



# NALC News

North American Lutheran Church

May/June 2025

## JOIN US FOR LUTHERAN WEEK 2025 FINAL DEADLINE: JULY 3

**The Rev. Dcn. Andrew S. Ames Fuller**

*Director of Communications*

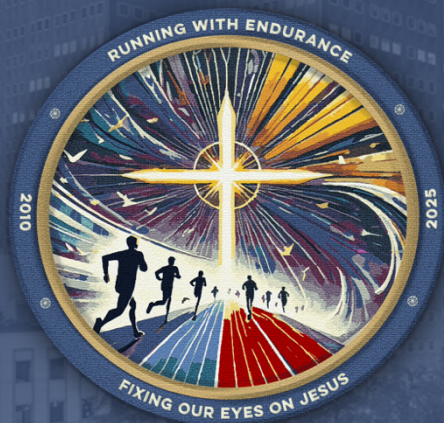
*North American Lutheran Church*

Join us in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, from August 3–8, for a joyful and Spirit-filled gathering as we celebrate **Lutheran Week 2025** at the historic Omni William Penn Hotel. This year marks a milestone in our life together—the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the North American Lutheran Church and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the North American Lutheran Seminary—and we will gather under the theme: “*Running with Endurance: Fixing Our Eyes on Jesus*” (Hebrews 12:1–2).

This will be more than a conference. It is a family reunion—a week of worship, fellowship, learning, vision-casting, and thanksgiving. Whether you’re a long-time delegate or a first-time visitor, there is a place for you here.

### **Mission Convocation | August 6–8**

The 2025 NALC **Mission Convocation**—Wednesday through Friday, August 6–8—will be a moment of celebration, gratitude, and renewed purpose. Together, we will give thanks for 15 years of the Lord’s faithfulness to the North American Lutheran Church and mark the conclusion of our 20/20 Vision Initiative—a season of fruitful work



## **LUTHERAN WEEK 2025 PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA**

*Celebrating 10 Years of the North American Lutheran Seminary  
and 15 Years of the North American Lutheran Church*

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that has strengthened our church body through theological education, global mission, congregational renewal, and expanded leadership development.

As we look to the road ahead, we will begin to paint a picture for the next chapter of our shared life. Rooted in the call to make disciples, the NALC's future direction will center on three core priorities: *Renewing Congregations. Equipping Disciples. Transforming Communities*. These aren't just phrases—they represent the contours of a Spirit-led movement we will begin exploring and embracing together in Pittsburgh.

Convocation business will include the election of members to the Executive Council, Court of Adjudication, and NALS Board of Regents; proposed constitutional amendments and new bylaws; and reports from ministry partners across the continent.

The registration fee is \$350 and includes the *Anniversary Banquet on Wednesday evening*, as well as *lunch on Thursday and Friday*. The Convocation begins on *Wednesday at 12:30 p.m.* and concludes by *5 p.m. on Friday*.

## Theological Lectures | August 5–6

The **Carl E. Braaten–Robert D. Benne Lectures in Theology**, held *Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning (August 5–6)*, will explore the vital relationship between mission and apologetics. Rooted in the Lutheran Week theme, the lectures will reflect on how the Church can remain anchored in the apostolic faith while bearing bold and faithful witness in a world that desperately needs the Gospel.

Featured speakers include:

- **The Rev. Dr. Peter Beckman**
- **The Rev. Arica Demme**
- **The Rev. Dr. Thomas Jacobson**
- **The Rev. Dr. Jukka Kääriäinen**
- **Dr. Alex Pierce**

Registration is \$175, including *lunch on Wednesday*.

## Faith Formation Festival | August 4

On *Monday, August 4*, the **Faith Formation Festival** offers a full day (8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.) of inspiration and equipping for those who nurture faith among children, youth, and families. Sessions include *Music in Christian Education*, *Special Needs Ministry*, and *Youth Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*.

Whether you're a volunteer or a full-time staff member, this gathering will encourage and



strengthen your ministry with practical tools and spiritual refreshment.

Registration is \$75 and includes *lunch*.

## Women of the NALC Gathering | August 5

The **Women of the NALC Gathering** will meet on *Tuesday, August 5*, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., bringing together women from across the church for worship, teaching, fellowship, and mission engagement. This beloved annual event remains a place of renewal and encouragement.

Registration is \$125 and includes *lunch*.

## Visit to the North American Lutheran Seminary | August 6

A special opportunity to visit the **North American Lutheran Seminary Center at Trinity Anglican Seminary in Ambridge, Pennsylvania**, will take place on *Wednesday morning, August 6*. This visit includes a campus tour, an opportunity to meet faculty and students, and time for prayer and fellowship.

Registration is \$15 for *lunch*, with an additional \$15 for *round-trip transportation* if needed.

## Last Call to Register

All events during Lutheran Week are open to *both delegates and visitors*. Whether you serve in a large congregation or a growing mission congregation, whether you are ordained or lay, there is a place for you at the table.

Let this week be a time of worship, learning, discernment, and joy as we look back with gratitude and forward with expectation—*fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith*.

**Registration closes July 3. Don't miss it.** Visit [www.lutheranweek.com](http://www.lutheranweek.com) to register today.



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## YOUNG ADULTS ON MISSION: WORD & WITNESS MISSION TRIP

**Ariel Wicker**

*Editor, NALC News*

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In June, sixteen young adults from across North America gathered in Winnipeg, Manitoba, for a week that would stretch their faith, deepen their compassion, and strengthen their sense of mission. Led by Pastor Teresa Peters, NALC Director of Youth and Family, the team partnered with local organizations that serve in the heart of the city, offering food, listening ears, and the love of Christ.

In a recent conversation, Pastor Peters sat down with team members Kayla, Lauren, and William to reflect on the experience and how it has continued to shape their lives.

Kayla shared how their time with the Bear Clan Patrol—a local grassroots group focused on community safety—left a lasting impression. “People really appreciated even just the simple sandwich, the simple, ‘I’m glad you’re here, how are you?’” she said. The group distributed food and hygiene kits, cleaned up streets, and offered dignity and kindness to neighbors in need.

At Agape Table, a local outreach providing meals and community support, Kayla was struck by the volunteers, many of whom had once needed help themselves. “It was beautiful to see how people can heal and return to serve others.”

William reflected on the power of personal connection during their community walks. “Getting to see where people actually live and hearing their stories changed me. It made me realize how much I have to be grateful for.” For him, entering into others’ realities was a humbling reminder of the humanity and strength found in even the hardest circumstances.

For Lauren, a seasoned participant in mission trips, the experience rekindled her heart for service. “This young adult mission trip reignited a fire—to love people well, to really see them as Christ sees them.” She spoke about discipleship not just as a concept, but as something lived out: “To truly follow Jesus, we need to be in relationship with Him—and that starts with seeing His face in others.”

Throughout the week, daily devotions and group prayer provided a foundation for the team. “It reminded us why we were there,” Kayla said. “Reading the Word together and praying as a group helped us see each act of service as part of God’s bigger story.”

The team came from all over—California, Illinois, Georgia, Ohio, Virginia, and Manitoba—but quickly became a unified community. For William, the week was life-giving: “It was just a week completely empty of self-doubt. A spiritual reset. You’ll be glad you did it.”

Since returning home, Lauren has carried the experience into her daily life as a physical therapy student. “I want to look like love,” she said. “To be a peaceful presence, to give back—this trip helped me see that’s what I’m called to do.”

As Pastor Peters noted, “God used this week to bless each person in ways they didn’t expect. And that’s what mission is—it’s not just about what we do, but how God meets us in the doing.”

The team encourages other young adults to prayerfully consider joining future mission opportunities. Whether you’re a seasoned volunteer or taking a first step, there’s a place for you in God’s work—and you just might find your life changed in the process.

*Young adults ages 18 to 28 are invited to join us in Winnipeg next year, May 23 to 30—listen for how God might be calling you to serve.*



## IGLESIA LUTERANA SAN JUAN BAUTISTA: RECIPIENTS OF A GREAT COMMISSION FUND GRANT

***The Rev. Carol Fryer***

*Director of Missions*

*North American Lutheran Church*

Pastor Esteban Salazar and his wife Angie serve a Hispanic mission congregation in partnership with Bethel Lutheran Church in Santa Maria, California. This mission serves many Mexican farm workers who work in the fields of the central coast of California. I was honored to visit them last summer when they were picking strawberries.

These farm workers, both men and women, work hard in the fields for little money. Their lives are hard, and the conditions are difficult. However, Esteban and Angie love them and do everything they can to help support them. Some of the workers come from the Oaxaca area of Mexico. Many of them speak an indigenous language, such as Zapotec or Mixtec, rather than Spanish.

Pastor Esteban and his wife, Angie, have already established the functions of a congregation. They gather for worship, administer the sacraments of Holy Communion and Baptism, and provide catechetical instruction for adults and youth in



God's Word and Luther's Catechisms. They perform marriages and burials. They offer pastoral counseling. They visit the sick and minister to the needs of the congregation, including food distribution, clothing, housing, furnishings, legal counsel, and medical advocacy.

Most recently, some of the farm workers have been deported back to Mexico. Parents are taken, but the children are left behind. Pastor Esteban and Angie collect the children and drive them to the Mexican border to reunite them with their parents. In addition, they have made the trip south to the area affected by recent forest fires to bring help and encouragement to the workers and residents. There is no end to the ways in which the Salazars will go to bring the love of the Gospel to those in need.

Because Iglesia Luterana San Juan Bautista serves a very poor population, it will always need additional support from other congregations, donors, and the Great Commission Fund. Thank you for your prayers. Please prayerfully consider supporting this important ministry.



## BISHOP SELBO BRINGS ECUMENICAL GREETINGS TO ACNA PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

**Ariel Wicker**

*Editor, NALC News*

Speaking from the campus of Trinity Anglican Seminary in Ambridge, Pennsylvania—home to the North American Lutheran Seminary since

2014—Bishop Dan Selbo brought ecumenical greetings on behalf of the NALC to the Provincial Council of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA). His remarks were filled with gratitude, theological resonance, and a strong affirmation of the deepening partnership between the two church bodies.

"I bring you greetings on behalf of the NALC and our congregations," Bishop Selbo began. "I want to express our thanks for the many ways in which your church and our church have walked together and continue to serve the gospel in partnership."

Reflecting on the past decade of growing collaboration, Bishop Selbo celebrated the visible witness of shared mission. He noted the close relationship between the churches in areas such as church planting, disaster response, public witness, and theological education. "Our two church bodies have a tremendous amount in common," he said, "not only in what we believe and where we place our trust, but also in our history."

The location itself served as a powerful symbol of this relationship. The NALC seminary's presence on a campus affiliated with the ACNA, Bishop Selbo noted, is not merely logistical—it is theological and missional. "That relationship has grown deeper in these last 10 years, and we pray it continues to be so."

He went on to thank ACNA leaders for their regular presence at NALC events and installations, observing that the two churches "are not just formal partners, but truly members of one body."



As both ACNA and the NALC continue maturing as young church bodies formed in response to the crisis of North American Protestantism, Bishop Selbo offered a vision not of institutional rivalry but of Spirit-led unity. “We believe God raised up our two churches for such a time as this—not to compete, but to walk together as sister churches.”

He concluded with a prayerful charge:

*“May our partnership be deepened,  
our witness strengthened,  
and our joy made full in Jesus Christ.”*



## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2025 JUNE INTENSIVE: A WEEK OF SHARED LEARNING, FELLOWSHIP, AND MISSION

**Emily Clark**

*Communications Specialist & Seminary Liaison  
North American Lutheran Church*

The North American Lutheran Seminary (NALS) Network 2025 June Intensive was our largest and most dynamic gathering yet, bringing together nearly 50 participants—seminarians, auditors, and pastors engaged in continuing education—for a week of rich theological exploration and missional formation.

Led by Dr. Michael Pasquarello, the course, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Pastor-Theologian*, offered both scholarly depth and pastoral sensitivity. His warm, dialogical teaching style fostered an energetic and collaborative learning environment

where students didn't just absorb content—they wrestled with it together.

Throughout the week, participants gathered around Scripture, shared meals, prayed, and engaged in spirited classroom dialogue. One attendee described the atmosphere as “a real camaraderie—like we're all in this together.” That sense of fellowship ran deep, reminding many why they first felt called to ministry.

For most NALS Network students, who study remotely, this was a rare and meaningful opportunity to gather in person. The week offered not only academic enrichment but also the kind of incarnational community that strengthens both one's studies and vocation.

We're already looking ahead with anticipation to next year's gathering. Mark your calendars: the 2026 June Intensive will be held **June 8–12 in**



**Ambridge, Pennsylvania.**

## MISSION CONVOCATION TO ELECT MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, COURT OF ADJUDICATION & NALS BOARD OF REGENTS

**Ariel Wicker**

*Editor, NALC News*

The 2025 NALC Mission Convocation, taking place from August 6–8 in Pittsburgh, will include the election of leaders for several key positions within the life of the church. Delegates will vote to fill open seats on the Executive Council, the Court of

Adjudication, and the Board of Regents for the North American Lutheran Seminary.

## Executive Council

Four positions are open—two clergy and two lay—for four-year terms. The Executive Council serves as the NALC's board of directors, providing leadership and oversight between Mission Convocations.

### *Clergy Nominees:*

- **The Rev. John Conrad**, First Evangelical Lutheran Church—Floresville, Texas (nominated by St. Paul Lutheran Church, Rosenberg, Texas)
- **The Rev. Theresa Jacobson**, Grace Lutheran Church—Thornville, Ohio (nominated by Grace Lutheran Church, Thornville, Ohio)
- **The Rev. Eric Miletti**, Immanuel Lutheran Church—La Vernia, Texas (nominated by Immanuel Lutheran Church, La Vernia, Texas)
- **The Rev. David Nuottila**, St. Jacob's Lutheran Church—Chapin, South Carolina (nominated by St. Paul Lutheran Church, Rosenberg, Texas)
- **The Rev. Mark Werner**, Emanuel Lutheran Church—Elmer, New Jersey (nominated by Emanuel Lutheran Church, Elmer, New Jersey)

### *Lay Nominees:*

- **Jerry Hansen**, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church—Casper, Wyoming (nominated by St. John Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana)
- **Kathaleen Lilley**, Salem Lutheran Church—Elizabethville, Pennsylvania (nominated by Salem Lutheran Church, Elizabethville, Pennsylvania)
- **Jerry Roehr**, St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church—Winnipeg, MB (nominated by St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba)
- **Joel Williams**, Badger Lutheran Church—Badger, SD (nominated by American Lutheran Church, Castlewood, South Dakota)

## Court of Adjudication

Four clergy or lay positions are open for four-year terms. The Court of Adjudication hears appeals from disciplinary decisions, interprets NALC governing documents, and resolves related claims.

### *Nominees:*

- **The Rev. Jeff Blain**, Ascension Lutheran Church—Fond du Lac, Wisconsin (nominated by Immanuel Lutheran Church, Fresno, California)
- **Samuel Duncomb**, Peace Lutheran Church—Northwood, Iowa (nominated by Peace Lutheran Church, Northwood, Iowa)
- **The Rev. Jeffray Greene**, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church—Fayetteville, Georgia (nominated by Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Fayetteville, Georgia)
- **The Rev. Rick Robers**, St. Timothy Lutheran Church—Goose Creek, South Carolina (nominated by St. Timothy Lutheran Church, Goose Creek, South Carolina)
- **The Rev. Terese Whitten**, St. John's Lutheran Church—Creston, Illinois (nominated by St. John's Lutheran Church, Creston, Illinois)

## Board of Regents – North American Lutheran Seminary

One position is open (clergy or lay) for a six-year term. The Board of Regents oversees the NALS network and president, including strategic planning, new initiatives, and financial stewardship.

### *Nominees:*

- **The Rev. Mark Daniels**, Living Water Lutheran Church—Centerville, Ohio (nominated by Living Water Lutheran Church, Centerville, Ohio)
- **Nancy Lawton-Kluck**, St. Luke Lutheran Church—Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania (nominated by St. Luke Lutheran Church, Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania)



- **The Rev. Dr. Franklin Gore**, Epiphany Lutheran Church—Pensacola, Florida (nominated by Epiphany Lutheran Church, Pensacola, Florida)
- **The Rev. Erik Osness**, St. Albert Evangelical Lutheran Church—St. Albert, Alberta (nominated by Victory Lutheran Church, Medicine Hat, Alberta)
- **The Rev. Alan Peacock**, Shepherd of the Woods—Jacksonville, Florida (nominated by Shepherd of the Woods, Jacksonville, Florida)

These elections are a vital part of the Convocation's work, helping to shape the future leadership of the NALC.



## THE REV. DR. JUKKA KÄÄRIÄINEN BEGINS HIS ROLE AS NALS PRESIDENT

**Emily Clark**

*Communications Specialist & Seminary Liaison  
North American Lutheran Church*

We're excited to officially welcome the Rev. Dr. Jukka Kääriäinen as President of the North American Lutheran Seminary. Dr. Kääriäinen began his role on Monday, June 2, bringing a wealth of global experience in theological education, pastoral ministry, and mission leadership.

While Dr. Kääriäinen and his family prepare for their international move from Finland, he will begin his work remotely. The family plans to arrive in Pennsylvania later this summer.

As he shared with the NALC staff this month, these next six weeks are filled with transition. Please join us in praying for:

- A smooth move across the Atlantic (their belongings are currently en route by ship).
- Wisdom and peace as Jukka prioritizes his first months of work.
- Their teenage daughter, who will remain in Finland to begin a new school and live with her grandparents.
- Safe travels—and a kind, dog-loving airline attendant—as they hope to bring their family dog with them on the flight in July.

We are grateful for your prayers as Dr. Kääriäinen begins this important season of leadership and look forward to introducing him in person at Lutheran Week.



## ALL PRAISE AND THANKS TO GOD: THE SALUTATION AND COLLECT/PRAYER OF THE DAY

**The Rev. Dr. Amy Schiffrin**

*President Emeritus  
North American Lutheran Seminary*

In many ways, the liturgy puts the words of the Scriptures into our ears, our mouths, and our hearts. The Bible is “made alive” in our bodies as

we proclaim and receive God's holy words. "The Lord be with you" is a refrain often repeated in Scripture. It is a continual reminder that Emmanuel is "God with us." We are most familiar with these words through the books of Judges, Chronicles, Ruth, Luke, and 2 Thessalonians. We also hear from St. Matthew that "The Lord is with you." In Ruth, the reapers respond to Boaz's words, "The Lord bless you." In the early church, sometimes the refrain, as it was recorded in the New Testament (and translated into Latin), was written, "The Lord be with your spirit."

This sung or spoken greeting and response reflects and creates a bond of love between the presider and the assembly. As the presider then invites the congregation into prayer ("Let us pray"), they are calling those who have gathered to have their hearts opened to hear the proclamation of the biblical texts that will follow. There is a sense of reciprocity between presider and assembly as our petitions are lifted to God.

We can read the Bible and pray when we are at home, but this greeting and call to prayer serve as a reminder that even when we are apart from friends, family, or our congregation, we remain in union with them as well as with our Lord, who has promised to hear our prayers. So, it is also appropriate to take a moment of silence between the call to prayer and the collect, so that we may quiet our thoughts and be prepared to pray.

The term "collect" (noun) dates back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> centuries in Gaul (France), as this prayer was intended to bring together, i.e., "collect" (verb), the prayers of the assembly. Like many of the prayers in the early church, it was a free composition of the presider. In the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries, the collect begins to take a set pattern that is the foundation of the appointed prayers in the *LBW*. There are examples of these collects in the Leonine, Gelasian, and Gregorian sacramentaries, which are some of the earliest collections of prayers. Some of the oldest collects that are still in use reflect the liturgical season rather than the appointed lectionary texts. (Lectionaries have changed and developed over

time.) Yet, the basic form of the collect has remained fairly constant for the last 15 centuries.

Most of the collects are addressed to God the Father, while a smaller number are addressed to the Lord, and very occasionally, to the Holy Spirit. Many of our prayers are addressed to the Father, *through* the Son, *in* the power of the Holy Spirit. Luther D. Reed, in *The Lutheran Liturgy*, his 1947 study of the Common Liturgy of the Lutheran Church in America, takes us back to the scriptural roots of this form, reminding us of the words of our Lord from John 16:23, "That whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you." In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Lutheran Reformers translated and/or adapted the prayers into German and Swedish. And in 1549, the church received Thomas Cranmer's powerful work in the 1549 *Book of Common Prayer*. English-speaking Lutherans continue to reap the benefits of Cranmer's work. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Lutheran theologian, William Loehe, brought the church's attention back to the beauty and truth that were prayed through this prayer form and wrote that they were "the breath of a soul, sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, brought to the eternal Father in the Name of his Son."

So, what is this form, and how does it help us receive God's love and grow in faith? In its fullness, there are five parts. (On occasion, parts 2 or 4 are not included.)

1. We name the one to whom we are speaking, usually the first person of the Holy Trinity, such as "*Almighty God*," "*Father in Heaven*," or even simply, "*O God*." In naming God, we honor Him as we have been commanded to do, as we express our faith that there is only one God, eternal and everlasting.
2. We say something about the attributes or power of God, what He has done for us, and why we believe Him to be trustworthy. Such as, "*You who led your people out of slavery into the freedom of the promised land; You who made the heavens and the earth*"; or "*the strength of all who suffer*."

3. What are we asking of God? Now we come to a request, petition, or plea. Here, we are reminded that nothing is beyond God's care, and no one is beyond His mercy and love.
4. Following the petition, we pray for a benefit or outcome from our request. We do not know how God will answer our prayers, but voicing these desires is a sign of trust through which we may discover that God has something to give us that is greater than we had imagined. The gifts with which He fills our hearts are beyond our ability to measure.
5. Even some of the deepest laments in the Psalter end in praise. When Christians conclude their prayers with a Trinitarian doxology, we are joined to all the saints who have gone before us in a proclamation of the resurrection. Thus, a Trinitarian doxology, such as *"through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever,"* followed by a congregational *"Amen,"* powerfully concludes the collect.

Have a look at the collect for the Sixth Sunday of Easter. (LBW p. 22) It is a clear and straightforward example of this 5-part form. Then, of course, you are invited to pray it!

*O God, from whom all good things come: lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to think those things which are right, and by your goodness help us to do them; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen*



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## EL SHADDAI CHRISTIAN CENTER IN MEXICO: MINISTRY UPDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP

**Ariel Wicker**

Editor, NALC News

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### About El Shaddai Christian Center & Our NALC Partnership

El Shaddai Christian Center is a small, independent church in Maneadero, Mexico, led by Pastor Carlos Santiago and his wife, Mireya Pozo, since 2007. In addition to regular worship services, Bible studies, and children's programs, El Shaddai provides food, clothing, and free medical clinics to some of the most vulnerable members of their community. Their outreach has extended to new church plants in nearby Las Tinajitas and Oaxaca.

Since 2019, the ministry of Pastor Carlos and El Shaddai has been recognized by the NALC as a mission partner. Our ongoing relationship with El Shaddai is centered on supporting their outreach and strengthening our partnership for future ministry endeavors.



## El Shaddai Christian Center Church Plant in Oaxaca Update

Last month, Carlos and Mireya traveled to the Sierra de Oaxaca, where they were warmly welcomed by their brothers and sisters in Christ. They shared Bible teachings and administered Holy Communion—a time of great joy and encouragement for the community.

The construction of the church building in Oaxaca is progressing, with most of the roof recently installed. However, windows and doors are still needed. Please pray that God will provide the resources to complete this important work.

Carlos and Mireya are planning another trip to Oaxaca in August. Please pray that God will make this possible and bless their journey.

They also ask for prayers for provision to repair their vehicles, which have been damaged by the challenging roads. Reliable transportation is essential for their ministry.

## El Shaddai Activities & Needs

At El Shaddai, the children from the “God Provide” Orphanage are currently homeschooling at the church facilities. The women of the church prepare and serve lunch for the children each day, and improvements have been made to the facilities, though more is still needed.

The teachers have shared that the children are in need of school supplies, as well as shoes and sneakers, for the upcoming school year. If you or your church feels led to help, your support would be a great blessing.

Carlos and Mireya also welcome NALC groups who may wish to visit and serve at El Shaddai and in the community. A house is available for visiting groups at the orphanage.

## How You Can Pray and Help

- Pray for the completion of the church building in Oaxaca, with a special focus on the windows and doors.

- Pray for safe travels and provision for Carlos and Mireya’s upcoming trip in August.
- Pray for resources to repair their ministry vehicles.
- Pray for the children at El Shaddai—for their educational needs and well-being.
- Consider supporting the children with school supplies or shoes.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support.



## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ACTION SUMMARY – SECOND QUARTER 2025

**The Rev. Mark Werner**  
*Recording Secretary*  
*NALC Executive Council*

### The NALC Executive Council took the following actions at their meeting on May 7 and 8:

- The Executive Council acknowledges and thanks Pastor David Keener for his leadership in developing resources for NALC Life-to-Life Discipleship and Pastor David Baer for his work on the *NALC News*. They have both concluded their work on the NALC staff.
- Appointed Pastor David Baer, Pastor Sarah Stenson, Pastor Jeffray Greene, Pastor Rick

Laursen, and Mrs. Lynn Kickingbird to the Committee on Reference and Counsel for the 2025 Mission Convocation.

- There will be two online presentations of the proposed constitutional changes and the 2026 budget for registered delegates to the 2025 Mission Convocation. They will be held on Tuesday, July 22, and Thursday, July 31, at 7:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., respectively.
- Affirmed the appointment of Dr. Douglas Sweeney to the Commission of Theology and Doctrine (CTD). He is the Dean/Professor of Divinity at Beeson Divinity School, a NALS Network school in Birmingham, Alabama.

As points of information, we have 135 congregations that are dual-affiliated with Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC). There are 203 pastors who are dually affiliated with the NALC and LCMC.

The Executive Council approved a new mission partner as recommended by the Mission Vetting Team, called “Dress a Girl,” a ministry of St. John’s Lutheran Church in Arroyo Grande, California.

## The following congregations were received into the NALC between February 1 and May 31:

- St. James Lutheran Church, Pitman, Pennsylvania
- United Lutheran Church of the Swiss Alps, Schulenburg, Texas
- Mount Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church, Little Mountain, South Carolina
- Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Florence, Alabama
- Silverstreet Lutheran Church, Silverstreet, South Carolina
- American Lutheran Church, Stanley, North Dakota
- Faith Lutheran Church, Osborne, Kansas

- Advent Lutheran Church, Houston, Texas
- Our Savior’s Lutheran Church, Denmark, Wisconsin

## The following pastors were received into the NALC between February 26 and May 31:

- The Rev. Dr. Jukka Kääriäinen
- The Rev. Andrea Taphorn
- The Rev. Don Safrit
- The Rev. Lucas Kisner
- The Rev. Matthew Voyer



## THE CHURCH SHOWS UP: NALC RESPONDS COAST TO COAST

**Mary Bates**

*NALC Disaster Response Coordinator*

Across the United States—from western North Carolina and Texas to California—NALC Disaster Response is actively coordinating mission trips that bring tangible help and Gospel-centered hope to communities in crisis. Thanks to the dedication of our incredible volunteers, **15 mission trips** have already been completed this year. The impact is remarkable: **more than 40 homes repaired** and **six new homes built from the ground up**.





Recent disasters in Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, Kentucky, Illinois, Oklahoma, and along the Ohio River have added to the urgent need. Our teams continue to serve where the need is greatest, offering the presence of Christ amid devastation.

Yet as we approach hurricane season, **our regional and national warehouses are nearly empty**. These supply centers are critical for our rapid response efforts, and we need your help now to restock them with essential items like flood buckets, health kits, Bibles, and bedding.

If you or your congregation are ready to serve—whether by going, giving, or gathering—please reach out. Together, we embody the Church's calling to be Christ's hands and feet in times of disaster.

To volunteer or support this ministry, contact Mary Bates at [disasterresponse@thenalc.org](mailto:disasterresponse@thenalc.org).

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## SHARING THE THREAD OF OUR LIFE TOGETHER: A WORD FROM YOUR NEW EDITOR

**Ariel Wicker**

Editor, NALC News

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Dear friends,

For the past four years, I've had the privilege of serving on the NALC communications team. It's been a joy to contribute to so many meaningful projects for our church body, including editing and managing our Advent and Lenten devotionals, which has been an incredible way to connect with you—and connect you to—the rhythms we share in the church year.

Now, I'm excited to add on a new adventure as the editor of your NALC newsletter! I'm looking forward to helping us stay connected and informed about the incredible ministries, events, and people that shape our life together as a church body—**and continuing the thread of sharing content written by your NALC staff as we journey through the church year.**

This newsletter is for all of us, and I'd love to hear from you! Please share your stories, photos, and upcoming events with me at [news@thenalc.org](mailto:news@thenalc.org).

Thank you for welcoming me into this new role. I'm eager to work together and share all the ways God is at work among us.

Blessings to you all!

## LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH

Ariel Wicker, *editor*

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