

20
20
VISION | **MISSION**
CONVOCATION

2020 NOMINEE BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

INDEX:

INTERIM REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE.....	1-3
NOMINEES FOR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.....	4-20
NOMINEES FOR COURT OF ADJUDICATION.....	21-22
NOMINEES FOR BOARD OF REGENTS.....	23-41

2020 CONVOCAATION OF THE NORTH AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH INTERIM REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The 2020 Nominating Committee presents the candidates named below for positions to be elected at the August Mission Convocation. We believe that all the individuals named are qualified and would do well in their service if elected.

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.

Each year the Convocation elects one pastor and one layperson to the Executive Council for four-year terms. The 2020 clergy candidates are as follow (name, current congregation and nominating congregation):

- [The Rev. Dr. Catherine Braasch](#), St. John's Lutheran Church – Lake Township, Fort Wayne, Indiana; nominated by First English Lutheran Church, Marysville, Ohio
- [The Rev. Susan Elizabeth Fox](#), First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Ridgway, Pennsylvania; nominated by Advent Lutheran Church, North Charleston, South Carolina
- [The Rev. Dr. Franklin J. Gore](#), St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church of Pensacola, Pensacola, Florida; nominated by St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church of Pensacola, Pensacola, Florida
- [The Rev. Carl Rasmussen](#), First Lutheran Church, Kirkland, Illinois; nominated by Old East Paint Creek Lutheran Church, Waterville, Iowa

The 2019 lay candidates are as follows (name, current congregation and nominating congregation/nominating delegates):

- [Ms. Lynn Kickingbird](#), Peace Lutheran Church, Edmond, Oklahoma; nominated by Peace Lutheran Church, Edmond, Oklahoma
- [Dr. Beverly Miller](#), St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Sarver, Pennsylvania; nominated by delegates: The Rev. Shawn W. Smith (St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Sarver, Pennsylvania), The Rev. Carl A. Johnson (St. John's Lutheran Church, Kittanning, Pennsylvania), The Rev. Dr. Cathi Braasch (St. John's Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana)

COURT OF ADJUDICATION

The Court of Adjudication has jurisdiction to decide appeals from disciplinary decision, 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 one individual, clergy or lay, will be elected to a four-year term on the Court of Adjudication. The 2020 candidates are as follows (name, current congregation and nominating congregation):

- [Mr. Samuel Duncomb](#), Peace Lutheran Church, Northwood, Iowa; nominated by Peace Lutheran Church, Northwood, Iowa

BOARD OF REGENTS

The NALS Board of Regents is a group of 9 to 12 people who commit their time and talents to act as the governing body of the North American Lutheran Seminary (NALS). Among their numerous duties, the Board of Regents appoints, advises and evaluates the president of the NALS and also determine the hiring of faculty members and staff persons.

This year three¹ individuals, clergy or lay, will be elected to a six-year term on the Board of Regents. The 2020 candidates are as follows (name, current congregation and nominating congregation):

- [The Rev. Maurice C. Frontz, III](#), St. Stephen Lutheran Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; nominated by St. Stephen Lutheran Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- [The Rev. Paul Gruetter](#), St. John's Lutheran Church, Montpelier, Ohio; nominated by Zion Lutheran Church, St. Marys, Ohio
- [The Rev. Dr. Paul Krueger](#), First Lutheran Church, Washburn, North Dakota; nominated by Peace Lutheran Church, Devils Lake, North Dakota
- [The Rev. James Lehmann](#), Immanuel Lutheran Church, Thomasboro, Illinois; nominated by Immanuel Lutheran Church, Thomasboro, Illinois
- [The Rev. Daryl Olson](#), Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church, Outlook, Saskatchewan; nominated by Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church, Outlook, Saskatchewan
- [The Rev. Christopher Ryan Porter](#), Advent Lutheran Church, Winchester, Virginia; nominated by Trinity Lutheran Church, Warrenton, Virginia

¹ Correction from original announcement

- [The Rev. Dieter Punt](#), Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Troutman, North Carolina; nominated by Christ the King Lutheran Church, De Soto, Illinois
- [The Rev. Dr. Eric Waters](#), St. John Lutheran Church, Boerne, Texas; nominated by St. John Lutheran Church, Boerne, Texas
- [Mr. Roger Weyersberg](#), Redeemer Lutheran Church, Owosso, Michigan; nominated by Redeemer Lutheran Church, Owosso, Michigan

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Hugh W. Brewer, Chair

The Rev. Dona Johnson

Ms. Carol Lattier

Mr. Erik Osness

The Rev. Richard Tomlinson

NOMINEES FOR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (CLERGY)

THE REV. DR. CATHERINE BRAASCH

Fort Wayne, Indiana



Congregational Membership: St. John's Lutheran Church – Lake Township (Fort Wayne, Indiana)

Occupation: Chaplain, Lutheran Military Veterans & Families Ministries; mission formation pastor, Reformation Church (NALC), Middlebury, Indiana

Basic Biographical Information: FAMILY: Widowed in 2016 after 50 years of marriage; one child, deceased

FAMILY BUSINESSES: Ranching; farm/ranch real estate (corporation secretary)

EDUCATION: B.S.Ed., University of Wisconsin – Whitewater; M.A., Gonzaga University; M.Div., Lutheran School of Theology – Chicago; D.Min., Graduate Theological Foundation

PROFESSIONAL: 1974–1988: Management in higher education, health care, volunteer services; private practice consultant/trainer. 1988–2002: Denominational executive. 2002–2020: Pastor, chaplain.

VOLUNTEER: Public speaking judge; national, state, local Future Farmers of America (FFA); 4-H leader; fire/rescue squad

HOBBIES: Shooting; quilting

Experience within the Body of Christ that has prepared you for service in this position.

CONGREGATIONAL: President, vice-president, financial secretary, teacher, stewardship chair, choir

DENOMINATIONAL:

- 1998–2002: Executive staff (mission leadership, development/redevelopment); executive director, women's ministry; Bishop's Cabinet
- 2002–2009: Parish pastor; synod committees – consultation, stewardship, rural ministry, communications
- 2009–2020: NALC Vision & Planning Team; mission district dean; interim pastor, six congregations; Holy Families! Initiative director; Living & Giving Stewardship Team; Candidacy Committee; led four annual seminarian retreats; 2019 nominee for bishop

- NALS Board of Regents, secretary; chair, Development Committee; Planning & Expansion Committee; Executive Committee

OTHER: Sola Publishing Board of Directors

What spiritual gifts and skills has God given you to bless this ministry?

SPIRITUAL GIFTS: Faith, knowledge, wisdom, discernment, administration

SKILLS: Guiding governing bodies, constituencies and staff in strategic planning, action, evaluation and accountability; planning gatherings for 3,000–5,000 participants

Nominators and other colleagues say I'm: "Forthright." "Courageous." "Persevering." "Pastoral to the hurting." "Responds firmly when necessary." "Lutheran by conviction ... coming from a five-generation Mormon background to faith in Christ as Lord and Savior." "Respects roles of elected leadership and relationship to staff." Their words humble me and ring true.

What challenges do you see facing the NALC over the next few years? Our greatest challenges are our greatest opportunities: making Christ known when indifference and hostility to Christ are increasing, all while remaining faithful to our biblical, creedal, confessional foundations. To accomplish this, we must: (1) Prepare the NALC for sustainable growth, including potential doubling or tripling of member congregations over the next 5–10 years; and (2) Develop lean, nimble, cost-effective denominational structures that honor, equip and support NALC congregations as the heart of a missionary church.

What hopes do you have for the mission of the NALC over the next few years? I hope the NALC will mature into a vibrant, confessional, truly evangelical denomination that leads lasting, significant change in how unbelievers meet Jesus and experience His life-changing Body, the Church. I'm excited about Bishop Selbo's 2020 Vision for the NALC. Once we fully translate this vision into mutually accountable collaboration between congregations, mission districts and denomination, then the NALC's Vision will translate into hopeful, positive, sustainable mission action — both now and in years to come.

What should be the NALC's most important ministry priorities over the next few years?

We need to:

- Uplift all four Core Values, beginning with greater attention to congregations;
- Model transparent governance by regularly publishing Executive Council minutes and financial reports;
- Promote strategic growth; plant NALC congregations in promising places where we aren't already present and there's no nearby congregation to foster new ministry; and

- Clearly define and expand roles and relationships of mission districts, their deans and other leaders, and congregations as integral to the mission and ministry of the NALC.

What tangible actions can the NALC, its mission districts and its member congregations take to live out our commitment to be a Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven church?

Let's get fully behind Bishop Selbo's 2020 Vision, especially by:

- Prayerfully asking, "Where does the Great Commission lead us to establish new worshipping, serving presences in each mission district?" and, "What will it take for this to happen?";
- Strengthening mission districts' capacity for mission planning and action;
- Giving greater focus to revitalizing existing congregations;
- Expanding the CREDO initiative on sacramental discipleship; and
- Expanding the NALC's Living & Giving Stewardship initiatives as vital to all discipleship efforts.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life. The sign of God is that I'm continually being led where I haven't planned to go. My spiritual disciplines are grounded in daily remembrance of Baptism, including:

- Praying with Scripture using the daily prayer offices;
- Intercessory prayer;
- Peer accountability; and
- Daily reflection on how God has been present and/or silent during the day just passed.

I pray for grace and courage to keep saying, "Yes, and I ask and trust God to help and guide me."

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you. 1 Corinthians 12:18-26 guides my life and ministry. Verses 18-21, in particular, are at the heart of servant leadership, and especially vital if the NALC wants to be a lean, responsive denomination with the congregation at its heart. No part of this body, the NALC, can dare say "I have no need of the other." Fulfilling God's mission will take all of us, running together as one, to encounter a world that is ignoring Christ.

THE REV. SUSAN ELIZABETH FOX

Ridgway, Pennsylvania



Congregational Membership: First Evangelical Lutheran Church
(Ridgway, Pennsylvania)

Occupation: Pastor/Shepherd

Basic Biographical Information: Widowed. Michael J. Fox (I know!) was also a Lutheran pastor. Collectively, we have five children and nine grandchildren.

Education: National College of Business, Rapid City, South Dakota; Dakota State University, Madison, South Dakota; Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa

Pastimes: Singing/piano, gardening, cooking/baking, genealogy, quilting, swimming, and camping

Experience within the Body of Christ that has prepared you for service in this position.

Before entering Word and Sacrament ministry, I spent 25 years in the business world, serving as an administrative assistant to presidents, vice-presidents and treasurers. I have experience working with the needs, challenges and expectations of boards of directors.

I am also a former high school business/computer science teacher.

In ministry, I have served both four-point and three-point parishes, working well with each congregation's leadership team. Currently, I serve on the In-Tents Lutheran Camp Board.

What spiritual gifts and skills has God given you to bless this ministry?

1. Prayer
2. A passion for proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ
3. A passion for strengthening His Church
4. Searching the Scripture for truth, wisdom and will
5. Lots of patience
6. A lovely sense of humor
7. Committed to timeliness and meeting deadlines

What challenges do you see facing the NALC over the next few years? Two of the challenges we face are:

1. the continued shortage of pastors; and
2. providing cultures for making disciples of all nations.

If you have not already done so, I encourage you to read the NALC 2020 Vision: A 10-Point Plan, as posted on the NALC website at thenalc.org/vision. From these points of light should come new conversations, strategies and solutions.

What hopes do you have for the mission of the NALC over the next few years? I love this church body. My daily prayer is that God will continue to bless the work of the NALC.

Grounded in Scripture, I hope we continue in unity of mission, while being bold in our witness to draw all people to Jesus. May we never grow weary of our calling. We have the best message in the world to proclaim!

What should be the NALC's most important ministry priorities over the next few years?

1. Making disciples of all nations has to be saturated into all of our plans, programs, initiatives – into every aspect of the NALC. Life-to-Life Discipleship, let's move forward!
2. Let's also look deeper at our aging ministry, with a focus on equipping the mature adult for outreach and sharing the faith.
3. As one who is called to rural (and remote) ministry, I encourage us to covenant with each other to be intentional in addressing the needs of our small and rural congregations.

What tangible actions can the NALC, its mission districts and its member congregations take to live out our commitment to be a Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven church?

1. Let us continue to be faithful in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
2. Increase training opportunities for pastors and lay leaders.
3. Congregations continue to struggle with geographical distance for mutual conversation and consolation. One thing the COVID-19 pandemic has blossomed in us is the creativity and use of electronic media. Expansion in this area might be good.
4. Encourage each congregation to support (be creative) at least one mission partner, besides our NALC and mission districts.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life. “And He walks with me and He talks with me, and He tells me I am His own.”

- Remembering my Baptism
- Confession and Absolution
- Prayer and devotions
- Interaction with colleagues
- Conversations with parishioners, both the joys and concerns

In ministering to others, I am being ministered to.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you. Psalm 27:1 (ESV): “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” This verse was bestowed upon me at my confirmation by Pastor Theilen. I have worn it as a mantle since that time. Jesus is the Light of the World, and my sure defense. He is the anchor I cling to.

THE REV. DR. FRANKLIN J. GORE

Cantonment, Florida



Congregational Membership: St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church of Pensacola, Inc. (Pensacola, Florida)

Occupation: Pastor

Basic Biographical Information: I’m married to Wanda R. Gore. We have three grown children: Kevin (Becky), Kristin (Tim) and Kelly (Kevin), and three grandsons (Andrew, Parker, and Kenzo).

Experience within the Body of Christ that has prepared you for service in this position. I’m a graduate of Kent State University, Kent, Ohio (B.S.), Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio (M.Div.), and Trinity Theological Seminary, Evansville, Indiana (D.Min.). My doctor of ministry focused on christian management and leadership. My education interests included research and analysis of ministry and contextualization, church planting and church revitalization. My doctor of ministry project focused on “Stewardship: A MATTER OF FAITH” webinar course. The work was submitted to Trinity Theological Seminary as an online seven to eight-week course for pastoral candidates.

What spiritual gifts and skills has God given you to bless this ministry? My gifts for serving on the Executive Council include: administration, finances, and leadership development

With God's help, I've guided two churches from financial struggle into stability. We established three endowment funds, along with their articles of agreement, and policies and procedures.

My corporate business experience and skills helped to secure loans for the church in Ohio for additional classroom space, and in Pensacola to revitalize through stability. As a pastoral leader, I've mentored four seminary students: two for Word and Sacrament and two for Word and service. My equipping of the saints has increased the visibility of the parish deacon for the church. With God's help, I've been able to equip, nurture, and develop leaders within the two congregation that can lead the Body of Christ with health and mutuality.

By rebuilding a Christ-Centered foundation in the church, the church leadership is able to encourage others to engage in the mission and ministry.

What challenges do you see facing the NALC over the next few years? Evangelism – Lutheran churches are not always good in evangelism development. How can we help plant churches, educate leaders for evangelism, and support a long-term plan? This is not a quick fix.

Discipleship – this is the same as evangelism. We need to give opportunities for the people of God to develop their spiritual gifts in serving, in witnessing and in testifying.

Stewardship – not just talking about it but actually putting in place opportunities for development.

How can we, the Executive Council, help promote and support the congregations in their mission and ministry?

What hopes do you have for the mission of the NALC over the next few years? My hopes and prayers for the NALC are:

We establish a better social media presence. As I go around and speak to people about St. Paul – Pensacola, there is a lack of knowledge of the NALC.

I believe we have an opportunity in the next few years to establish congregations (new congregations or disaffiliated ELCA congregations). We should have a support system for those churches wanting to change affiliation. As a pastor who lived through the change of affiliation, I know the congregation council and the pastor need a supportive connection to the NALC.

Lastly, I pray and hope that we can establish more congregations in the Panhandle area of Alabama and Florida, as well as reach into Louisiana.

What should be the NALC's most important ministry priorities over the next few years?

1. Pray for God's Church. Pray for the people of God. Pray for our church leaders, and involve as many people as possible.
2. Develop a financial plan for church planting and church renewal.
 - a. Development and revitalization does not happen without cost.
 - b. While models of the past have not worked well, that does not mean that we should abandon financial planning for future church plants.
 - c. Some mission districts are small and cannot support the new mission opportunity.
3. Support and help in the development of congregation spirituality and discipleship.

What tangible actions can the NALC, its mission districts and its member congregations take to live out our commitment to be a Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven church?

Matthew 22:37-40: "Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments" (NIV).

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life. Every day in prayer I give thanks for the blessing of life today. My faith is an everyday experience that continues to give me the opportunity to grow. Although I feel greatly connected through my prayer life, my devotion time is vital for my spiritual health. Lastly, I've learned over the years that my plans are not always God's plans. God has a way of letting you know this. My children and wife have heard me say many times over the years, "God has a sense of humor."

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you. Ephesians 2:8-9: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast" (NIV).

I am saved by God's action and grace. This is a matter of faith for the Christian believer. I look to what God has already done for me in giving His Son. Therefore, I see the gifts given to me in ministry, as a way to bring glory to the Father, not me. We are fortunate to have such a gracious and loving God who gives us the opportunity to serve Him and to love Him as He loves us.

THE REV. CARL RASMUSSEN

Kirkland, Illinois



Congregational Membership: First Lutheran Church (Kirkland, Illinois)

Occupation: Pastor

Basic Biographical Information: Married to Nancy (42 years). Three grown children: Andrew, Matthew, Peter. Five grandchildren: Samuel, Grace, Noah, Elijah, Micah. B.A. in music from Dana College, M.Div. from Luther Theological Seminary. Internship at Trinity Lutheran, Rhinelander, Wisconsin. Music is my main hobby; play piano and guitar, direct choir.

Experience within the Body of Christ that has prepared you for service in this position.

Served an earlier four-year term as a member of the NALC Executive Council (2015–2019), chairing two task forces. Ordained pastor for 41 years. Served congregations in Hodgeville, Saskatchewan, and Calgary, Alberta; and current congregation, First Lutheran Church, Kirkland, Illinois, for almost 31 years. Conference president (similar to mission district dean) in Canada. Served on various boards (Lutheran nursing home, Lutheran campus ministry, agency for developmentally handicapped, subsidized housing organization). Served for several years on the Great Rivers Mission District Council.

What spiritual gifts and skills has God given you to bless this ministry?

I love Jesus Christ and His Church. I love the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. I am grateful and happy to be part of the NALC. I believe I am an effective preacher, teacher, and counselor, an able leader of my congregation, a discerning and knowledgeable theologian, and a good communicator. I enjoy teamwork and always commit myself to fostering happy and productive relationships with co-workers and within the church as a whole.

What challenges do you see facing the NALC over the next few years?

A major challenge will be to provide our congregations with faithful, able, inspired pastors. We need to continue encouraging the young people of the NALC to consider whether God is calling them to the ministry of Word and Sacrament! Secondly, as our growth continues, we need always to foster strong, gracious, Christlike relationships throughout the NALC, with the leaders of the church trusted and loved, and congregations and members experiencing belonging and being valued.

What hopes do you have for the mission of the NALC over the next few years?

- That through our witness, many will come to know Christ, and know the joy, peace and fulfillment that is life in Him;

- That we will continue speaking, lovingly and courageously, for the holy estate of marriage as taught in Scripture, and for the lives of the unborn; and
- That congregations, pastors and members of the ELCA who inwardly support the convictions of the NALC will increasingly be ready and able to join us.

What should be the NALC’s most important ministry priorities over the next few years?

- Continued support for our seminary and its new president, with the leadership of the NALS and the NALC enjoying a strong relationship and a common vision;
- A strong call process, with hands-on caring for vacant congregations;
- Prayer and encouragement for our new bishop;
- Continued commitment to our four Core Values; and
- Internal strength and mutual affection as a church body, with all congregations and pastors experiencing the NALC as a place of belonging and being valued.

What tangible actions can the NALC, its mission districts and its member congregations take to live out our commitment to be a Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven church?

- Congregational worship life is the most important thing: honoring the church’s liturgy, especially the lectionary – while resisting liturgical legalism. We are a Traditionally Grounded, confessional church. Our belief that there are matters of freedom is an important part of that confessional tradition.
- For the NALC and its mission districts, the most needed tangible actions are for the congregations and pastors to be encouraged, inspired and engaged by the bishop and the deans.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

- Daily devotions, Bible reading, and prayer. Luther’s Morning Prayer has proven especially meaningful, year after year.
- Conversation and consolation, and Bible study with fellow pastors and with congregational leaders and members. God speaks His word to me on the lips of fellow believers.
- Suffering and cross bearing – understanding that this too is an encounter with God, as He seeks to conform me more and more to the image of His Son.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you. Joshua 1:9: “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage, be not frightened; neither be dismayed; for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go” (RSV). Meditation on this verse reminds me never to lose heart, despite any discouragement or conflict. It gives me courage and freedom from fear, knowing that God is with me in both the struggles and the joys of life and ministry.

NOMINEES FOR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (LAY)

MS. LYNN KICKINGBIRD

Edmond, Oklahoma



Congregational Membership: Peace Lutheran Church (Edmond, Oklahoma)

Occupation: Retired, grandparent, volunteer, consult occasionally with nonprofits

Basic Biographical Information: Married to Kirke (attorney, 46 years); two children, four grandchildren (ages 8, 6, 5 and 1)

Education: Mary Washington College, B.A.; Virginia Tech, M.Ed.

Certificates: Mediation, strategic visioning, organizational self-assessment, nonprofit management

Worked for nonprofits, university, museum and Kickingbird Associates as program director and consultant dealing with governance, program development, evaluation and training, and strategic visioning

Hobbies: Cooking, gardening, grandchildren, word puzzles

Experience within the Body of Christ that has prepared you for service in this position:
Congregational: Adult christian education team leader and teacher; women's retreat planning team; small group leader, trainer and equipper; strategic visioning facilitator; constitutional review (2005); synod delegate (2007-2009); denominational review committee; mission; coordinator Easter prayer vigil, women's Bible study; lector; assisting minister; choir

Training/Education: Bethel Bible Study; Welcoming New Christians; Stephen Ministries – ChristCare Small Group (2004) and Breakthrough Leadership (2005); Navigator's 2:7 series (2014-2015)

Lutheran CORE Steering Committee (2010-2016), vice chair, Missions & Benevolence Working Group (2010)

NALC Executive Council (2016-present); Mission Team (2011-2016); attended every Convocation since 2010

What spiritual gifts and skills has God given you to bless this ministry? Over the years three spiritual gifts have been affirmed through prayerful discernment, inventories and

encouragement from the Body of Christ – leadership (including helping groups and ministries create, communicate and achieve their visions); teaching (I have worked in three congregations leading and teaching adult ministries using the Bible alone, off-the-shelf materials, and those I developed myself); and faith (I believe fully and confidently in the truth of God’s Word, the creeds and that God keeps promises and answers prayers.)

What challenges do you see facing the NALC over the next few years?

- Keeping the Great Commission the main thing and staying true to its four Core Values in the face of tremendous financial and organizational challenges caused by the current pandemic and its economic fall-out
- Helping congregations, mission districts, councils, committees, teams, etc. move in the same strategic direction
- Communicating a clear, compelling message of love and hope through word and action in the midst of an ever increasing unchurched, secular culture that is often hostile to the historic Christian faith
- Developing, preparing and placing new pastors, as many pastors retire

All of these and other challenges need to be bathed in prayer throughout the NALC.

What hopes do you have for the mission of the NALC over the next few years?

1. That all entities within the NALC and its congregations and mission starts will prayerfully and powerfully discern their Great Commission visions
2. An increase in NALC congregations and new church plants with disciple-making cultures reaching out to the unchurched in North America
3. More partnerships and increased integration of the NALS and the CREDO initiative throughout all levels of the NALC (NALS, mission districts and congregations)
4. Through grounding in God’s Word, the creeds, the Lutheran Confessions and training up in spiritual disciplines within the context of the local congregation, all ages will be equipped to share their faith stories and the Good News of Jesus, and give “a defense to anyone who asks ... for a reason for the hope that is in [them]” (1 Peter 3:15 ESV).

What should be the NALC’s most important ministry priorities over the next few years?

1. The training up of both clergy and lay leaders in the processes of spiritual formation, evangelism and missional outreach needs to be a priority of the NALC.
2. To prepare strategically and prayerfully at all levels for long-term sustainability and

continual growth, including the implementation of flexible administrative structure

3. To strengthen communications and educational efforts throughout the NALC (including mission districts) through technology

What tangible actions can the NALC, its mission districts and its member congregations take to live out our commitment to be a Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven church?

1. Strengthen and expand paths for quality theological education that includes spiritual formation and making disciples who are the hands, lips and feet of Jesus in their communities and beyond
2. Strengthening teams of clergy and lay leaders who can respond in timely ways to support congregations and mission districts
3. Encouraging congregations and clergy who are effective in spiritual formation and making disciples who “go” to partner with others who need help
4. Developing sufficient financial strength to achieve its vision
5. Reviewing all charters, plans and guidelines for all NALC entities for clarity and consistency to enable staff and volunteers to move in the same direction to achieve the 2020 Vision and plans.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life. I experience God everyday through Scripture reading, meditation and prayer, and a growing peace and confidence that comes through God’s gracious mercy and answered prayer. I also experience God in my relationships with fellow believers – my family, close friendships, my congregation, encouragement from many friends and mentors in the greater church, and in serving others. I have learned that when I step beyond my comfort zone to serve or witness for Christ I have a very real sense that God, through His Holy Spirit, is with me.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you. Philippians 4:6-7: "do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer" (ESV)

Anxiety gripped me continuously as a young adult. As overwhelmed new parents with financial woes, God in His mercy called us to a faith community where, through a discipling process, I laid my sins on Christ. I realized that I was yearning for God’s deep abiding peace that by my own effort, or any blessing of this world I could not attain. My anxiety gradually diminished until it virtually stopped. I found this peace through God’s immeasurable grace, which is beyond my knowledge or understanding, by growing (and I am still growing) in my relationship with His Son, and by being built up within a fellowship of believers. This verse has informed my prayer life for over 35 years.

DR. BEVERLY MILLER
Tarentum, Pennsylvania



Congregational Membership: St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church (Sarver, Pennsylvania)

Occupation: Retired from biotechnology career, now running my own financial coaching and speaking business

Basic Biographical Information: Married (John) 41 years. Two daughters, one granddaughter; B.A. Biology/Chemistry, Thiel College, Greenville, Pennsylvania, 1979; Ph.D. Biology, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1987; 20+ years academic and medical research/marketing, then 18 years business owner; Ramsey preferred financial coach; Financial Peace University (FPU) coordinator; 28 years National Ski Patrol; NRA basic pistol instructor; avid skier, pistol shooter, kayaker

Experience within the Body of Christ that has prepared you for service in this position: Member St. Paul's (Sarver, Pennsylvania) for 20+ years; St. Paul's Council, 2009-2014 (service chair 2009, stewardship chair 2010, council secretary 2011-2014, through NALC formation, and call of new pastor); capital campaign and building committees, assisting minister, choir, bell choir, teller, usher; lay delegate to Lutheran CORE 2009 and NALC Convocations, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2017; founding board member, Fellowship for Christian Stewardship, St. Luke's (Saxonburg, Pennsylvania), 2012-present; led Financial Peace University class 12+ times, at St. Paul's, St. Luke's (Saxonburg), St. John's (Kittanning), and New Life Christian Ministries (Saxonburg); member, Christian Business Partners and Christian Leadership Network; NALC Living & Giving Stewardship Team 2017-present

What spiritual gifts and skills has God given you to bless this ministry? I am not afraid to challenge conventional wisdom, ask probing questions, persist in getting to the root cause of a problem, and find out-of-the-box solutions. My passion is stewardship, especially when it comes to applying biblical principles to create concrete changes in a family's financial life, and watching their lives be revolutionized as they become empowered to bless others beyond anything previously imagined. When God's people are first good stewards in their homes, they can then lead by example in our congregations and the NALC (1 Timothy 3:5).

What challenges do you see facing the NALC over the next few years? The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the importance of sound financial stewardship for individuals and families, churches and society as a whole. As stewards, we have the privilege and responsibility of managing the household of faith, in thanksgiving to God and for the good of our neighbors. The NALC can and should take the lead in teaching and practicing

exemplary stewardship of the time, talent, treasures and testimony entrusted to it by the congregations we serve. God will provide all that is needed for the NALC to flourish.

Another particular challenge is the increased need for safety and security measures that protect members and guests in our congregations. While the NALC Disaster Response website lists some government resources, the NALC should more actively encourage the additional use of carefully vetted private sector resources and practical guidance in implementing measures appropriate for each congregation.

What hopes do you have for the mission of the NALC over the next few years? My biggest hope is that we see the translation of theology into practical daily discipleship and transformed lives of both our clergy and laity ... walking the walk and not just talking the talk, which is the best possible witness to the power of the Gospel. For this to happen, we need to be more 'Congregationally Focused.' Leadership needs to constantly ask this question: "How will what we propose encourage and equip congregations in making Jesus Christ known as Savior and Lord?"

What should be the NALC's most important ministry priorities over the next few years? I hope to see Life-to-Life Discipleship implemented among all clergy and laity, evidenced by improved marriages, stronger families, more effective parenting and greater financial stewardship. The CREDO initiative promises to combine Lutheran core beliefs with one-to-one discipleship techniques.

The NALC needs a comprehensive youth and family ministry strategy. Without that, we face decline in both membership and pastoral leadership as young adults leave the church. A cohesive approach to family and youth ministry would strengthen homes and families as the first schools of the faith, foster congregational faith formation at all ages and stages of life, and bring youth together around God's Word, worship, and seeking God's will for their lives. We need a youth gathering as part of every NALC Convocation, with initiatives that are taken back to the mission districts and congregations.

What tangible actions can the NALC, its mission districts and its member congregations take to live out our commitment to be a Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven church? I'd like to see more direct personal involvement of members in local mission projects carried out by congregations or mission districts, as opposed to merely funding other charities. This approach drives better stewardship of benevolence dollars while providing more opportunity for personal evangelistic efforts. Doing this in mission districts could help ensure sufficient personnel and resources, while building camaraderie among members from different congregations (including our youth), which builds unity with the identity of the NALC at large. The NALC should provide assistance to congregations and mission districts in implementing multi-generational mission projects that fit the needs and

opportunities in their areas.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life. Since 2011, my ministry in daily life has been to provide financial stewardship coaching to over 100 hurting families and individuals. My clients have ranged from Christians to atheists to Muslims. I have relied heavily on Scripture, the Holy Spirit and many godly mentors (both in the NALC and elsewhere) to guide my thoughts, words and actions in my coaching practice and in all my daily activities. I have many times seen God's transformative hand in my own life as well as the lives of the people I have worked with, for which I am eternally grateful.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you. Matthew 28:18-20 – Not only is the Great Commission our primary purpose as the Church, but when I teach about stewardship, I use this passage because it is the most succinct directive on discipleship. And while "discipleship" covers many "disciplines," stewardship is the discipline most frequently mentioned in Scripture, yet the most neglected by the Church. Teaching "all that I have commanded you" is a huge responsibility that we need to take more seriously as a church.

NOMINEES FOR COURT OF ADJUDICATION

MR. SAMUEL DUNCOMB

Northwood, Iowa



Congregational Membership: Peace Lutheran Church (Northwood, Iowa)

Occupation: Maintenance manager at Federal Foam Technologies

Basic Biographical Information: Married to my wife Holly for 20 years. We have two sons and two daughters. We have six grandchildren with number seven arriving this fall. We are blessed to spend time with the grandchildren outdoors: hiking, hunting, fishing, and especially geocaching.

Experience within the Body of Christ that has prepared you for service in this position: My experience in the Body of Christ includes church council, council secretary, council president, some building maintenance, cleaning, leading Bible study, jail ministry and sometimes Sunday school.

What spiritual gifts and skills has God given you to bless this ministry? I have been blessed with a sense of humor and the love to share Jesus with anyone I meet, anywhere and anytime. I have a passion to reach out to help anyone in need in our local mission field and neighborhood.

What challenges do you see facing the NALC over the next few years? I think the biggest challenges facing the church today is pressure from the society to be what is called politically correct – accepting the different and perverted ideas of what life should and shouldn't be. There is pressure from other non-Christian groups to stop preaching and using references to our God anyplace in the public eye.

What hopes do you have for the mission of the NALC over the next few years? Reach out to the national and local governments to protect our religious teaching. Spread the word to all people how everything depends on our faith in Jesus Christ. Reach out to all believers and work together – teaching what is sound doctrine of the Christian faith.

What should be the NALC's most important ministry priorities over the next few years? Reach out to all people local, state and nationwide who do not know Jesus or who have not heard about Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord but have fallen away or just given up on their faith. Reach out to bring them back and show love to all of our neighbors.

What tangible actions can the NALC, its mission districts and its member congregations take to live out our commitment to be a Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven church? Teach and encourage congregational leaders to form small groups that will eagerly go out and evangelize in their own communities and reach out to the lost. Continue these acts keeping Christ the center.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life. I love to keep God in my daily life by starting out my day in His Holy Word. Study before morning prayer and devotions before any work begins. The holy reading and devotion carries me through each day – work and recreation. I think it's great to get charged every worship Sunday and, as I write this, even Sunday worship at home.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you. I think my everyday go-to Bible verse is Romans 5:8, "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (ESV). This verse is everything, from each morning when I get up to when I go to sleep. Without knowing what Christ has done I would be lost in busy work and have nothing to show for it in the end.

NOMINEES FOR BOARD OF REGENTS

THE REV. MAURICE C. FRONTZ III

Irwin, Pennsylvania



Congregational Membership: St. Stephen Lutheran Church
(Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)

Occupation: Ordained minister

Basic Biographical Information: Married to Rebecka V.A. Frontz (2020); six children and three step-children; My bachelor's degree is in music education.; I received my M.Div. from Gettysburg Seminary.; I enjoy writing, am a devotee of the drum and bugle corps activity, and have recently taken up birding.

Experience within the Body of Christ that has prepared you for service in this position: While in the ELCA, I was a multi-year member of my Synod's Committee for Reference and Counsel. When I joined the NALC, I became familiar with the mission and programs of the seminary. I have worked with several seminarians during my time in Pittsburgh. I planned and led worship for the 2013 NALC Convocation, which involved both independent work and collaboration over a period of several months with local and national leaders and staff.

What spiritual gifts and skills has God given you to bless this ministry? I have a passion for ministry and the raising up of pastors from within the church. I believe that our NALS is unique, forming both men and women faithful to Scripture, creed and confession. I am a skilled writer and communicator. While I do not have specific expertise in the skill-set areas sought for the board, I am willing to learn and am confident that in networking with others I can contribute in these areas.

What challenges do you see facing the NALC over the next few years? The NALC urgently needs pastors. Many of our clergy are nearing retirement age or are currently serving beyond it. Men and women must be invited to prayerfully discern God's call to ordination. Our candidates both must be thoroughly formed in Scripture, creed and confession and be able to creatively address the mission situation in which they find themselves.

What hopes do you have for the mission of the NALC over the next few years? I hope that the NALC will continue to live into the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19). This involves taking to heart, in every area of life, the dominical command to make disciples, baptize and teach. But to teach we must listen, to baptize we must embrace our baptismal identity, and to call disciples we must follow. The subsequent programmatic initiatives then will bear fruit, as they are undertaken by Spirit-impelled individuals.

What should be the NALC’s most important ministry priorities over the next few years?

The NALC should support, encourage and equip current pastors in their call to equip the saints for ministry; continue to address the call to discipleship to long-time Christians, new Christians and non-Christians; and be a public church in the best sense of the word, that is, not as a social-justice organization adopting secular aims and terminology, but as a church passionately concerned for all those whom God seeks to call to discipleship.

What tangible actions can the NALC, its mission districts and its member congregations take to live out our commitment to be a Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven church?

Mission is not a work we do in order to justify ourselves as Christians or as a church, but a Christ-Centered Church will be Mission-Driven. The leaders of the NALC, its mission districts, and its pastors and congregations must tangibly preach Christ in order for the mission to be about Him and not ourselves. Christ-Centered laity can and should be empowered and encouraged to see missionary opportunities in their own lives.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life. God encounters me in daily life as He does all people – through His Word. I am encountered when I pray the daily office, including psalms, hymns, and meditation on Scripture, or recall the words of our Lord throughout the day, His Word keeps me from rashness which would bring all things to destruction, forgives me when I stray and rebel, and calls me to follow Christ in and among my family, community and congregation.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you. Esther 6:9: "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor" (ESV). In a humorous episode, Haman, who hates the Jewish Mordecai, must dress him in royal robes and lead him through Susa making this proclamation. Though Haman speaks unwillingly about Mordecai, the old Adam in me must die so that the new person in me can willingly glorify the man Christ whom the Father delights to honor.

THE REV. PAUL GRUETTER

Montpelier, Ohio



Congregational Membership: St. John's Lutheran Church (Montpelier, Ohio)

Occupation: Pastor

Basic Biographical Information: Married to Joy since 1980. Two adult children, three grandsons. Education: Capital University and Trinity Seminary (Columbus, Ohio). Ordained 1982. Hobbies include gardening, reading, the Cleveland Indians, and playing electric bass.

Experience within the Body of Christ that has prepared you for service in this position: Currently secretary of North West Ohio Mission District, and formerly secretary of Ohio Mission Region. I have been an internship supervisor twice. Currently president of Montpelier Ministerial Association. Experience in a former church body includes synod council, synod evangelism committee (chair), consultation committee and discipline committee.

What spiritual gifts and skills has God given you to bless this ministry? First, a passion for Jesus Christ and His Gospel, and its proclamation in church and community. Added to that, I am a patient person and a good listener. I also have experience working with staff, both as an associate pastor and as senior pastor of a large congregation.

What challenges do you see facing the NALC over the next few years? Regarding theological education, the greatest challenge facing the NALC is providing quality pastors for our congregations. We have a significant number of good pastors who will be retiring; we need to meet that need.

What hopes do you have for the mission of the NALC over the next few years? I hope that the NALC continues to be faithful to Jesus and His Holy Word. Keep growing our commitment to discipleship and to develop new congregations, so that our church growth comes primarily through our mission and not so much from people leaving other church bodies.

What should be the NALC's most important ministry priorities over the next few years? Strengthen congregations for proclamation and discipleship; continue to develop new congregations; provide well-trained pastors for congregations.

What tangible actions can the NALC, its mission districts and its member congregations take to live out our commitment to be a Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven church? Congregations can love Jesus and share Jesus. They can support the seminary; pray that God will raise up pastors and leaders for the Church, and strive as congregations to make that happen. Districts and the NALC can continue to inspire congregations, hold them accountable in mission and discipleship, and support the seminary and our seminarians with prayers and funding.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life. I experience God in my daily Bible reading and prayer; through God's artistry in creation around me; through the Holy Spirit giving me the words I need in different situations; and through watching the people of God growing in and living out their faith.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you. Romans 10:14, especially the last phrase: "And how are they to hear without someone preaching?" (ESV).

Throughout my ordained ministry, this verse has provided my theme and inspiration. The highest calling of a pastor is to proclaim Jesus. That's not just limited to pastors, of course, but that's how I experience it in my own life.

THE REV. DR. PAUL KRUEGER

Minot, North Dakota



Congregational Membership: First Lutheran Church (Washburn, North Dakota)

Occupation: Senior development officer – Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch

Basic Biographical Information: Life-long Lutheran, married to Susann, six adult children, eight grandchildren; B.A. Concordia University, St. Paul, Minnesota; M.Div. Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana – Systematic Theology; D.Min. Fuller Seminary, Pasadena, California – Missional Leadership; executive certificate in religious fundraising – Indiana University; hobbies: hunting, fishing, wildlife enthusiast, master carpenter

Experience within the Body of Christ that has prepared you for service in this position:
A full range of ministry experiences, including:

Parish Ministry:

- Thirty-one years in parish ministry; including rural, mission-developer, senior pastor of a multi-staff, multi-site ministry
- Numerous state and national denominational positions

Disaster Response:

- Creation and management of a \$9M multi-denominational operation. 5,200 volunteers, from 42 states, rebuilt 551 flood ravished homes

Board Service – National Ministries:

- Tentmakers Leadership/Discipleship Training (2012 to present)
- Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch (2013 to 2017) – A Christian residential treatment center for “at-risk” children

Current Call:

- Senior development officer – Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch

What spiritual gifts and skills has God given you to bless this ministry?

Spiritual Gifts and Skill Sets Include:

- Grant Writing – experience in corporate, state and private foundation funding
- Senior Leadership Training – 15+ years as lead trainer with Tentmakers, with service to denominational teams, para-church organizations, and mission organizations, including the ITA (International Training Alliance)
- Fundraising and Development – As senior development officer our team navigates the funding of a \$23M foundation budget.
- Organizational Management – I tend to be a collaborative leader who helps groups and teams achieve exceptional visionary goals.

What challenges do you see facing the NALC over the next few years?

- Finding, training and deploying the next generation of clergy/leaders who will lead with scriptural veracity, integrity, moral courage, and vision
- Meeting the needs of a growing number of small churches without pastors
- Solidifying NALC identity
- Continued financial stability that will confidently take us as a church body into the decades that lay ahead
- Continued faithfulness to the Holy Scriptures and confessions in a changing culture, while at the same time boldly and freely engaging in full-out, Gospel-filled mission work

What hopes do you have for the mission of the NALC over the next few years?

- To sharpen and solidify our place across the Lutheranism spectrum as a truly biblical and confessional church
- To answer the Gospel's call by planting new churches and growing new ministries with vibrancy and purpose
- To become a church body where, through mutual encouragement and respect, clergy are supported and encouraged to become their very best in service to the Savior and their calling
- To be known and respected across the Lutheran spectrum as the church committed to Christ-Centered, Gospel-focused mission

What should be the NALC's most important ministry priorities over the next few years?

- A commitment to growing disciple-making cultures in each of our congregations
- A commitment to church-planting and bold mission starts for the sake of the Gospel
- A commitment to the support and encouragement of our clergy and their vital roles in the Gospel's mission
- A commitment to growing our seminary system as a vital, unparalleled training center for Gospel proclamation and missional action
- A commitment to stewarding the financial resources of our church for our future generations and their Gospel work

What tangible actions can the NALC, its mission districts and its member congregations take to live out our commitment to be a Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven church?

- Be men and women of the Word, choosing to be faithful to Christ in all things
- Go the extra mile necessary to support and encourage one another, wrapping one-another with grace, helping one another discover our best, and compelling one another towards greater purpose and commitment in the Gospel's work
- Partner together for the planting of new churches and mission starts
- Embrace this unique moment in history as the opportunity for a Christ-Centered, Mission-Driven church to truly bring Gospel transformation into the hearts and lives of broken people unlike never before.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life. Every day is a day of forgiveness and new starts for me. In a very personal way I understand the effects of sin and the power of Christ's forgiveness in a deeply profound way. Our hymns have become personal, "Chief of sinners though I be, Jesus shed His blood for me." The "me" in that hymn is Paul Krueger. When the psalmist says: "As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:12 NIV). He's speaking of Paul Krueger. Those are real words for me. They are words I live by every day. When our Lord Jesus Himself says, "Behold, I am making all things new," that "new" includes my life and my future.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you. Isaiah 41:10 "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (NIV1984). Could there be any more powerful of a promise? We face fearful moments, but the God of Power who made heaven and earth, says "I'm right here, you're not alone." He says, "Do not be dismayed," in

other words, "don't give up, because I, the God who destroyed the evil foe on the cross of Calvary, am your God!" The words, "I will" mean you can count on it! *I will* help you. *I will* strengthen you. No matter how weak you and I might feel, God says, "*I will* give you the strength you need. It's OK." "I will uphold you with my righteous *right hand*." The same right hand that rose Jesus from the dead is the same right hand that will powerfully hold you and me in whatever moment this sin-broken world brings, right up until the day, by Christ's grace, we step into eternity.

THE REV. JAMES LEHMANN

Fithian, Illinois



Congregational Membership: Immanuel Lutheran Church
(Thomasboro, Illinois)

Occupation: Pastor

Basic Biographical Information: Married to Bev Lehmann, three sons, two grandsons; B.S. Animal Industries, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois; M.Div. Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa; hobbies: gardening, camping, baking bread

Experience within the Body of Christ that has prepared you for service in this position: Forty-one years of ordained ministry; served on many boards, committees and councils in American Lutheran Church (ALC) district, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) synod and NALC Executive Council; internship supervisor for nine seminarians from three different seminaries; served on the Board of Institute of Lutheran Theology; dean of the Great Rivers Mission District, NALC; vicar of the Society of the Holy Trinity.

What spiritual gifts and skills has God given you to bless this ministry? Strong interest in theological education; ability to listen to different perspectives; seek to develop consensus as much as possible.

What challenges do you see facing the NALC over the next few years? Many people, for many reasons, have found a home in the NALC. We have many different expectations and underlying assumptions. As we continue to live in the NALC, we need to recognize these differences and find a way to continue working toward a common mission. Our four Core Values are a wonderful tool to describe who we are and what we are about. But we have different understandings of what they mean.

What hopes do you have for the mission of the NALC over the next few years? For the mission of the NALC, my hope/prayer is that we grow in faith and obedience to our Lord. I hope that God grants numeric growth, but not at the expense of faithfulness. Repentance

for the forgiveness of sins will be proclaimed in Christ's name to all nations.

What should be the NALC's most important ministry priorities over the next few years?

As a candidate for the seminary Board of Regents, ministry priorities include: (1) solid training of pastors, both in education and formation, (2) attracting individuals who have tools to be honed, and (3) developing a solid financial foundation to help keep seminary costs affordable.

What tangible actions can the NALC, its mission districts and its member congregations take to live out our commitment to be a Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven church?

The Lutheran church has been blessed with many resources at its disposal. Its strong emphasis on education in the parish, Word and Sacrament worship, a sense of the Body of Christ, a passion and compassion for the world are part of who we are. Continuing to form us in these things, help us to live out our commitments.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life. A pastor has a sacred trust and privilege of caring for people in all aspects of life. Watching God bring new life, renewed life, healing, wholeness, comfort, strength to people as they experience "the joys and sorrows and all that the years will bring," I experience God active. That strengthens my faith.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you. How does one pick one? It depends on situations. The one that I keep coming back to is Acts 2:42, "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (ESV). This verse give a brief outline for Christian worship and for Christian living.

THE REV. DARYL OLSON

Outlook, Saskatchewan



Congregational Membership: Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church (Outlook, Saskatchewan)

Occupation: Retired pastor

Basic Biographical Information: I'm married to Sherryl for 42 years in September. We have four adult children, all married and actively involved in the church. Three daughters and one son. Thirteen grandchildren; Education: Two years at Canadian Lutheran Bible Institute. Two years of University at Camrose Lutheran College and one year at University of Alberta in Edmonton resulting in a B.A. in Classical Greek and Roman History. Three years of seminary at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Saskatoon and a year of internship in Calgary, Alberta., M.Div; hobbies: reading, cross country skiing, cycling, rosemaling, wood work, genealogy

Experience within the Body of Christ that has prepared you for service in this position: Pastored churches in Rose Valley, Saskatchewan, four years; Donalda, Alberta, eight years; Birch Hills, Saskatchewan, six years; Outlook, Saskatchewan, 19 years. Have served on the board of the Lutheran Evangelistic Movement eight years; served as chairman of World Mission Prayer League Canada Council for over 15 years; served on Alberta Synod Council four years; served on two synod appointed conflict resolution committees; served on two Lutheran Bible Camp boards for over 20 years; served on Life-to-Life Discipleship Committee for past five years.

What spiritual gifts and skills has God given you to bless this ministry? Intercessory prayer; teaching Bible studies; passion for discipleship; passion for sound orthodox worship; sense of humor; experience on many different boards; Knowing from experience what kind of pastors many churches desire

What challenges do you see facing the NALC over the next few years?

1. Biggest challenge is helping people in our congregations become disciple-makers in a way that is compatible with our Lutheran Confessions.
2. To provide enough well-trained pastors and church planters who can lead the church under the lordship of Christ
3. To become an even more Mission-Driven church than we presently are so that every congregation is involved in outreach and discipling

What hopes do you have for the mission of the NALC over the next few years?

1. That we will grow and increase in the number of disciples and disciple-makers
2. That more churches will be planted, especially here in Canada
3. That more young people hear the call to pastoral ministry and overseas missions among the un-reached peoples of the world

What should be the NALC's most important ministry priorities over the next few years?

1. Discipleship
2. Church planting
3. Encouraging more young people to become pastors and missionaries
4. Developing inspiring worship resources compatible with our Lutheran heritage

What tangible actions can the NALC, its mission districts and its member congregations take to live out our commitment to be a Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven church?

1. Training people how to be disciples and disciple-makers using materials compatible with our Lutheran tradition
2. Workshop – training for church-planting
3. Training and teaching about inspiring Lutheran worship.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life. In my morning devotions I seek God's direction for the day. I pray Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer. I hear God speak to me through Scripture and sense the Holy Spirit's guidance throughout the day and often marvel at where He leads and the people He puts in my path.

Mutual conversation and consolation of the brethren. I have been part of the Society of the Holy Trinity since 2012 and have been blessed by the ministry of other pastors also speaking God's word to me.

Through Confession and Absolution

Regular Holy Communion has become more and more meaningful.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you. Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope" (ESV). This has been a theme verse in my life since Bible school. I believe God always has our best interests in mind even when we experience trials and difficulties like Judah in exile in Babylon to whom these words were first written. I have been blessed incredibly by the Triune God who has good plans for me.

Another favorite verse is Luke 11:13, "If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him" (ESV)! Again God desires to give us the Holy Spirit – and the Holy Spirit is who we need in order even to believe and begin to live the Christian life.

THE REV. CHRISTOPHER RYAN PORTER

Winchester, Virginia



Congregational Membership: Advent Lutheran Church (Winchester, Virginia)

Occupation: Pastor

Basic Biographical Information: Married to my faithful wife Colleen, with two children, Ben (9) and Rachel (6); enjoy reading philosophy of mind, gardening, kayaking and foraging for wild mushrooms.

Experience within the Body of Christ that has prepared you for service in this position: A sincere concern to prepare ministers for the Church of Christ has been engendered in me since I began the candidacy process in the ELCA and found it lacking. In addition, I have been encouraging pastors in a private manner toward higher goals and a sound understanding of the Office of Ministry for some time now. I continue to encourage laity to consider the call of God to service in ecclesiastical positions in our church body. I have consistently participated in both NALC pastoral educational opportunities and in additional areas of pastoral concern: namely, the St. Michael's Conference in Detroit, Michigan; the St. Mark's Conference in Baltimore, Maryland; the Ancient Evangelical Future Conference at Trinity, Pennsylvania; the Bugehagen Conference; and the Center for Catholic and Evangelical Theology (CCET) Pro Ecclesia Conference.

What spiritual gifts and skills has God given you to bless this ministry? Frankness and boldness, tempered by lived ministerial experience under the influence of the Word of God, the Holy Spirit and the trials and temptations that were promised us by our Lord Jesus. A determined doctrinal mind. A persistent spirit.

What challenges do you see facing the NALC over the next few years? Doctrinal unity beyond mere agreement in the moral teaching of the Scriptures. How will we continue in one body while acknowledging a limited diversity of conviction according to the Scriptures and confessions?

What hopes do you have for the mission of the NALC over the next few years? I hope that she will remain a faithful witness to Jesus Christ and the Triune God, and will preach and teach the deposit of faith that was given to us in the Holy Scriptures.

What should be the NALC's most important ministry priorities over the next few years? Doctrinal clarification and theological instruction, and the attendant fostering of patterns of life that accord with it in the clergy and laity. There is no consistent preaching of the

saving Gospel when it is not rightly understood and believed.

What tangible actions can the NALC, its mission districts and its member congregations take to live out our commitment to be a Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven church? Redouble our commitment and will to learn the faith of the Scriptures and confessions of our church. Also to learn the dogmatic tradition of our great dogmaticians and theologians that have given us such wonderful resources for holding to Christ and offering Him to others by the power of the Spirit.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life. As a constant source of judgment, chastening and encouragement. He judges my sins and leads me in the good way to grace through the Word of God and the Spirit. He holds forth the blessed promise of life eternal in Jesus Christ.

God disabuses me of my regular daily tendencies and shows me a better way.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you. "For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another" (Romans 12:3-5 ESV).

This Word of God has been especially freeing to me: both to admit my deficiencies — and to accept that God has provided others to make up for them — and to admit my gifts, so that I may confidently offer them for His service in the Church. Also, it tells me that I am part of a body, and that this is a blessed thing. A thing which I cannot sufficiently appreciate. There are gifts that He has generated for others that I know little or nothing about, but it is all to the edification of the common lot of us all that He does so. This is a great comfort to me.

THE REV. DIETER PUNT

Statesville, North Carolina



Congregational Membership: Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church (Troutman, North Carolina)

Occupation: Pastor

Basic Biographical Information: I am married to Pastor Heidi W. Punt — Heidi serves Union Lutheran Church in Salisbury (She is also a NALC global worker to Haiti), we are blessed with three adult children — Angelique, living in Botswana, started her own business, Nadia, senior at Appalachian State University, is studying to becoming a teacher, and Michael is transferring

to North Carolina State University to study environmental science and forestry.

I was born, raised and educated in South Africa. Did my theological training at the Lutheran House of Studies which was connected to the University of Natal Pietermaritzburg campus and achieved my B.Th., M.Div. equivalency, in Biblical Studies and Systematic Theology. I also studied for one semester at Wartburg Seminary in Iowa. While at seminary in South Africa, I studied at three centers: one Lutheran, one Catholic, and one evangelical, which made up the program to help with the formation of pastors. I love to tinker – wood work, metal work and house projects. But most of all I love to be on the lake in my free time.

Experience within the Body of Christ that has prepared you for service in this position:

It has been a honour to service on the Board of Regents for the past six years as we have gone from infancy to a toddler, building a program to assist with the formation of pastors for the larger Church. As stated, I studied in three centers, which allowed us to use the best of each to equip and form pastors for the proclamation of God's Word. I studied in a system that took me from high school, into college and seminary and every step of the process was geared to help form me for the vocation of pastor. I think the life experience in South Africa, as well as the 20 years serving in the U.S.A., have helped me understand the practical and academics necessary for the formation of pastors. I served as chair to global mission in a previous church body for six years, vice chair for a year. I was both chair and vice chair of the local town ministerium for nine years and served as a mentor on the youth board of the previous synod I served in. Once a year for five years I was part of a larger training team, called Leadership Lab, preparing up to 400 youth for one week each summer in leadership for the congregations they serve in and the larger Church.

What spiritual gifts and skills has God given you to bless this ministry? 1 Corinthians 12

comes to mind – the Holy Spirit blesses all with gifts. All work for the greater good of God's kingdom. What gifts and skill do I bring? I am a planner, organizer and a person not afraid of conflict. I speak my mind in the love of God. I am not afraid to tackle difficult situations for the sake of the greater good of the larger Church. I enjoy preaching and teaching biblical studies classes, i.e. Bible studies. I love people of all ages and I think I relate well with most people. If someone has done something well, I think praise should be proclaimed and if they have made a mistake, it can and should become a teaching moment.

I find it comforting to pray with people and assist with exploring their spiritual gifts for the greater good of the Church of God. Most of all, I believe it is important to delegate and allow the Body of Christ and the gifts they bring to the table to be utilized for the greater good of all. I can not, nor want, to do it all so I believe it's a strength to have the people of God service the kingdom of God for the the growth of the Church of God. I am not a very creative person but am blessed to be able to organize and put all necessary things in place

to make ministry happen on a variety of levels. I see myself as a problem solver.

What challenges do you see facing the NALC over the next few years? Identifying and equipping individuals for the purpose of becoming leaders and pastors for the larger church. We will in the next few years have a large percentage of pastors who will and can retire. Far more than what we have in seminary. We the church will need to step up and identify individuals, pray for and over them and assist them every step of the way in the formation process of ministry. I also see from the past six years that the structure within the NALC, NALS, and candidacy will need to streamline so that we all speak with one voice and not bring any confusion into the life and process of forming pastors.

What hopes do you have for the mission of the NALC over the next few years? With our new bishop and the new president at the NALS, I believe we have the possibility for some wonderful new work to be done. Forming disciples for the greater good of God and the church. I am thankful that in the past six years we have identified and signed memorandums of understanding with a variety of schools (pre- and post-grad) to help young and mature men and women with a variety of theological sound and orthodox training opportunities for the purpose of forming pastors, and or lay leaders, for the church. It has taken a lot of time and hard work, but we are starting to see that process move forward to make sure we can provide multiple opportunities for growth and education both in the U.S.A. and Canada. I'm excited about mission opportunities within the continent of the U.S.A., and abroad. I am thankful to serve in a church that is open minded enough to endorse mission opportunities beyond our direct scope and for congregations to be able to serve their neighbour locally, nationally and internationally.

What should be the NALC's most important ministry priorities over the next few years? If the congregations in the larger church want pastors and lay leaders — educate, educate, educate those identified and called into ministry. We will need to identify and help grow those for the ordained and lay ministry and leadership positions of the church. We will have to become extremely active in one-to-one discipleship. In a culture that has and is still moving away from God. We have an opportunity to be the hands, feet and voice of our Lord to all we encounter.

What tangible actions can the NALC, its mission districts and its member congregations take to live out our commitment to be a Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven church? Reach out to our neighbours. Become more relational in the way in which we move into our communities, and especially to those who have become estranged from the family of God. We need to take the truth of Scripture and equip not only the saints but all in understanding the power of God's Word.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life. "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God" (Colossians 3:1 ESV). I am in conversation with God through His Holy Word and prayer. We not only do family devotions, but also I take time most days for private time in prayer and meditation on God's Holy Word. This comes first before preparing for a Bible study or even a sermon. It is my favorite time of the day to sit and read and listen to God speaking to me. I am blessed to experience God through the wonderful people God has placed in my life. Their connection and relationship with God gives me strength and hope, not only for the Church but the kingdom of God.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you. John 14:6 – No matter where I am emotionally, spiritually, physically, Jesus is the only way. He is the way of hope, He is the way out of depression, He is the only way forward. He is all. Jesus as the only way that brings me comfort in a world that is broken.

THE REV. DR. ERIC WATERS

Boerne, Texas



Congregational Membership: St. John Lutheran Church (Boerne, Texas)

Occupation: Pastor

Basic Biographical Information: Michelle and I have been married for 23 years and are blessed with six children, ages 8 to 19. I hold a B.A. from Dartmouth College, an M.Div. from Yale Divinity School, and a D.Min. from Luther Seminary.

Experience within the Body of Christ that has prepared you for service in this position: I have served on the boards of India Transformed and Sola Publishing. I have served on the NALC's Life-to-Life Discipleship and the mission teams, and participated in the Young Theologians Colloquium. I have graduated from Yale Divinity School and Luther Seminary, and am currently supervising an intern pastor.

What spiritual gifts and skills has God given you to bless this ministry? God has given me the gifts of leadership and administration. Leadership is the ability to see ahead and plan for the future. Administration is the ability to execute the plan. I think both would be a benefit to the NALS.

What challenges do you see facing the NALC over the next few years? The NALC will be challenged to raise up the next generation from among our ranks, especially as the current generation moves into retirement. These students will need to be trained not only in the

traditions of our Lutheran church and the theology of our confessions, but also in how to reach an increasingly hostile culture and reach out in a fast-moving digital age. While doing all that, we also need to equip pastors for rural ministry.

What hopes do you have for the mission of the NALC over the next few years? I am inspired that the bishop's vision for our church includes a commitment to disciple-making, continuing education and building "the most highly respected Lutheran seminary training system in North America." I want to be a part of that, and see serving on the Board of Regents as I way that I can do my part to make the bishop's vision a reality.

What should be the NALC's most important ministry priorities over the next few years? The NALC must continue to grow in size, both by reaching out to existing congregations and by planting new churches. The NALC must continue to grow in spiritual depth by bringing more churches and pastors into our discipleship initiative. The NALS can contribute by raising up the next generation of pastors, continuing to educate the current generation of pastors, and championing the discipleship of both.

What tangible actions can the NALC, its mission districts and its member congregations take to live out our commitment to be a Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven church? Get involved with the discipleship initiative! I've been a part of it now for four years, and it has not only renewed my ministry and passion, but also revitalized the ministries, outreach, and passion of my church. Do you want to see your people walking with Jesus and serving Him? Then join the discipleship initiative!

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life. I begin every morning with the Morning Prayer from the LBW, keeping a Bible journal to reflect on what God is saying to me through His Word. I then take a 1.5-mile prayer walk to pray for myself, my family and my church. I keep a prayer journal every week in which I record my petitions in black ink and God's answers in red ink. I go to sleep every night with Luther's Evening Prayer, the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you. "'The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever.' And this word is the good news that was preached to you" (1 Peter 1:24-25 ESV). This verse reminds me of God's calling on my life and the eternal significance it can make, by His grace.

MR. ROGER WEYERSBERG

Owosso, Michigan



Congregational Membership: Redeemer Lutheran Church (Owosso, Michigan)

Occupation: Retired music educator/active musician/seasonal entertainer

Basic Biographical Information: Married to Nadine Weyersberg, Children: Roger Weyersberg II and wife Elizabeth, Robert Weyersberg and wife Jayme, daughter Roseanne Weyersberg with grandson Asher and granddaughter Nadina. Bachelor of Music: Michigan State University; post graduate work Michigan State University, Central Michigan University, and the Vandercook School of Music. Travel and camp, perform on trombone, euphonium and tuba. At Christmas, you'll find me sharing the true meaning of Christmas while embracing the role of Santa.

Experience within the Body of Christ that has prepared you for service in this position: Baptized at Our Savior Lutheran in Detroit, Michigan, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS); confirmed at Bethel Lutheran Church, St. Clair Shores, Michigan, American Lutheran Church (ALC)/Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), attended University Lutheran Church, East Lansing, Michigan, ALC/ELCA; past member of St. John's Lutheran Church, St. John's, Michigan, LCMS; past member of St. Phillip's Lutheran Church, Owosso, Michigan, LCMS; and current member Redeemer Lutheran Church, Owosso, Michigan, ALC/ELCA/NALC. At Redeemer, I have served as council president, council secretary and as congregational life co-chair. I have served as member and chair of three call committees, and serve as an assistant minister and church musician. I have been a lay delegate at several ELCA Synod Conventions, as well as the first NALC Convocation in Columbus, Ohio.

What spiritual gifts and skills has God given you to bless this ministry? Faith turned to action is my first gift. God is good and is central to my faith. It gives me the confidence in all that I know to be true because of my faith. I believe it is important to give of our resources, our time and our talents for the benefit of others. We have been blessed in so many ways; it is with great gratitude that we seek to give back and pass it forward. I have been given the gift of leadership. To lead is not to be first but instead, to be last. To lead is to serve, and to help others recognize what their gifts are and how best we might collectively serve all of God's children.

What challenges do you see facing the NALC over the next few years? A major challenge is going to be filling pastoral vacancies with NALC pastors. A second challenge is sharing with

the public as to what it means to be an NALC Lutheran. A third challenge is associated with church growth. It is imperative that we work to be a church with balanced congregations; membership that reflects the demographics of communities with vitality. Congregations where the cries of infants can be heard as well as the words of the mature and wise. Congregations that not only speak the messages of the Word, but live the messages of the Word.

What hopes do you have for the mission of the NALC over the next few years? I hope to see congregations, worldwide, flourish. I hope to see young and mature alike, be inspired by the Holy Spirit, and led by the Word to live lives of service as ministers, or in lay service side by side within the careers that best align with the gifts and talents that they have been given. I hope to see our seminary grow with adults of all ages seeking to learn with the goal of serving His people in ministry. I think it is important also to always be in tune with all that is being taught at seminary.

What should be the NALC's most important ministry priorities over the next few years? Everything in the world keeps changing at a geometric rate. Technology, changing international relations, changing social relationships, changing family pressures, and the list goes on and on. All change known and yet to be known needs to be dealt with in the context of the Word and what our Lord would have us do. Worldview seeks to dominate our lives; it must be the mission of the church; our mission to work against that domination. I believe there is strength in numbers and knowledge. This leads me to the answer found next.

What tangible actions can the NALC, its mission districts and its member congregations take to live out our commitment to be a Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven church? We, the members of the NALC must become a church of action denomination-wide. We, as members, must never retire as members but always be in tune to how we can serve our members, our communities, and our nations with action backed by Scripture and the directives we have been given in His Holy Word. We must be knowledgeable, we must be steeped in the Spirit, and prepared to walk to faith every day.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life. I experience God in daily study, prayer, and then in all of my interactions with all whom I come in contact with. I may be teaching, adjudicating, performing, entertaining or socializing, but my daily mission is always to seek how I may help the individuals or groups that I see and serve to have a better day, week; or life by the grace of God and through the sacrifice and mercy shown me by my Savior, His Son, Jesus Christ.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you. Psalm 84:11: "The Lord God is like the sun that gives us light. He is like a shield that keeps us safe. The Lord blesses

us with favor and honor. He doesn't hold back anything good from those whose lives are without blame" (NIRV). I know I am loved. I know I am forgiven. I know the Lord my God, wants the best for us always. Even when so much can go awry in our lives; my God has my back and by the Grace and Sacrifice made by His Son, I will be with Him forever.