleship in our congregation?

Would our congregation benefit from the NALC Life to Life Experience, Small and Rural Church workshop, Hope for the Older Adult Bible or Fresh Eyes for Mission retreat?

### **Means—What will we need**

*Pick one or two action items from your mission worksheet and write down what you will need in people and resources in order to make the vision a reality.*

### **Things to consider:**

Who will present our vision for discipleship and renewal to the Church Council and congregation?

What persons or committee will take the lead in implementing the action plan?

What physical resources will we need?

What will be the timeline for implementing the plan?

# ON FIRE FOR MISSION FOCUS DOMESTIC MISSION

## Church Planting Worksheet

### **VISION—What do we see?**

*Take some time to silently think and pray about your vision for a possible new church plant?*

### **Questions you may want to consider:**

Has your congregation ever considered planting a new church?

Is there an area of our community that is not being reached with the gospel?

Is there a particular demographic we would like to reach?

If we move forward with planting a house church or mission congregation, what would we like to see in five years?

### **Share your vision with your table mates.**

### **MISSION—What will we do?**

*In light of the vision you received, take some time to discuss possible actions steps you could take to make the vision a reality.*

### **Questions you may want to consider:**

Might God be calling us to start a mission congregation?



Might God be calling us to support an existing mission congregation?

Do we have congregational members who have relocated that might be interested in starting a house church?

If so, how might we encourage, help and support them?

Would our congregation benefit from the NALC Life to Life Experience, Small and Rural Church workshop, Hope for the Older Adult Bible Study or Fresh Eyes for Mission retreat?

**Means—What will we need?**

*Pick one or two action items from your mission worksheet and write down what you will need in people and resources in order to make the vision a reality.*

**Things to consider:**

Who will present the action item to the Church Council and congregation?

What persons or committee will take the lead in implementing the action plan?

What physical resources will we need?

What will be the timeline for implementing the plan?

# THE FIVE W'S AND H OF CHURCH PLANTING NORTH AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

**Who** will plant the church?

- Other Churches (partner church model)
- Mission Districts
- Groups of Individuals

**What** will the church plant look like?

- Bible Study Group
- Missional Community (coffee shop)
- House Church
- Traditional Congregation

**Where** will the church be planted?

- Growing Or Underserved Area
- A Concentration of Believers Gathered
- Niche- Youth, Older Adults, Multi-National

**When** should the church be planted?

- Now! To make disciples and share the Gospel of Jesus
- When preparations are made

**Why** plant the church?

- Scriptural—The church in Antioch, Paul's Ministry (Acts 13)

Matthew 28:19-20- "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. And teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you, and I will be with you always until the end of the age."

I Corinthians 3:6- "I (Paul) planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth."

Romans 16:5- "Greet also the church in their (Prisca and Aquilla) house"

**How** do you plant the church?

- Prayer
- Identify An Area
- Who will lead? Lay? Clergy?
- Advertise in Local Media/Social Media
- Have Meeting for Interest
- \*\*Develop A Core Group of 5-20 people\*\*
- Locate A Place to Worship-funeral home, community center, church, house
- Determine Worship Style
- Center on Discipleship
- Getting to know the community and letting them know about the new church.
- Monetary resources

# ON FIRE FOR MISSION FOCUS

## INTERNATIONAL MISSION

### **Multi-National (Glocal) Worksheet**

#### **VISION—What do we see?**

*Take a few moments to silently think and pray about your vision for your congregation in establishing and supporting multi-national ministries.*

#### **Questions you may want to consider:**

What is the multinational presence in our community?

Are there immigrant populations that we could reach out to?

Who are our neighbors and where are they from?

**Share your vision with your table mates.**

#### **MISSION—What will we do?**

*In light of the vision you received, take some time to discuss possible actions steps you could take to make the vision a reality.*

#### **Questions you may want to consider:**

How might God be calling us to reach out to our neighbors of different nationalities?

How might God be calling us to support the multi-national congregations in our communities and mission districts?

How might God be calling us to help start or support a multi-national church plant?

**Means—What will we need?**

*Pick one or two action items from your mission worksheet and write down what you will need in people and resources in order to make the vision a reality.*

**Things to consider:**

What might be a first step in reaching out to people of different nationalities in our community?

What persons or committee will take the lead in making our vision a reality?

What resources do we have to offer?

What will be the timeline for implementing the plan?

Who will present this vision to the church council and congregation?

# ON FIRE FOR MISSION FOCUS

## INTERNATIONAL MISSION

### International (Global) Worksheet

#### **VISION—What do we see?**

*Take a few moments to silently think and pray about your vision for your congregation in establishing and supporting multinational ministries.*

#### **Questions you may want to consider:**

In what ways would you like to see your congregation more involved in global missions?

Have you ever considered being or supporting a global worker?

What area of international mission connection intrigued you the most?

**Share your vision with your table mates.**

#### **MISSION—What will we do?**

*In light of the vision you received, take some time to discuss possible actions steps you could take to make the vision a reality.*

#### **Questions you may want to consider:**

How might God be calling us to strengthen our international relationships?

Might God be calling us to support a global worker?

Might God be calling my congregation to become more involved in international missions?

**Share your responses with your table mates.**

**Means—What will we need?**

*Pick one or two action items from your mission worksheet and write down what you will need in people and resources in order to make the vision a reality.*

**Things to consider:**

What might be a first step in becoming more involved in global mission?

What persons or committee will take the lead in making the vision a reality?

What resources do we have to offer or need?

What will be the timeline?

Who will present this vision to the church council and congregation?

# MISSION CONVOCATION NOMINEE INFORMATION

The 2023 Nominating Committee presents the candidates named below for positions to be elected during this week's Mission Convocation.

## BISHOP

This year, the Convocation elects one ordained minister who is a member of the North American Lutheran Church (NALC) to serve as bishop of the NALC. The bishop shall serve as the chief pastor and chief evangelist of the NALC, responsible for ensuring the priority of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16–20) in the life of the church.

The 2023 candidates are as follows (name, congregational membership and nominating congregation):



**THE REV. DR. DANIEL SELBO**, St. Timothy's Lutheran Church—San Jose, California; first nomination by Immanuel Lutheran Church, Whitewood, South Dakota



**THE REV. DR. DAVID M. WENDEL**, Shepherd of the Woods Lutheran Church—Jacksonville, Florida; first nomination by Shepherd of the Woods Lutheran Church, Jacksonville, Florida

## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

During the interim between convocations, the Executive Council shall implement the work and policies of the NALC and shall act for the NALC, subject in all matters to review of its actions by subsequent convocations. This year the Convocation elects one pastor and one layperson to the Executive Council for four-year terms.

The 2023 clergy candidates are as follows (name, congregational membership and nominating congregation):



**THE REV. JOHN CONRAD**, First Evangelical Lutheran Church—Floresville, Texas; nominated by St. Paul Lutheran Church, Rosenberg, Texas





**THE REV. DR. SCOTT NESS**, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church— Senoia, Georgia; nominated by Joy Mission Church, Lexington, South Carolina



**THE REV. DIETER W. PUNT**, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church— Troutman, North Carolina; nominated by Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Troutman, North Carolina



**THE REV. DR. DOUGLAS SCHOELLES**, St. John's Lutheran Church—Ft. Wayne, Indiana; nominated by Old East Paint Creek Lutheran Church, Waterville, Iowa



**THE REV. PAMELA THORSON**, Grace Lutheran Church— Erskine, Minnesota; nominated by Grace Lutheran Church, Erskine, Minnesota

The lay candidates are as follows (name, congregational membership and nominating congregation/nominating delegates):



**MRS. JULIA HARTFELDER**, Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church— Westerville, Ohio; nominated by the Rev. Melinda H. Jones, Advent Lutheran Church, North Charleston, South Carolina; the Rev. William E. Maki, Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Saint Marys, Ohio; the Rev. Matthew Cox, Grace Lutheran Evangelical Lutheran Church, Westerville, Ohio



**MR. SCOTT KRAMER**, St. John Lutheran Church—Boerne, Texas; nominated by St. John Lutheran Church, Boerne, Texas

## COURT OF ADJUDICATION

The Court of Adjudication has jurisdiction to decide appeals from disciplinary decisions, questions regarding interpretation of the NALC's governing documents, and claims that any person, body or entity has violated the governing documents of the NALC.

This year two individuals, clergy or lay, will be elected to a four-year term on the Court of Adjudication. The 2023 candidates are as follows (name, congregational membership and nominating congregation):



**THE REV. THOMAS M. BRODBECK**, Grace Lutheran Church— Springfield, Ohio; nominated by Grace Lutheran Church, Springfield, Ohio



**THE REV. LESLIE HAINES** STS, St. John's Lutheran Church— Fort Wayne, Indiana; nominated by St. John's Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana



**THE REV. RYAN HENKEL**, Emmons Lutheran Church— Emmons, Minnesota; nominated by Immanuel Lutheran Church, Fresno, California

*To read each candidate's full biographical information,  
scan the QR code below with the camera on your smart phone.*



*[thenalc.org/nominationbios](https://thenalc.org/nominationbios)*

## WORKSHOP DETAILS AND SPEAKERS

### **LOOKING THROUGH THE GLOBAL MISSION WINDOW** **OFFERED AT 4:30 P.M. | ROUTE 66**

Pastor Buba will summarize the NALC's Global Mission work and introduce some of our Mission Partners and Global Workers who will share about their work in the mission field and how congregations and individuals can support them.

**Presenters:** The Rev. William Moberly (Awakening Lives to World Mission); the Rev. David and Angela Breidenbach (Spiritual Orphans Network); and the Rev. Charles Jackson (World Mission Prayer League).

**NALC Global Workers:** Dr. Randy Stubbs; the Rev. Dr. Thomas Thorstad; Jonathan Gowin; the Rev. Martha Shanka; the Rev. Jhakmak Neeraj Ekka and the Rev. Nijhar Minz-Ekka; Dagaga Gemachu.



#### **THE REV. DR. GEMECHIS BUBA**

*Assistant to the Bishop for International Mission,  
North American Lutheran Church*

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### **SEXUAL SLAVERY—CALL IT WHAT IT IS** **OFFERED AT 4:30 P.M. | DOUBLE DEUCE**

Our congregations and every parent need to know the dangers of human (sexual) trafficking and its devastating effects on young children and youth. Human trafficking is everywhere—schools, shopping malls, youth programs and churches. It is both an individual and societal sin against God. Victims come from both affluent and poor neighborhoods. At this very moment, children in this country and throughout the world are being seduced, coerced and kidnapped to be groomed as sexual products to be sold on the worldwide sex market. As the church has formed statements on the right to life for the unborn, it is important that we extend this position to victims of human trafficking. No parent or child is immune from this pandemic of organized crime. “Chosen,” a brief film, will be shown about a young girl who was trafficked and was rescued by family members and friends.

This one-hour presentation will cover the following:

- How traffickers (pimps/predators) find young victims.
- How children are groomed and how traffickers create an emotional and physical bond with the victim.
- The role pornography plays in the grooming process.
- Warning signs and markers that could mean a victim is being trafficked.
- Illustration: Shared Hope International & Phoenix Dream Center—flagship recovery program.
- What is being done by local law enforcement and nonprofit agencies.
- How can you make this a ministry or get involved? Q&A.



**THE REV. DONA JOHNSON**

*Chair, NALC Living & Giving Stewardship Team;  
Pastor, GracePointe of Sedona*

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## HOW CONGREGATIONS CAN ADDRESS THE RANGE OF LIFE ISSUES

**OFFERED AT 5:30 P.M. / ROUTE 66**

The NALC Life Ministries Team will give an overview of forthcoming resources intended to help congregations address life issues from conception in the womb to the end of life, and the circumstances of life in between those points. The resources will be based on Holy Scripture with the aim of not getting entangled in the polarizing politics of the culture. The resources will be designed to use in a variety of settings—youth or adult educational series, a Bible study, a sermon series for Lent or any other period. The workshop will offer ample time for discussion and feedback to assist in the preparation of the resources.

**Presenters:** The Rev. Mark Chavez, Chair; Rebecka Andrae-Frontz; the Rev. Dennis Di Mauro; the Rev. Dr. Amy Schiffrin; the Rev. Melinda Jones; the Rev. Scott Licht; the Rev. Steve Shipman; and the Rev. Al Towberman.



**THE REV. MARK CHAVEZ**

*Chair, NALC Life Ministries; Pastor, Reformation Lutheran Church (Lancaster, Pennsylvania)*

## **LEGACY GIVING: AN EXPANDED VIEW OF GIVING** **OFFERED AT 5:30 P.M. | DOUBLE DEUCE**

During our lifetime and only by the grace of God, many individuals and families accumulate some amount of wealth—it could be a little or a lot. And many very devoted and faithful people have no clear plan on how some of their financial and property assets will be distributed in ways that honor God upon their death. Your testimony to the faithfulness of God can live on through a legacy gifting plan.

Through the cross and Jesus' death and resurrection, we gain an expanded perspective of what genuine giving and generosity look like. God's giving of His only Son was not only for the benefit of a favored few but through Christ, God extended his gift of salvation to all future generations.

Legacy gifting gives the giver an opportunity to ground their giving in the gospel. And it expands our understanding of generosity to include not only our families but above all else Christ's church—both local congregations and the North American Lutheran Church. Through directives in your will, beneficiary designations or your trust—your last will and testament, a statement of your faith in Jesus Christ can live on for generations to come. In this session we will provide the resources and the “how to” get started on building your legacy for Christ's church.



**THE REV. DONA JOHNSON**  
*Chair, NALC Living & Giving  
Stewardship Team;  
Pastor, GracePointe of Sedona*



**MICHAEL JOHNSON**  
*Treasurer,  
North American Lutheran Church*

## **NALC LIFE-TO-LIFE DISCIPLESHIP**

### **OFFERED AT 4:30 P.M. AND 5:30 P.M. | FIVE MOONS 5**

Tips and tools for developing a disciple-making culture in congregations. Come join Pastor David Keener in learning about our NALC Life-to-Life Discipleship initiative and how to be intentional in being and making disciples.



**THE REV. DAVID KEENER**

*Director of Renewal & Discipleship,  
North American Lutheran Church*

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## **HOW YOU CAN BECOME PART OF THE 2020 VISION TO ENSURE A LEGACY OF FAITH TODAY, TOMORROW & FOREVER**

**OFFERED AT 4:30 P.M. AND 5:30 P.M. | FIVE MOONS 6**

This interactive workshop will cover all updates, information, and resources to employ as you consider the best time and format for supporting the 2020 Vision in your own congregation. Mike and Makenzie will discuss the impact made within the NALC and its congregations through the 2020 Vision since the launch of its financial component and at the virtual Convocation in 2022, as well as the various communication tools to be aware of as you seek to become its local voice amongst your church peers. Join us to learn and ask questions about the vision as it continues progressing to ensure a legacy of faith today, tomorrow & forever!



**MIKE SCHMIDT, CFRE**

*Cramer and Associates*



**MAKENZIE FRESHLY**

*Cramer and Associates*

## **THE NORTH AMERICAN LUTHERAN SEMINARY AND DISCERNING A CALL TO MINISTRY**

***OFFERED AT 4:30 P.M. AND 5:30 P.M. | FIVE MOONS 7***

During this breakout session, the North American Lutheran Seminary (NALS) president, faculty, and staff will be present to share about the good things God is doing to raise up the next generation of pastors and church leaders. Come and meet our newest faculty members and hear about the work of the seminary. Pastor Jeff Morlock will share about his ongoing ministry of discernment throughout the NALC and Pastor Patti Morlock will share about Ordination Under Special Circumstances (OUSC). There will be time for questions and discussion.



**THE REV. DR. ERIC RIESEN**

*President, North American Lutheran Seminary*

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## **EFFECTIVE PARISH COMMUNICATION**

***SESSION 1: PRINCIPLES AND THEORIES***

***OFFERED AT 4:30 P.M. | FIVE MOONS 3***

Join us in this transformative workshop with the Deacon Andrew Ames Fuller and the NALC Communications Team in the first part of our two-part series. The Principles and Theories workshop is an immersive exploration into the profound theological foundations of communication. Learn to unlock the potential of both traditional and digital channels in strengthening your parish's connectivity. Grasp the pivotal principle that “everything speaks” and learn how to let your parish's vision and values resonate through every interaction. Delve deep into the art of crafting compelling messages, balancing your communication with your internal and external audiences, and navigating through crises. Embrace leadership principles to foster a collaborative and respectful communicative environment.

**SESSION 2: APPLYING PRINCIPLES AND SOLVING REAL-LIFE PROBLEMS**  
**OFFERED AT 5:30 P.M. | FIVE MOONS 3**

The second part of our series, Applying Principles and Solving Real-Life Problems, invites you into an interactive forum for exploring real-life communication issues within your parish. Harness the knowledge from our first session, bring your questions and concerns, and be prepared to engage in vibrant, problem-solving discussions. Learn from your peers, gain new insights from their experiences, and apply communication principles in real-world situations. This hands-on, collaborative workshop will help you navigate through actual communication challenges, with the guidance of our seasoned NALC Communications Team. Join us and contribute to the creation of congregations that communicate in a way the fosters shared identity, unity, and testimony across the North American Lutheran Church.



**THE REV. DCN. ANDREW S. AMES FULLER**  
*Director of Communications, North American Lutheran Church*

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**YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY IN THE NALC**  
**OFFERED AT 4:30 P.M. AND 5:30 P.M. | FIVE MOONS 2**

The Rev. Teresa Peters (Director of Youth and Family Ministry) and Melanie Corn (Youth and Family Ministry Specialist) will give a brief overview of what is happening in Youth and Family Ministry in the NALC and how the NALC can help make your local ministry stronger. They will also discuss how your church can do Youth and Family Ministry when you have few or even no young people in your pews.





**THE REV. TERESA PETERS**

*Director of Youth & Family Ministry,  
North American Lutheran Church*



**MELANIE CORN**

*Youth & Family Ministry Specialist,  
North American Lutheran Church*

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**EVERY CONGREGATION RENEWING: REAL LIFE  
PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES FOR STRENGTHENING  
AND GROWING NALC CONGREGATIONS  
OFFERED AT 4:30 P.M. AND 5:30 P.M. | FIVE MOONS 4**

Many congregations in North America—and in the NALC were struggling with declining attendance, participation and involvement BEFORE the pandemic! That reality increased during the COVID-19 shut-down. Is your congregation plateaued? Stagnant? Unsure how to renew and re-engage to revitalize mission and ministry? The NALC offers a number of opportunities and strategies to assist congregations in this important work. This breakout will introduce these processes and strategies, focusing especially on the Fresh Eyes for Mission Summits, renewal through Aging Ministry resources, Small and Rural Church resources, as well as providing practical real-life ideas and information aimed at renewal and revitalizing congregational in-reach and out-reach!



**THE REV. BRAD HALES**

*Director of Church Planting &  
Aging Ministry,  
North American Lutheran Church*



**THE REV. DR. DAVID WENDEL**

*Assistant to the Bishop for  
Ministry & Ecumenism,  
North American Lutheran Church*

# NALC MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS REPORT

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

Our theme for this year's Lutheran Week, "*Missio Dei*—The Work and Mission of God," comes at the close of six years in which two years have been dedicated to each of the three persons in the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The theme is appropriate because God, as a Triune God, has been on a mission from the beginning of time. Everything He has done and all that He has accomplished was ordained and set into motion for the sole purpose of saving the world and its people in Jesus.

No other mission comes close in importance to the one being pursued and carried out by God. No other purpose in life comes close in meaning and significance to the one given and offered to us in Christ. And no other reason for our existence and for the time we share in this life comes close to the reason we exist and why we have been brought together in the Church.

As I look back on this past year and reflect on what God has been doing since the North American Lutheran Church (NALC) was first formed, it is evident that God has been with us and blessing us from the start. Without exception, each year we have grown. Each year we have become stronger and more impactful in our witness. And each year there is growing evidence that the mission of God is being carried out in and through us.

I am encouraged by the progress we continue to make in implementing the Vision we adopted at our 2020 Mission Convocation. As you read through this report, you will see how God has been working to advance the commitments we have made together. Through the faithful ministry of our NALC Staff and the countless ways in which we have partnered with pastors, congregations, mission districts, and mission partners during this past year, our Lord's promise to build His Church through His people is being fulfilled. Despite the global pandemic that challenged all of us in ways we had not expected, there are encouraging signs that we are well on our way to recovery and to an increased opportunity for fruit bearing and life changing ministry.

The following is a categorized summary of the work being done in many key areas of our ministry.

## **NALC Life-to-Life Discipleship**

It has been a little over a year since we introduced the NALC Life-to-Life Experience in Intentional Discipleship for Congregations. It has been well

received by many of our congregations and is being integrated into our seminary and internship programs. The Life-to-Life Discipleship team is currently working on a companion piece to address how to be more intentional in disciple-making within our family units and everyday lives. If you are interested in learning more, visit [nalclifetolife.org](http://nalclifetolife.org).

## **Domestic Mission**

There are currently 21 "Missions in Formation" and several new developing church plants in both Canada and the United States. Following Convocation, we are planning to expand these same efforts by encouraging and supporting mission districts and congregations in developing new house churches and faith communities. To aid the small church and rural ministry, which represents a growing percentage of NALC churches, an online resource titled, "Small and Rural Church Ministry," was developed by the NALC Renewal Team. Workshops and consultations are available for this essential ministry. Finally, since many NALC congregations face the challenge of an aging demographic, we are working to prioritize our Aging Ministry by offering workshops, presentations and consultations throughout our mission districts and congregations.

## **International Mission**

On the International Mission front, last fall my wife, Mary, and I, along with the Rev. Dr. Gemechis Buba, the Rev. Dr. David Wendel, the Rev. Dr. Amy Little, the Rev. Dr. Eric Riesen and the Rev. Carol Fryer met with the leaders of the Evangelical Ethiopian Church Mekane Yesus, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania. We also visited the Rev. Martha Shanka, one of our Global Workers who is currently in Dubai.

Current Global Projects include the Leadership Project in the Middle East, the reconstruction of the Mekane Yesus Seminary in Ethiopia, and the new mission frontier in Kenya. Two new partner agencies have been approved: Bethany International and One Plus God Ministries.

Six new Global Workers will be commissioned during this year's Convocation. Dr. Randy Stubbs in Tanzania; the Rev. Sam Chim in Cambodia; the Rev. Dr. Thomas Thorstad who will be going to Laos; the Rev. Dr. Slavomír Slávik in Slovakia; the Rev. Aleksandr Gröss in Ukraine; and Dagaga Gamechu in Kenya.

## **Youth and Family**

The key to youth and family ministry is strong relationships—encouraging young people in their relationships with Christ, the church, to their community.

Over the past year, we have prioritized ways to encourage those relationships by hosting events and planning new ones. We have hosted multiple Faith Formation Festivals, which strengthen, encourage, and equip anyone working with young people. We have organized speaking engagements with churches, local youth gatherings, and online confirmation classes. We are also planning a four-day Continental Youth Gathering, scheduled for July 2024.

## **NALC Disaster Response**

NALC Disaster Response has recently responded to seven disasters: Kentucky flooding, California wildfires, Hurricane Ian in Florida, Ohio train derailment, Arkansas tornado/outbreak of 200+ tornadoes, and Oklahoma tornadoes. We have been working on Disaster preparedness for our volunteers. We have had nine trainings and 12 Disaster Response Sundays across the country, and we encourage congregations to reach out and schedule one at their church.

We have also had 25 "Stuff the Truck" events to help bolster our emergency relief efforts, but 15 regional warehouses need to be filled. Flood buckets, quilts, kits, and gift cards of all kinds are needed. Twenty servant event mission trips have been held in each of the states, and disasters listed above, and more teams of youth and adults are needed to help families rebuild their homes. We thank Jesus for amazing volunteers and we pray that God will continue to raise up faithful servants.

Lastly, the new Volunteer Training & Retreat Center is nearly complete—the Disaster Response Team encourages congregations to start planning a trip to the center in Caldwell, Ohio, with your youth and adults in 2024.

## **North American Lutheran Seminary (NALS)**

This has been a full year for the NALS. In the past year and a half, we have called three new full-time faculty members: Dr. David Luy, Dr. Alex Pierce, and the Rev. Dr. Nathan Yoder. Drs. Luy and Pierce are at the seminary center in Ambridge. Dr. Yoder is the new Director of the Lutheran Studies Program at Gordon-Conwell (Charlotte). We also called the Rev. Jeff Morlock this year to serve as the Director of Vocational Discernment for the NALS/NALC.

In the Spring, the NALS released the first edition of the new NALS magazine, *Word & Sacrament*, and is preparing for the launch of its first podcast, *Cardigan & Collar*, hosted by Dr. Luy and Pastor Maurice Lee. Lastly, the NALS has a new Memoranda of Understanding with both Fuller Theological Seminary and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary to better promote the “spokes” surrounding our hub that is at Trinity in Ambridge, PA.

## **Call Process**

The NALC call process is a prayerful discernment of ministry for congregations and pastors. In the past 12 months, 26 congregations have called a pastor to their congregation. There are 41 congregations currently seeking a full-time pastor and 37 pastors seeking a full-time call. The NALC call process website has been redesigned and is much easier to navigate and can still be found at [thenalc.org/call](http://thenalc.org/call).

## **Ministry & Ecumenism**

Fresh Eyes for Mission summits, which aim at renewal, re-energizing and re-focusing on mission within congregations, have been held all over North America since 2020. As of this Convocation, 35 have been facilitated and many positive responses have been received.

Ecumenism for Inter-Lutheran relationships has been continuing, with representation from myself, Pastor David Wendel, and other NALC appointments attending meetings with the USCCB Bishop's committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious affairs meeting and LCMS-LCC-NALC. We also are working on continued relationships, through Bishop Ray Sutton, Presiding Bishop of the Reformed Episcopal Church, to reconstitute the ACNA/NALC consultation.

The Commission on Theology and Doctrine has restarted post-COVID, continuing to oversee the Braaten-Benne Theological Lectures Series and Lutheran Theologians for the Church group (formerly Younger Theologians study group). We are also continuing to work on various NALC topics, such as the marriage and sexuality statement, sacramental practices document, non-Lutheran presidency and preaching statement of advice and counsel, and catechesis in the NALC.

## **Communications**

This year saw expansion on our communications team with the additions of Alana Brooks and Steven Neaton. In its efforts to increase a sense of unity, identity, and testimony across the NALC, much of this year's efforts were directed towards new strategies for the NALS Network as well as communication overhauls related to the NALC candidacy and call processes. Additionally, new platforms were developed to support the ongoing work of our mission team, as well as to resource congregations launching financial initiatives related to the 2020 Vision. Finally, we launched a weekly video series to give updates on our life and ministry together.

## **Operations Report**

One of the major items we have been working on in “operations” is strengthening and streamlining the process we have for vetting and certification of pastoral candidates. The Candidacy Process has been reworked to be more relationship oriented, and the certification of pastors has been tightened up in terms of requirements for those who are coming to the NALC as non-Lutherans. A first call team of seasoned pastors was formed to provide ministry support for the newly ordained.

The OUSC (Ordination Under Special Circumstances) process has been revised and improved as we learn how to maintain the integrity of the process while providing pastoral support to congregations who are in “special circumstances.” The Diaconate process is being established. Since August 2022, we have grown to 490 congregations. In the past year we have received 16 new congregations, two new mission starts, and have welcomed 19 new pastors who have gone through certification. We have also celebrated the ordination of eight new pastors.

## **Stewardship**

For more than 8 years, the NALC Living and Giving Stewardship team has created and made monthly devotions available. They highlight faith and giving, and generosity and gratitude, and are aligned seasonally with lectionary readings.

Monthly stewardship messages will begin in August 2023, along with expanded topic resources available on the NALC website. New RESET workshops will be offered to mission districts come February 2024, and a new publication addressing the origin of giving in the Old Testament with the grace of giving in the New Testament will be published in August 2024. Mike Johnson, NALC Treasurer has published a micro-book on the newly formed NALC Foundation. Ask the Registration Table how you can pick up a copy here during Lutheran Week.

## **2020 Vision Financial Initiative (Today, Tomorrow & Forever)**

One of the essential components to our 2020 Vision is to be in a strong enough financial position so that we can respond to ministry and mission opportunities as they arise. The purpose of the financial initiative is to increase the funding we have available for ministry and mission and to invest that money in ways consistent with our Core Values and our Lord's Commission.

Having kicked off our 2020 Vision financial initiative last August, we have

already received more than \$1.3M in commitments. Most of these have come from individuals who have the capacity and the heart for supporting our work financially. Other gifts have come from congregations as they strive to play a larger and more supportive role in the mission we share together.

During this first year alone, we have invested in our seminary, expanded our global workers, and increased renewal efforts in congregations. Our prayer is that commitments will continue to be made by individuals and congregations so that the legacy of faith we have received will be passed on to future generations, “Today, Tomorrow & Forever.”

### **Executive Council**

Since the 2022 Mission Convocation, the Executive Council has moved on important actions. Some of the highlights include: approving a request from Pastor Lalisa Daniel, Mission Director for Mekane Yesus, to translate the NALC Discipleship Manual into the Amharic and Afan Oromo languages; approval of funding to our mission partners as adopted by the previous Convocation; acceptance of a colloquy process for clergy from non-Lutheran backgrounds; and the adoption of the seminary model of a hub and spokes, with the three options for seminary education as presented by the NALS (North American Lutheran Seminary) Faculty and Staff. You can read the full Executive report online at *[lutheranweek.com](http://lutheranweek.com)*.

### **Women of the NALC**

The Women of the NALC work together to serve as a resource, and to support the spiritual growth and flourishing of all women throughout the NALC. This year, they have worked to support their Mission Partners, NALC Disaster Response, and the Great Commission Society of the NALC. Some other highlights include their seasonal newsletters, re-creating their logo immediately recognizable as a part of the NALC, and the proposed operational guidelines update.

### **Lutheran Week Planning Team**

The Lutheran Week Planning Committee, established in 2018, helps organize the robust nature of the annual event, whether online or in person. Working directly with the General Secretary and NALC staff, the committee functions as a forum to provide effective Lutheran Week planning and responsible budgeting reflecting the NALC’s Mission, Ministry and Core Values. They meet monthly via Zoom.

## **In Summary**

We are soon coming to the close of our 13th year as a denomination. In these so-called teenage years of our existence, we are addressing challenges and opportunities that were not there when we first started. Adjustments in how things are done, a rethinking of strategies being employed, along with the necessary changes in infrastructure that inevitably need to happen to support continued growth, are among the growing pains we are experiencing. At the same time, we continue to grow in numbers, our collective Gospel reach and impact are expanding, and lives are being transformed as they are drawn into a life-giving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Thanks to all of you for your faithful ministry, for your God-honoring service, and for the part you play in support of the work to which we have been called. It remains an honor to serve as bishop and a joy and privilege to serve with you.

Yours in Christ,

*Bishop Dan*  
**Bishop Dan**



# REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Who makes you different from another?  
What do you have that you did not receive?  
And if you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift?

— 1 Corinthians 4:7 NRSV

## **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Lord, help us to remember that all we are, all we have, and all we ever will be is your gift to us in the person of your beloved son the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you for the work and ministry of your church, the NALC. Thank you for the amazing generosity of our congregational and individual donors that provide the means to make all that we do possible. Lord, we ask you to bless their great generosity with an abundance of success in all their endeavors. In the Name of Jesus our Lord and Savior we pray. Amen!

The following reports are presented in a new Unified Statement format. The Operating Fund, Great Commission Fund and Theological Education/Seminary Fund are the principal areas of ministry that are budgeted. Additional funds, given to the NALC for restricted purposes, are recorded but not budgeted.

## **2022 REVIEW**

The unified revenue of the NALC was \$3,025,566 against a budget of \$2,823,580 resulting in a 7% increase.

The unified expenses and distributions were \$3,140,059 against a budget of \$3,038,002 resulting in a 3% increase of expenditures over budget.

Net Income was projected to be (\$236,747). Actual Income was (\$114,493), an improvement of \$122,254 mostly due to an increase in congregational donations, and expenses for theological education and the seminary being less than budgeted.

Total Cash and Cash Equivalents ended the year at \$4,624,575. Of that total, designated/restricted funds were \$3,435,164 and unrestricted funds were \$1,189,411.

## **2023 FORECAST**

The 2023 Forecast projects a slightly higher loss than the 2023 budget. This 12% difference is primarily due to forecast decreases in donations and Convocation registrations.

## **2024 PROPOSED BUDGET**

A budget is a spending plan, a statement of faith, and a stewardship plan for fiscal responsibility. The budget tells a story of the mission and ministry of the NALC and how financially we move the vision forward. Every vision requires funding. Faith and finances are inseparable. The NALC budget is a statement of faith that the congregations and individuals we serve will value and contribute to the advancement of the mission and ministry of the overall church.

## **UNIFIED REVENUES**

Congregational and individual donations to the operating fund were increased by 3%. Total donations of \$3,514,950 include Today, Tomorrow & Forever funds being allocated as follows: Operating Fund \$100,000, Great Commission Fund \$150,000 and Theological Education and Seminary Fund \$200,000. Additional other income brings the unified projected Total Revenues to \$3,627,700.

## **UNIFIED EXPENSES AND DISTRIBUTIONS**

Unified expenses and distributions are estimated to be \$3,813,887.  
Total Unified Net Income is projected to be (\$186,187)

If the projected shortfall does in fact occur, then unrestricted funds will be reduced for the year. This is an important number to follow as the number will reflect the impact of the fiscal budget. It is much like a household whose expenses exceed income – debt either rises or savings decreases.

Long-term negative budgets can be harmful to any organization. There are four ways to balance a budget: raise revenue, cut expenses, use savings, sell assets or any combination of the four options. These decisions are painful but necessary to the overall fiscal health of an organization.

Please be assured the Executive Council and NALC leadership closely monitor the stewardship of these resources and will take decisive action to avert a negative trend from becoming a long-term detriment to the NALC.

## **UNRESTRICTED FUNDS TREND**

2019 \$431,857  
2020 \$884,952  
2021 \$1,218,870  
2022 \$1,189,811

Respectfully submitted,

**C. Michael Johnson, CFP**

NALC Treasurer

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity and privilege of serving our Lord Jesus Christ and His Church in the position of Treasurer.

*Note: Audited financials have been completed for the calendar year 2021. The 2022 audit is in process. All numbers in this report are therefore unaudited. The 2022 Unified Financial Statement and the 2024 Unified Budget Proposal follow this report.*

NORTH AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH  
2024 Unified Budget



FOR CONVOCACTION ACTION

	Budget 2023	Forecast 2023	Proposed 2024
<b>REVENUES</b>			
<b><u>Operating Donations</u></b>			
Congregation	1,975,000.00	\$ 1,990,000.00	\$ 2,034,250.00
Individual	140,000.00	123,000.00	144,200.00
Mission Districts	5,000.00	7,000.00	8,000.00
TTF Allocation	150,000.00	150,000.00	100,000.00
Total Donations	2,270,000.00	2,270,000.00	2,286,450.00
<b><u>Great Commission Fund Donations</u></b>			
Congregation	147,000.00	\$ 125,000.00	\$ 165,000.00
Individual	28,000.00	18,000.00	35,000.00
Mission Districts	0.00	0.00	3,500.00
TTF Allocation	0.00	0.00	150,000.00
Total Donations	175,000.00	143,000.00	353,500.00
<b><u>Theological Education/Seminary Donations</u></b>			
Congregation	385,000.00	\$ 385,000.00	\$ 400,000.00
Individual	255,000.00	255,000.00	260,000.00
Mission Districts	11,000.00	11,000.00	15,000.00
TTF Allocation	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00
Total Donations	851,000.00	851,000.00	875,000.00
<b>Total Donations</b>	<b>3,296,000.00</b>	<b>3,264,000.00</b>	<b>3,514,950.00</b>
<b><u>Other Income</u></b>			
Convocation and Conference Registrations	233,750.00	183,750.00	47,250.00
Tuition Reimbursement	27,050.00	27,050.00	58,000.00
Other Fees and Income	16,558.00	9,500.00	7,500.00
Total Other Income	277,358.00	220,300.00	112,750.00
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>3,573,358.00</b>	<b>3,484,300.00</b>	<b>3,627,700.00</b>

**NORTH AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**2024 Unified Budget**



**FOR CONVOCACTION ACTION**

	Budget 2023	Forecast 2023	Proposed 2024
<b><u>EXPENSES</u></b>			
<b>Operating Expenses</b>			
Convocations and Conferences	399,950.00	420,220.00	98,500.00
Travel and Meetings	400,500.00	275,000.00	325,000.00
Communications	47,510.00	38,000.00	78,000.00
Administrative Expenses	207,600.00	185,000.00	200,000.00
Staff Salaries and Benefits	1,421,875.00	1,442,406.00	1,572,992.00
Bishop's Discretionary Fund	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Support for Ministry Partners	90,000.00	90,000.00	98,000.00
Miscellaneous	22,450.00	22,000.00	24,000.00
Total Expenses	2,599,885.00	2,482,626.00	2,406,492.00
<b>Great Commission Distributions</b>			
Mission Start Funding	100,000.00	80,000.00	100,000.00
Global Workers	84,000.00	108,000.00	168,000.00
Global Projects	12,000.00	25,000.00	25,000.00
Congregational Renewal	10,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00
Multinational Congregations	0.00	36,000.00	24,000.00
Missional Leadership Development	10,000.00	2,800.00	20,000.00
Total Expenses	216,000.00	263,800.00	349,000.00
<b>Theological Education/Seminary Distributions</b>			
Staff Salaries and Benefits/Adjunct + Staff Travel	616,579.00	650,000.00	810,195.00
Communications/Marketing	85,200.00	35,000.00	55,500.00
Administrative/Facilities Expenses	10,200.00	5,000.00	15,200.00
Financial Assistance	82,000.00	97,000.00	110,000.00
Theological Conference Subsidies (Lutheran Theologians of the Church)	18,000.00	18,000.00	20,000.00
J-Term	35,400.00	35,400.00	34,000.00
Regents	12,000.00	12,000.00	13,500.00
Total Expenses	859,379.00	852,400.00	1,058,395.00
<b>Total Expenses and Distributions</b>	<b>3,675,264.00</b>	<b>3,598,826.00</b>	<b>3,813,887.00</b>
<b>TOTAL NET INCOME</b>	<b>(\$ 101,906.00)</b>	<b>(\$ 114,526.00)</b>	<b>(\$ 186,187.00)</b>

**North American Lutheran Church  
Balance Sheet  
December 31, 2022**

**ASSETS**

<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash	3,556,193.76	
Bequest/Legacy Fund	816,788.58	
Certificates of Deposit	251,593.25	
	<hr/>	
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	4,624,575.59	
Accounts Receivable	37,098.26	
Loans Receivable	75,000.00	
<b>Prepaid Expenses</b>		
Rent Security Deposit	1,228.31	
Prepaid Expenses-Recurring	13,921.67	
Prepaid Expenses-Short Term	42,864.89	
Prepaid Other Event Deposits	119,402.50	
	<hr/>	
Total Prepaid Expenses	289,515.63	
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>4,914,091.22</b>
		<hr/>
<b>Property and Equipment</b>		
Computer Equipment	33,557.88	
Office Equipment	1,119.98	
Website	15,000.00	
Disaster Response Vehicles	181,638.76	
Disaster Response Warehouse	212,607.35	
Accum Depr-DR Capital Invest	(62,550.95)	
Accumulated Depreciation	(34,527.37)	
	<hr/>	
<b>Total Property and Equipment</b>		<b>346,845.65</b>
		<hr/>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>5,260,936.87</b>
		<hr/> <hr/>

**LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL**

<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Accounts Payable	\$ 156,219.24	
Balance due to Other Agency	82,192.74	
Accrued Salary and Wages	70,899.93	
Accrued Payroll Taxes	1,990.75	
Accrued Expenses Payable	25,707.26	
Registration Dep - Other Event	1,574.49	
Registratn Dep - Pastors' Conf	12,442.64	
Registration Dep - B-B Lecture	2,250.00	
	<hr/>	
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>353,277.05</b>
		<hr/>
<b>Total Long-Term Liabilities</b>		<b>0.00</b>
		<hr/>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<b>353,277.05</b>
		<hr/>
<b>Capital</b>		
Net Assets	4,037,378.40	
Net Income	870,281.42	
	<hr/>	
<b>Total Capital</b>		<b>4,907,659.82</b>
		<hr/>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Capital</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>5,260,936.87</b>
		<hr/> <hr/>

Unaudited - For Management Purposes Only

**North American Lutheran Church  
Unified Financial Statement**

Ending December 31, 2022

<b><u>REVENUES</u></b>				
<b><u>Operating Donations</u></b>				
Congregation				
Individual	\$	586,418.08	\$	1,924,757.16
Mission Districts		70,443.14		154,734.40
		0.00		2,500.00
Disaster Response - Capital Investment		38,710.46		69,152.92
Donations - Miscellaneous		150.25		534.88
Total Donations		<u>695,721.93</u>		<u>2,151,679.36</u>
				<u>1,967,700.00</u>
<b><u>Great Commission Fund Donations</u></b>				
Congregation	\$	36,276.00	\$	100,244.44
Individual		18,342.29		36,612.29
Mission Districts		0.00		0.00
Total Donations		<u>54,618.29</u>		<u>136,856.73</u>
				<u>170,000.00</u>
<b><u>Theological Education/Seminary Donations</u></b>				
Congregation	\$	87,277.66	\$	309,778.62
Individual		239,681.61		342,532.31
Mission Districts		0.00		7,192.00
Donations - Miscellaneous		0.00		34.00
Total Donations		<u>326,959.27</u>		<u>659,536.93</u>
				<u>635,000.00</u>
<b>Total Donations</b>		<b>1,077,299.49</b>		<b>2,948,073.02</b>
				<b>2,772,700.00</b>
<b><u>Other Income</u></b>				
Convocation and Conference Registrations		0.00		36,250.00
Tuition Reimbursement		9,000.00		0.00
Other Fees and Income		16,990.82		14,630.00
Total Other Income		<u>25,990.82</u>		<u>50,880.00</u>
<b>Total Revenues</b>		<b><u>1,103,290.31</u></b>		<b><u>3,025,566.04</u></b>
				<b><u>2,823,580.00</u></b>

Unaudited - For Management Purposes Only

**North American Lutheran Church  
Unified Financial Statement**

Ending December 31, 2022

	Current Quarter Actual	Year to Date Actual	Year to Date Budget
<b><u>EXPENSES</u></b>			
<b>Operating Expenses</b>			
Convocations and Conferences	5,716.96	91,073.72	65,010.00
Travel and Meetings	143,450.97	365,865.77	323,500.00
Communications	23,614.85	55,288.67	53,350.00
Administrative Expenses	64,726.72	170,272.27	131,544.00
Staff Salaries and Benefits	370,082.50	1,347,236.32	1,276,283.00
Bishop's Discretionary Fund	7,000.00	7,400.00	10,000.00
Support for Ministry Partners	90,000.00	90,000.00	90,000.00
Miscellaneous	5,685.39	20,814.70	19,730.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>710,277.39</b>	<b>2,147,951.45</b>	<b>1,969,417.00</b>
<b>Great Commission Distributions</b>			
Mission Start Funding	16,750.00	99,008.95	100,000.00
Global Workers	8,000.00	92,017.90	75,000.00
Global Projects	1,000.00	18,085.00	10,000.00
Congregational Renewal	0.00	0.00	10,000.00
Missional Leadership Development	0.00	817.00	20,500.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>25,750.00</b>	<b>209,928.85</b>	<b>215,500.00</b>
<b>Theological Education/Seminary Distributions</b>			
Staff Salaries and Benefits/Adjunct	172,878.89	507,791.59	557,890.00
Communications/Marketing	52,108.61	109,591.90	97,800.00
Administrative Expenses	11,990.70	41,491.50	69,420.00
Scholarships	3,735.00	57,742.00	82,000.00
Theological Conference Subsidies (Younger Theologians)	0.00	18,988.70	18,000.00
J-Term	982.50	17,193.32	35,400.00
Regents	14,513.62	29,379.48	14,900.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>256,209.32</b>	<b>782,178.49</b>	<b>875,410.00</b>
<b>Total Expenses and Distributions</b>	<b>992,236.71</b>	<b>3,140,058.79</b>	<b>3,060,327.00</b>
<b>TOTAL NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 111,053.60</b>	<b>(\$ 114,492.75)</b>	<b>(\$ 236,747.00)</b>

Unaudited - For Management Purposes Only



**North American Lutheran Church**  
**Unified Financial Statement**  
Ending December 31, 2022

	<b>Current Quarter Actual</b>	<b>Year to Date Actual</b>	<b>Year to Date Budget</b>
Non-Recurring Income - Bequests	2,750.00	659,907.79	0.00
Disaster Response Donations	105,443.68	297,449.60	0.00
Disaster Response Distributions	52,933.65	266,374.63	0.00
	<u>52,510.03</u>	<u>31,074.97</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Today, Tomorrow & Forever Donations	645,643.11	707,306.08	0.00
Today, Tomorrow & Forever Distributions	398,155.18	398,155.18	0.00
	<u>247,487.93</u>	<u>309,150.90</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Other Restricted/Designated Donations	6,758.91	26,609.01	0.00
Other Restricted/Designated Distributions	12,967.05	41,968.50	0.00
	<u>(6,208.14)</u>	<u>(15,359.49)</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<b><u>Grand Total Net Income</u></b>	<b><u>407,593.42</u></b>	<b><u>870,281.42</u></b>	<b><u>(236,747.00)</u></b>
<b><u>2020 Vision - Today, Tomorrow &amp; Forever</u></b>			
Summary - 8/1/2021 to 12/31/2022			
Total pledges received		1,043,069.58	
Donations received to date	860,298.58		
Total expenses	398,155.18		
<b><u>Net Income for 2020 Vision - TT&amp;F</u></b>	<b><u>462,143.40</u></b>		

Unaudited - For Management Purposes Only

# REPORT ON LUTHERAN BENEFITS

Here is a summary of the current status of Lutheran Benefits as of the end of April 2023:

## **The Lutheran Benefits Health Plan**

- 127 employees (100 congregations) currently enrolled in health plan
- 125 employees (71 congregations) currently enrolled in the ancillary only (non-health) package
- 570 total lives covered (including dependents)

## **The Lutheran Benefits 403b Retirement Plan**

### Employees

- Total number of employees enrolled in the plan: 599
- Total number of active participants (with an account balance): 522

### Employers

- Total number of enrolled churches: 304
- Total number of churches enrolled (with an account balance): 250

### Transfers

9 new transfers have been processed in the last year (May 1, 2022, to April 30, 2023) totaling \$2,981,892.18.

### Plan Assets

Total plan funds under management – \$114,555,560.

### Lutheran Benefits Trends

June 30 each Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021*2022
<b>Health Plan</b>									
Employees	282	250	176	172	194	198	187	158	151 134
Congregations	181	178	152	145	148	157	150	124	120 106
<b>Ancillary Only Plan</b>									
Employees	18	50	76	80	71	69	72	101	105 115
Congregations	8	24	62	61	47	61	54	63	66 77
<b>Retirement</b>									
Total employees	282	343	398	423	478	504	512	527	530
Active participants	n/a	n/a	364	358	365	388	343	397	485
Total employers	181	216	236	251	267	282	245	261	269
Active employers	155	n/a	186	177	221	234	212	203	216
Total plan funds	\$45.4M	\$56.2M	\$60.7M	\$61.1M	\$77.9M	\$84.6M	\$87.9M	\$92.4M	\$122.6M

\*May 31



The Hahn Financial Building

3101 S Phillips Avenue

Sioux Falls, SD 57105

Office: 605.275.3600

Fax: 605.275.9595

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

## Welcome, Participants of the 2023 NALC Convocation!

God's richest blessings on your work at the NALC Convocation! Your work is very important. As you place your decision making in His hands, He will bless those decisions and implementations.

The Hahn Financial Group, Inc. (HFG) represents the NALC Lutheran Benefits Retirement and Health Plans. Many of you have already enrolled. With the NALC plans you have IRS-compliant plans in which congregations, Called Workers, and employees may choose to participate. The NALC denominational 403(b) plan provides Section 107 provisions for NALC Rostered Ministers of the Gospel where pre-tax contributions may be distributed for qualified housing expenses and may be excluded from gross income as a parsonage allowance in retirement.\* Your denominational health plan is a testament to your faith by not providing coverage for abortions or abortifacient drugs. Highlights and plan benefits are described in the attached summary sheet.

As your Plan Advisors, we are committed to excellence in service to you, your church, and the NALC. Our firm serves as your main contact for the plan and we will assist each of your Called Workers and employees who participate in the NALC Plans with individual service.

Please visit us at our booth during the Convocation. We are ready to help with any step in the process. We have further information, and enrollment directions at our booth. You can also schedule a future appointment to review your accounts with us. Feel free to call or email us anytime using the contact information below.

Blessings in our Savior's name,

Verlyn Hahn, CFP®, and your HFG advisor and service team members

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**1-800-516-HAHN (4246)  
[LutheranBenefits@HahnFinancialGroup.com](mailto:LutheranBenefits@HahnFinancialGroup.com)**

\*Rev.Rul 63-156, 1963-2 C.B. 79

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CHURCH

# Lutheran Benefits 403(b)9 Retirement Plan

## NALC Denominational Plan

- **Section 107 provisions for Ministers of the Gospel:**
  - Pre-tax contributions may be distributed for qualified housing expenses and may be excluded from gross income as a parsonage allowance in retirement.\*
- **Ministers of the Gospel Housing Equity Account**
  - Distributions available prior to age 59½ for home down payment\*\*
- **Direct Rollover and Transfer Capabilities from current 403(b), TSA, IRA**
- **Current employer/employee contribution limits: up to \$66,000/year\*\*\***
- **Pre-tax and ROTH capabilities**
- **Convenient online enrollment & easy-to-use website for 24/7 account access. Electronic prospectuses available online.**
- **Customer service team to assist with enrollment & answer questions**
- **Advisor service team for personal financial and/or retirement planning**
- **Pre-built investment fund portfolios or build your own portfolio**
- **No-load, low cost Vanguard & Dimensional Funds**
- **Loans or hardship withdrawals available**
- **Capability of separate portfolios for each money source – and ability to distribute from any fund or money source**
- **In-plan Roth conversion capabilities**
- **NO COST to your church / entity to implement**



**For more information, please call:**

**1-800-516-HAHN (4246)**

**[LutheranBenefits@HahnFinancialGroup.com](mailto:LutheranBenefits@HahnFinancialGroup.com)**

- Distributions from 403(b)9 denominational retirement plans are usually taxed as ordinary income. One exception may be distributions by Ministers of the Gospel for qualified housing expenses. Withdrawals made before age 59 ½ may be subject to a 10% federal income tax penalty. Generally, once you reach age 72, you must begin taking annual Required Minimum Distributions (RMD), unless still employed by an entity participating in the denominational plan.
- Investing involves risk, including the potential loss of principal.
- Neither Hahn Financial Group, Inc. nor its representatives provide tax or legal advice. For answers to your specific questions, please consult a qualified attorney or tax advisor.
- Investment Advisory Services and Insurance Products offered through Hahn Financial Group, Inc., a SEC Registered Investment Advisor.
- \*Rev. Rul. 63-156, 1963-2 C.B. 79, \*\*IRC Section 107, 403b9 Denominational Church Plans, \*\*\*www.irs.gov.
- Hahn Financial Group, Inc. is not affiliated with the North American Lutheran Church.

# Minister of the Gospel Financial Opportunities

## Potential planning situations:

1. Buying or selling a house
2. Receiving an inheritance
3. You have investment savings or mutual funds
4. You or your spouse are over 59 ½ and have an IRA or other qualified plan
5. You or your spouse contribute to an IRA or ROTH account
6. You live in a parsonage provided by your church
7. You and your spouse are both eligible for Minister of the Gospel status

## Potential benefits:

- ✓ Gain potential tax benefits when you contribute
- ✓ Gain potential tax benefits when you distribute

## YOUR ACTION ITEM:

*If any of these situations apply to you, please call Hahn Financial Group, Inc at **1-800-516-4246** and ask to speak with one of your advisors.*

*We look forward to serving you!*



Investment Advisory Services and Insurance Products offered through Hahn Financial Group, Inc., an SEC Registered Investment Advisor.

Neither Hahn Financial Group, Inc., nor its representatives provide tax or legal advice. For answers to your specific questions, please consult a qualified attorney or tax advisor.

## Psalm 139:13-14

*For you created my inmost being; you  
knit me together in my mother's  
womb.*

*I praise you because I am fearfully and  
wonderfully made; your works are  
wonderful, I know that full well.*

### Health Plan Premiums

Employee	\$930
Employee/Spouse	\$2,000
Employee/Child(ren)	\$1,451
Family	\$2,328

*Available to rostered Clergy and/or rostered  
Congregations including W-2 employees with the NALC*

## Explore your options!



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Sioux Falls, SD 57105

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# NORTH AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

## Lutheran Benefits Plan

### Health Plan Benefits

- \$1,000 annual deductible for an individual/\$2,000 for families
- 20% coinsurance after deductible
- \$3,000 max out-of-pocket expense for an individual/\$6,000 for families
- ACA Preventative Medical Evaluations covered at 100%
- \$0 co-pay for generic medications
- No coverage for elective abortions or abortifacient drugs

### Ancillary Benefits

- Life and AD&D: \$50,000 base life insurance policy with additional \$50,000 Accidental Death & Dismemberment coverage
- Short and Long-Term Disability: Protects a portion of your income to normal retirement age - or beyond if still working
- Employee Assistance Program: Provides counseling services for employees to work through personal or work-related problems
- \$10,000 Critical Illness Policy: Pays a lump sum cash payment in the event of heart attack, stroke, or certain types of cancer

### Optional Ancillary Items

- Flexible Spending Account: A pre-tax account to save for medical and/or daycare expenses
- Vision Plan: Exams, lenses, and contacts coverage
- Dental Plan: Cleaning, cavities, root canals, dentures, and orthodontia

## GLOBAL WORKERS



**The Rev. Samuel Chim**  
*Awakening Lives to World Missions*  
Cambodia



**The Rev. Tom Curry**  
*Victory Lutheran Church*  
Taiwan



**The Rev. Nijhar Minz-Ekka &  
The Rev. Jhakmak Ekka**  
*World Mission Prayer League*  
India



**Jonathan Gowin**  
*Bethany International*  
Gambia



**The Rev. Aleksandr Gröss**  
*Spiritual Orphans Network*  
Ukraine



**The Rev. Valery Hryhoryk**  
*Awakening Lives to World Missions*  
Belarus





**Stephen Katterhenrich**  
*Wycliffe Bible Translators*  
 Tanzania



**The Rev. William Obaga &  
 The Rev. Dr. Margaret Obaga**  
*World Mission Prayer League*  
 Kenya



**The Rev. Didi Panzo**  
*World Mission Prayer League*  
 Congo



**The Rev. Heidi Punt**  
*SMI Haiti*  
 Haiti



**The Rev. Martha Shanka**  
*Spiritual Orphans Network*  
 Dubai



**The Rev. Dr. Slavomír Slávik**  
*Spiritual Orphans Network*  
 Slovakia



**Dr. Randy Stubbs**

*Awakening Lives to World Missions*  
Tanzania



**The Rev. Thomas Thorstad**

*Awakening Lives to World Missions*  
Laos



**Dagaga Gemachu**

Kenya

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## **Pastors' Conference**

January 16–18, 2024

*Orlando, Florida*

## **Canadian Rockies Theological Conference**

April 9–11, 2024

*Canmore, Alberta, Canada*

## **NALC Young Adult Gathering**

May 5–11, 2024

*Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada*

## **Continental Youth Gathering**

July 1–4, 2024

*Boerne, Texas*

## **Online Mission Convocation 2024**

August 9, 2024

## **Lutheran Week 2025**

August 3–7, 2025

*Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*

# Is the Holy Spirit Calling You?

The NALS is a network of seminaries located across the U.S. & Canada, with the Seminary Center in Ambridge, PA. Explore our network and start your journey today!

**Trinity School for Ministry** | *Ambridge, PA*

**Beeson Divinity School** | *Birmingham, AL*

**Concordia Lutheran Seminary** | *Edmonton, AB*

**Fuller Theological Seminary** | *Pasadena, CA / Houston, TX*

**Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary** | *Charlotte, NC*

**Luther House of Study** | *Sioux Falls, SD*



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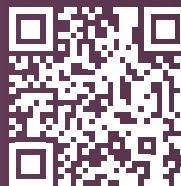
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## NOTES

## PARKING & LOCAL AMENITIES

### PARKING INFORMATION & GROUND TRANSPORTATION

If you are flying out of the Will Rogers World Airport, the best way to travel from the Omni Hotel is via **Uber or Lyft**. It's about a 10 minute ride.

*Additional parking is available for \$10/day at the Convention Center Parking, 15 Mick Cornett Drive, Oklahoma City, just east of the hotel.*

### LOCAL AMENITIES

For a list of museums and art galleries, outdoor recreation and parks, and restaurants near the hotel, visit *[lutheranweek.com](http://lutheranweek.com)*.



*To read the full list of amenities,  
scan the QR code below with the camera on your smart phone.*





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