

Nominating Committee Report

The 2016 Nominating Committee presents the candidates named below for positions to be elected at the NALC Convocation Aug. 10-12 in Anaheim, Calif.

We believe that the individuals named below are qualified and would do well in their service if elected.

Regarding additional nominations for Executive Council, the NALC Constitution (10.03, 15.01), specifies that *“Three or more delegates representing at least three congregations may together submit an additional nomination in writing. To be in order, the nomination, together with supporting biographical information, must be submitted to the Nominating Committee no later than 45 days prior to the Convocation.”*

The Committee is grateful for the opportunity to have served the NALC, and we commend these well-qualified individuals to the Convocation for your consideration. We pray that God will guide the election process so that those who will best serve us will be raised up.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Donald Brandt, Chair
Pastor Cathi Braasch
Mr. Harvey Hengst
Ms. Shelly Ree
Pastor Bert Schultz

Executive Council - Lay Member (4-year term)

(One person to be elected)

- + Rebecka V. Andrae - Greensburg, Pa.
- + Pamela Charas - Dayton, Ohio
- + Kathryn Hudnall - Charleston, W.Va.
- + Lynn Kickingbird - Edmond, Okla.
- + Janet W. Rash - Salisbury, N.C.

Executive Council - Ordained Minister (4-year term)

(One person to be elected)

- + The Rev. Carl M. Haynes - Salisbury, N.C.
- + The Rev. Kenneth Kimball - Waterville, Iowa
- + The Rev. William E. Maki - New Bremen, Ohio

Court of Adjudication (4-year term)

(One person to be elected)

- + The Rev. David E. Schafer - Waukon, Iowa

Board of Regents (6-year term)

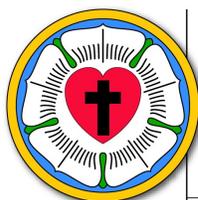
(Three persons to be elected)

- + The Rev. Cathi Braasch - Elwood, Neb.
- + Ms. Donna W. Evans - Pittsburgh, Pa.
- + The Rev. Jeffray S. Greene - Brooks, Ga.
- + The Rev. Kristopher Madsen - Fresno, Calif.
- + The Rev. Dennis A. Meyer - Grayslake, Ill.
- + The Rev. Allen Schoonover - Noblesville, Ind.
- + The Rev. Kris Leland Snyder - Gonvick, Minn.

Board of Regents (4-year term)

(One person to be elected)

- + The Rev. Ralph A. Kempinski - Aiken, S.C.
- + The Rev. Thurmond C. Plexico - Concord, N.C.
- + The Rev. Paull E. Spring - State College, Pa.



NALC

North American Lutheran Church

Rebecka Andrae

Nominee for Executive Council - Lay

Name:

Rebecka V. Andrae

Address:

Greensburg, Pa.

Congregation:

St. Paul Lutheran Church
Latrobe, Pa.

Occupation:

1) Mid-Northeast Mission
District Administrative Assistant
2) on medical leave from Social Work due to knee
replacement surgery

Basic Biographical Information:

I am single with three children: Adam (23), a second-year law student at Ohio Northern University; Maria (12), entering seventh grade this fall; and Sara (11), entering sixth grade this fall.

I earned my Bachelor's degree in Family Studies (two minors: Early Childhood Administration/ Education and Business Management) from Seton Hill University and have completed graduate work within the fields of education and leadership/ administration at the University of Pittsburgh, St. Vincent College, and Concordia University.

I am an avid soccer (the world's football) fan and particularly enjoy following the national team of my native Sweden. I enjoy cooking, reading, and outdoor activities with my children. Following recent knee replacement surgery, I am looking forward to a complete recovery and possibly being able to play tennis again and kick the soccer ball with my children.

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

My experiences and involvement in both local and regional expressions are varied and extensive including (but not limited to) chairing various



committees (Membership, Christian Education, 50th Anniversary Committee), teaching Sunday School, serving on Congregation Council (including one Vision Team), serving as voting member to synod assembly (1994, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010), serving on the West Penn Lutheran CORE Fellowship Steering Committee, serving as Parish Secretary (paid position), attending the Constituting Convocation for the NALC and signing the charter (2010), attending every subsequent NALC Convocation (2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015), and working as the Administrative Assistant for the Mid-Northeast Mission District (paid position) since 2014.

In addition, I spent my early life as a member of the Church of Sweden where my father, a pastor, was actively involved in various confessional movements. I have been a member of congregations in various settings such as a rural church in a potato-farming community in northern Maine and small-city churches in Sweden and Pennsylvania. All these experiences have combined to provide me with a global perspective that is balanced with the opportunities and challenges of small-town ministry.

(While my experience in the non-profit, social agency world is not experience within the Body of Christ, it has been relevant to honing my visionary and long-range planning skills along with short-term action plans which have been very beneficial to me over the years.)

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

Through prayerful discernment over many years, I believe that I have been granted the gifts of administration and wisdom to be used to build up the Body of Christ.

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

The NALC appears to face several challenges. As we reach critical mass in several areas, we must address and solve these challenges in a thoughtful, deliberate, and intentional way while not losing the inherent momentum.

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One challenge I see is in the structure of the NALC itself. We are committed to a lean structure yet there are multiple demands within that structure and requests from congregations, pastors, and individual laity. We saw this materialize over the past two years in the areas of communication and family/youth ministry. The NALC leadership was able to thoughtfully respond to this challenge and to do so in a timely manner. The key is to always view challenges as opportunities and to evaluate each challenge in the light of the mission of the NALC. In other words, we want to address challenges in a visionary manner that ultimately makes sense and makes good use of our resources.

Another challenge that is rising from the grassroots level is that of the annual Convocation. Timing (annually) and location (varies) is being questioned by some due to the cost of travel. I, however, view the annual Convocation as an opportunity to come together as disciples of Jesus Christ for a time of learning, renewal, and fellowship. The NALC is congregationally-focused and this is evident in that every congregation may send a delegate whereas in our predecessor body, one had to be elected from the regional expression. The fact that all pastors on our roster, whether serving under call or retired, and that every congregation may send a delegate should be encouraged to be viewed as a privilege and an opportunity.

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

I am hopeful that we will continue to build relationships and partnerships in the Gospel with other groups and church bodies throughout the world that share our Biblical understanding. I hope that these relationships will be not only denomination to denomination but congregation to congregation and congregation to ministry partner. I believe that a culture of discipleship is the foundation for building these partnerships as well as for living out our baptismal covenant.

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

I believe that we need to focus on youth and young adult ministry especially in light of the recent ending of Youth Encounter. We need to provide a national youth and young adult gathering and offer it during Lutheran Week. The timing is critical as it will likely keep costs down for everyone involved. In our Mission District, we have now had two summer youth camps and have expanded our facilities. It is my hope that more Mission Districts will also be able to build their youth ministry offerings and that Mission Districts will be able to share in their resources for those who are more limited. In addition, I see campus ministry as an untapped opportunity thus far for the NALC and this should be something we begin to explore intentionally. It is something that can, and should be, a local/Mission District focus in addition to being supported by the church body as a whole.

It is imperative that we continue to support and build on our seminary education so that we have trained pastors to lead our congregations. We must support the seminary itself and its leadership and we must continue to find innovative ways to support those studying at the seminary. Thus far, great strides have been made, both financially and in other ways (such as online course offerings) and it's important to continue with this momentum.

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 body?

Discipleship needs to be a primary focus at every level within our church body as it will, and should, undergird all else in the worshiping community. As congregations, we are worshiping communities and as a church body, we are a worshiping community. Disciple-making does not occur in isolation. It occurs in one-on-one mentoring, in small groups, and in larger groups. It is woven together throughout the entire Body of Christ. To that end, some tangible actions may include workshops and planning for pastors, congregational leaders, and laity in the pews on the subject of a culture of

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discipleship. A paradigm shift never happens overnight. We must be intentional about the training, the Biblical foundation, the vision, and the step-by-step process. Too often, we find something useful and we implement it in isolation. This rarely works to change mindsets as it is being implemented in isolation with no follow-through. A step-by-step process to build that culture of discipleship, to make spiritually mature followers of Christ, is critical to change the culture. That plan must be in place, with goals and objectives, prior to implementing any activities and actions.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

God is woven throughout my day. He is always with me and I feel His presence as I begin my day with prayer (most of the time) which carries me throughout the day. I turn to Him at various times, to rejoice and to lament, as He carries me to the evening. I pray that He will keep me safe from all the evil forces so that I may awake anew in Christ.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you.

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.” — Psalm 119:105

This verse holds great meaning to me. It tells me, and reminds me daily, that Jesus, the Word incarnate, lights my way as He is the Light of the World and that I am His. It reminds me that His written Word, the Holy Scriptures, guides me. It reminds me that as I am fed at His Altar, I am nourished by His Word.

Pamela Charas

Nominee for Executive Council - Lay

Name:

Pamela (Pam) Charas

Address:

Dayton, Ohio

Congregation:

Living Water Lutheran Church
Centerville, Ohio

Occupation:

Housewife, retired, in service to the Lord.



Basic Biographical Information:

Married for 50 years. My husband, Myron, and I have two children, James and Kathryn. James is married to Michele and has one son, Samuel, age 15.

I have two years of college, have had great life experiences, and have traveled in 14 different countries.

Hobbies: I love mission work and participating in Bible study. I love international travel and decorating.

I have had various jobs throughout my life as we moved around often with my husband's job:

- + Actuarial clerk
- + Dental assistant
- + Sales specialist
- + Bank teller
- + Nanny

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

Raised in the LCMS, and attended through age 45:

- + Sunday School superintendent

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+ Lutheran Women's Missionary League Zone President, worked with women's groups in 20 churches, helped to plan rallies and retreats. At the District level, I helped plan a retreat for 500 women. I presented practical applications of the speaker's main points and was the song leader.

+ Was a member of a mission congregation in Kentucky that "went through" 4-5 pastors in 10 years! I am familiar with the struggles associated with trying to start a church in a place unfamiliar with Lutheran theology.

In the ELCA:

+ India Mission Team leader.

+ Headed up special events for fellowship and to raise money for missions.

In the NALC:

+ An elected member of The Women's Council.

+ Chair of the WNALC Mission Support Team, created and developed "My Mission Bank" initiative, and support for pastors' spouses.

+ I've been to India on 12 short-term mission trips since 2004.

+ Instrumental in bringing United Evangelical Mission/India Transformed! to the NALC.

+ Led a short-term mission trip to India in 2016 and am planning one for January 2017.

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

As identified by fellow Christians, I have been blessed with the gift of faith, leadership, and evangelism. I have a heart for missions and a passion to reach the "lost."

+ Creative thinker.

+ Good listener.

+ Team player.

+ Open and frank, not reluctant to voice my opinion.

+ People person.

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

+ Representing the Christian faith in a fallen society.

+ Administrative clarity — who is responsible for what and where is that stated?

+ Identify and eliminate any remnants of the ELCA practices.

+ Citing practical applications in connecting with and supporting ministry partners/recognized ministries as may be stated in the partnership agreements.

+ Getting the discipleship culture in motion.

+ Being Congregationally Focused.

+ I was reading over the 2014 Staff reports. I don't know how the staff can continue at such a horrific pace — the travel, the meetings, the congregational visits they have to prepare for, their administrative duties, etc. What will their job descriptions look like for future candidates?

+ I have found with the WNALC that they don't want to be told what to do. They want choices. They are not going to give up what has worked for them over the years for something similar, but different. For instance, some will not give up the Thank Offering service that they are used to having. We are suggesting doing a Mission Sunday. We hope that we can all eventually do that as an annual activity of the WNALC.

+ I think that many churches are lacking in their support of national and international missions and ministries.

+ I think the NALC leadership needs to recognize where their audience is at, to address those things which will benefit, encourage, and "train them in the way they should go!" A lot of training and transformation is needed.

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

- + To expand outreach.
- + That the Bishop and his staff would get greater support — a bigger team. I think that having such a streamlined staff can be good in some ways, but the weight of the work needs to be spread out among many or methods need to be created that benefit many more on a regular basis.
- + That there would be a better use of lay people.
- + That the “Mission Bank” initiative now being done by the WNALC would go church wide.

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

- + To give support to small, new NALC congregations.
- + Take steps to grow our congregations and the members. Maintaining membership is still the practice of many.
- + Children — understanding that they need to be trained to be future disciples and stewards of the gifts God has given them. There are a lot of things children can be doing now.
- + The training of many more pastors/lay ministers.

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 body?

- + Teach congregations to have a world vision.
- + The NALC, its Mission Districts, and its member congregations need to share the same goals. It seems we want congregations to make so many changes in their way of thinking and acting. That transformation has to come through the Word, prayer, and by example.

+ Don’t rely on our leaders to do all the work. Seek out people with specific gifts who can impact areas of growth.

+ The Mission Districts can take on a greater role of shepherding their member congregations, supporting them as they determine how to live out being Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven congregations.

+ The NALC has a limited history. What’s new about what we’re doing? Share that.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

Through prayer and daily reading of the Scriptures, I recognize more and more how blessed I am to know the one true God, my living Lord, the Lord Almighty who reigns over my life, who knows my future, and knows what is best for me. I daily ask to be empowered by the Holy Spirit that the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart would be pleasing to Him. In sharing my faith with others, my faith is strengthened. Thanks be to Jesus.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you.

I love to hear how the disciples share Jesus, the Gospel message.

The jailer asked, “What must I do to be saved?” Both Paul and Silas replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved...you and your household.” — Acts 16:30-31

Then they went on to explain the Gospel more thoroughly to him and all the others in his house. (That’s a pattern that the church planters use in India!) Paul and Silas’ answer was concise and clear. We tend to complicate things. God gives us the words to say. God Himself works faith in the hearts of people. I have known/know many that don’t know Christ. It’s a joy to have the opportunity to share Christ, His love, His forgiveness, the hope we have in Him alone. I love the way God speaks to us and through us. We don’t have to be great theologians. Knowing Christ and His love for me, I can’t help but share that love with others.

Kathryn Hudnall

Nominee for Executive Council - Lay

Name:
Kathryn Hudnall

Address:
Charleston, W.Va.

Congregation:
St. Timothy Lutheran Church
Charleston, W.Va.

Occupation:
Educator/Coordinator



Basic Biographical Information:

My parents, Christians of Syrian decent, raised my sisters and me in the Lutheran Church. I have one daughter, and my husband has three children and seven grandchildren. God led me into the field of special education. I have been employed as a speech-language therapist, a teacher, a county director, and a state coordinator for a total of 42 years.

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

God prepared me for service through Bible study, prayer and worship. I have served on altar guild, children's Bible study, Parish Council secretary, committee chairperson on Parish Council, and president of Parish Council. I am part of a team which invites, encourages and supports the church's neighborhood children through various ministries.

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

God has given me joy and delight in service and in worship. He provides guidance in leadership, a desire to work with children and youth, and a love for mankind.

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

The challenges facing the NALC are:

- + Supporting and sustaining congregations; and
- + Instilling Biblical principles which support our Christian beliefs in the midst of the changing social climate.

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

Hopes for the continued growth of evangelism, within NALC congregations and the NALC seminary, and throughout our communities, our nation and our world.

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

The continued commitment to ministries that:

- + carry God's abundant lovingkindness and salvation to youth, young adults and young families; and
- + support men and women called by God to serve as ministers of the Word.

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 body?

Tangible actions for the NALC are:

1. To increase the number of congregations implementing the Discipleship program;
2. To increase funding to the seminary-faculty and students; and
3. To increase the use of social media to spread Biblical teachings.

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Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

God blesses me with peace and understanding through life's challenges. The comfort that God is always with me, sustains me.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge."
— Proverbs 1:7.

The fear of the Lord leads me to seek His Word for wisdom and guidance. Though the Bible is chock full of awesome scripture, this verse reminds me of my grandmother (Sittie). She kept her Bible (in Arabic) close, read it often, and frequently referred to Proverbs.

Lynn Kickingbird

Nominee for Executive Council - Lay

Name:

Lynn Kickingbird

Address:

Edmond, Okla.

Congregation:

Peace Lutheran Church
Edmond, Okla.

Occupation:

Retired; grandparent and volunteer; still consult occasionally with non-profits on organizational development and strategic visioning and program planning.



Basic Biographical Information:

Personal: Born in Queens, N.Y. Married to Kirke Kickingbird, an attorney specializing in Indian law, for 42 years. Two married children and three delightful grandchildren, ages 4, 2 and 1, who all live near me.

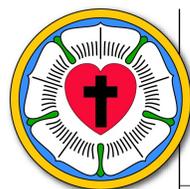
Education: Mary Washington College (1968), B.A. in Drama; Virginia Tech, M.Ed. (1979) in Adult Education; *Work-related Certificates:* Mediation Training (Oklahoma City University); Strategic Visioning (Grove Consultants International); Organizational Self-Assessment (The Drucker Foundation and Board Source); Nonprofit Management (Society for Nonprofit Organizations).

Work Experience:

+ Nonprofits and Government, Washington, D.C., 1969-1972; variety of positions as staff or consultant dealing with program development, evaluation and training.

+ Institute for the Development of Indian Law, 1972-1986; Director of Training & Development.

+ Kickingbird Associates (consulting and training services for nonprofits, government agencies, communities specializing in strategic visioning,



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program and organizational development, training design), 1986-2013; Vice President.

+ Oklahoma City University, 1989-1994; Program Director and Development Officer.

+ Oklahoma City Art Museum, 1995-1996; Development Officer.

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

At Peace Lutheran Church, Edmond, Okla., (1993-Present): Adult Christian Education Team leader and teacher (1994-2003, 2010-2015); Women's Retreat planning team; Billy Graham Crusade counselor (Oklahoma City); small group leader trainer and equipper; small group leader; strategic visioning facilitator (2005); Constitutional Review Committee (2005); Synod delegate (2007-2009); attended Lutheran CORE 2009 Convocation; Denominational Review Committee (2010-11); Mission Team member (2011-present); coordinator Easter Prayer Vigil, Women's weekly Bible study member; Lector; Assisting Minister; Choir member.

Training/Education: Bethel Bible Study; participant in two John Maxwell Training Events (1997, 1999); Welcoming New Christians Conference (2001); Stephen Ministries — ChristCare Small Group Training Conference (2004) and Breakthrough Leadership Conference (2005); Navigator's 2:7 series (2014-2015).

Lutheran CORE: Lutheran CORE Board (2015-2016), Steering Committee Chair (2010-2014), Vice Chair, Missions and Benevolence Working Group (2009-2010).

North American Lutheran Church: Member, Mission Team and Mission Conference planning team (2011-present); member of the Great Commission Society Team (2015-present); attended theological conferences/lectures and Convocations (2011-present); attended Great Plains Mission District meetings 2012-2016.

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

Over the years my spiritual gift have been affirmed through prayerful discernment, several inventories and the encouragement from the Body of Christ — leadership (including helping groups and ministries both create, communicate and achieve their visions); teaching (I have worked in three congregations leading and teaching adults using the Bible alone, off-the-shelf materials as well as those I've developed myself); and faith (I believe fully and firmly 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?

The NALC has successfully passed through the first five years of a start-up phase, laying a strong foundation in many areas of ministry. Challenges facing the NALC in the future may be in the area of containing expectations of its congregations as they struggle to transition to be truly "congregationally-focused" and not be dependent on a big church to do ministry for them, especially making disciples who grow and go. "Congregationally-Focused" does not mean "focused inwardly — on my congregation." It means within each congregation, the saints through the power of the Holy Spirit are building each other up to be Christ's voices, hands and feet in the local community, region, nation and the world, including making disciples who can make other disciples and sharing the Gospel with the unchurched.

At the same time, as the NALC continues to grow, both new and existing congregations struggle with very real issues like shrinking participation, funding stability, and leadership. While retaining its core values, the NALC needs to be continually looking for effective and efficient ways to help both new and struggling congregations, including mission starts, to make this transition without over burdening the NALC leadership. This may mean staff expansion, congregational partnerships, new ways to prepare and engage lay and clergy in support of congregations and Mission Districts, ever

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expanding the effective use of technology, all while maintaining a relatively lean organization.

Another challenge in the future is the preparation and placement of pastors as many 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 the NALC will continue to stay true to its Core Values and keeping the Great Commission the main thing, while relying on the Holy Spirit to provide the way.
2. That congregations will prayerfully and powerfully discern their Great Commission vision.
3. That Mission Districts and mission starts in less dense regions of the country will find partnership opportunities and support from those in more populated areas.
4. That the NALC goal of each congregation supporting at least one local mission congregation, one domestic and one global mission be 100 percent realized.
5. That the NALC congregations will significantly increase the number of baptisms among the unchurched in North America.

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

1. The rapidly changing secular culture is increasingly hostile to the historic Christian faith. At the same time, there is a rise of universalism within the church, as the number of the unchurched grows. With God's help, these negative societal trends can be used by NALC to rally its ordained and lay leadership in congregations, Mission Districts and partner organizations to focus on the following: spiritual formation and making disciples who follow Christ into the world. 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 should be

equipped people 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]."

2. To continue to explore and establish paths for theological and practical education for ordination and lay leadership development.

3. As NALC begins to transition out of the start-up phase, to prepare strategically and prayerfully for long-term sustainability and continual growth.

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 body?

Mission is responding to God's amazing gift of grace to spread the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection beyond the local congregation to all peoples of the world through word and action. One cannot "go" if one does not "know" or have opportunities to practice and live out their faith within an encouraging and supportive Church community.

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. Developing a team of clergy and lay leaders who can respond in timely ways to requests by congregations and Mission Districts.
3. Encouraging congregations, who are effective in spiritual formation and making disciples, to "go" to partner with others who need help.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

I experience God every day 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

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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.

One of my favorite verses is Philippians 4:6-7: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Anxiety gripped me continuously as a young adult. When my husband and I were overwhelmed new parents, God in his mercy called us to a faith community where we both recommitted our lives to Christ. Through a discipling process I laid my sins on Christ. I realized that I was yearning for God's deep abiding peace that neither by my own effort nor any blessing of this world could I achieve. As I grew spiritually, my anxiety significantly diminished until it virtually stopped. I found this peace through God's immeasurable grace, which is beyond my knowledge or understanding, and by growing (and I am still growing) in my relationship with his Son, Jesus Christ, and by being built up within a fellowship of believers.

This passage, along with the Sermon on the Mount (especially Matthew 6:25ff and 7:7), has informed my prayer life for over 30 years as I praise and thank God for who he is and what he has done for me, confess my sins, and pray with faithful expectation and trust that my Lord and Savior will answer.

Janet Rash

Nominee for Executive Council - Lay

Name:

Janet W. Rash

Address:

Salisbury, N.C.

Congregation:

Salem Lutheran Church
Salisbury, N.C.

Occupation:

Retired (Medical Secretary)



Basic Biographical Information:

I have been married to Gary for 30 years. I have one son, Christopher (Jessica) and a step-son, Philip (Laura as of Dec. 2016). I graduated from Wingate College in 1969, and from Catawba College in 1971 with a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education, but worked for about 20 years as a medical secretary, retired for a year, and went back to work as a bank teller for five years. I enjoy traveling, kayaking, hiking, photography, pickle ball and I've been playing and/or directing handbells for about 25 years.

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

I am a life member of Salem Lutheran Church and have been active within the church since my early 20s. I'm currently president of the women's organization in our congregation (SWIFT), chairman of the worship and music committee, direct the handbells (past 18 years), lector, Communion assistant, sing in the chancel choir, and teach an adult Sunday School class. In the past, I've served on church council, altar guild, call committee, mutual ministry, and president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer of the Women's Ministry. While we were still in the ELCA, I served as conference presider with WELCA, then served on the board of the Carolinas Lutheran Women as we were forming our organization, along with Women of the NALC.

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

I have held a number of leadership positions within our congregation as well as our conference/mission district, especially in the women's organizations. I feel very strongly that emphasis needs to be put on being involved — not just in our congregation, but on various levels within our organization. I pray that God will guide me in being a link between the congregation members and the church body.

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

Many of the challenges we face continue to come from our culture. Every day we are bombarded with news events telling us we are moving “backwards” or not being culturally up to date. We must stand strong against the forces of the devil and remember “who” we are and “whose” we are. There are no challenges we cannot overcome if we stay true to the Bible and the Gospel.

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

I hope to see it continue to grow and become even stronger, as we are still very young. I would hope more mission congregations are able to be formed in those areas that have no NALC churches. As more congregations struggle with the decisions made by the ELCA, I hope to be a support for them as they begin their journey.

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

- + Reaching out to the unchurched.
- + Supporting our congregations as they continue to decline in attendance.
- + Supporting the men and women in seminary.
- + Strengthening programs for youth to encourage participation.

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 body?

1. Establish a missions committee within the congregations.
2. Support seminarians financially and in prayer.
3. Continue to be strong in the preaching of the Word.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

My day begins with prayer and reading a devotional. I live close to the church and very few days go by that I'm not there for something. Any time spent alone in the sanctuary renews me and gives me comfort and peace.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you.

Philippians 4:4-7 (with emphasis on verse 7): “And the peace of God that passes all understanding, keep your hearts and mind in Christ Jesus.”

I was going through a particularly trying time in my life recently. As mentioned above, I live near the church and spend some time there nearly every day. I had not thought of this verse in years, but was there one day, sitting in the quiet, when I very distinctly heard these words spoken to me. I have never felt such a peace and comfort as I did that day. I truly felt embraced by Jesus. My problems didn't go away, but I was able to accept them and was comforted knowing that I was not facing them alone.

Carl Haynes

Nominee for Executive Council - Clergy

Name:

Carl M. Haynes

Address:

Salisbury, N.C.

Congregation:

Christiana Lutheran Church
Salisbury, N.C.

Occupation:

Pastor



Basic Biographical Information:

My wife, Kathy, and I have been married for 39 years. We have three daughters: Suzanna, Natalie and Emily, and one granddaughter, Claire.

I graduated from Catawba College in 1978 and Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in 1982.

I enjoy reading, especially the Bible, playing with my granddaughter, and playing bass trombone in the Salisbury Swingband.

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

I have served two congregations in my 34 years of ministry. I served on the Christian Education and Outreach Committees of the North Carolina Synod ELCA. I was chair of the Percept Task Force. In the NALC I served as Dean of the Carolinas Mission District for four years and was instrumental in getting the Department of Lutheran Studies started at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary in Charlotte, N.C. I currently serve on the Advisory Board for the Department of Lutheran Studies and is serving on the Board of Advisors for Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary.

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

God has blessed me with a love for people, a passion for His Church, a hunger for His Word and the truth of its proclamation.

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

As the world turns more and more away from God and His Word, it is going to be crucial that we stand firm on the truth of Scripture. We need to be unified in our faith and streamlined in our organization. We must continue to focus on discipleship in order to train our people in how to rightly handle the truth of God's Word (2 Timothy 2:15).

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

That we will continue to focus on the Great Commission and make the equipping of disciples a priority so that we are about doing the work Christ has called us to do. If we are not about the business of the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19 we have no business calling ourselves a church; but, if we are, then the Holy Spirit will empower us to make a mighty witness for our Lord Jesus.

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

Scriptural and theological education for seminarians and our lay people in order to equip them for the ministry of reconciliation we have all be charged with. We need to be training and equipping disciples from birth so that we all "attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature adulthood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," so that we are not lead astray by falsehood (Ephesians 4:11,12). With disciples that are firmly grounded in the Word, the NALC will know and do God's will in all matters regarding ministry.

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Kenneth Kimball

Nominee for Executive Council – Clergy

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 body?

1) Pray. We have got to be in conversation with God daily. 2) Study God's Word. God speaks to us through His Word. 3) Equip the saints. We need to be making disciples who know God's Word and can use it rightly in conversation with others to plant the seed of salvation in their hearts. 4) Go. Go out into the world — locally and globally in order to fulfill Christ's command.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

I experience God in conversation through prayer and the reading of His Word. I experience Him in holy conversation with others. He is with me in leading worship and speaking through me as I preach and teach. I experience God through the ministry of the disciples I shepherd and the ones I minister to in times of illness, grief or tragedy.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you.

“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose” — Romans 8:28.

In this verse we have God's promise to bring good out of whatever happens to us — whether good or bad, God will bring good. This promise is only for those who love God and are called according to His purpose. So it is a great verse to use for sharing one's faith with believers and non-believers alike. Once I grasped the meaning of this verse, life became an adventure. Now when something bad happens to me, instead of lamenting, I just think: “Okay God, I can't wait to see how you are going to bring good out this. I can't see it, but I know you can and in your time will reveal it to me.” What a wonderful way to look at life!

Name:
Kenneth Kimball

Address:
Waterville, Iowa

Congregation:
Old East and Old West Paint
Creek Lutheran Churches
Waterville, Iowa

Occupation:
Pastor



Basic Biographical Information:

Age 56. Married to Debbie. We have two grown children, both married, and five grandchildren.

Education: B.A., St. Olaf, Northfield, Minn., 1983; M.Div., Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., 1987.

Hobbies: biking, strength training, cross-country skiing, canoeing, camping, reading, writing, history, theology.

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

+ 29 years parish pastor: ALC, ELCA, NALC — serving Our Saviour's, Ackley, Iowa, 1987-1994, and Old East and Old West Paint Creek Lutheran Churches, Waterville, Iowa, 1994-present.
+ Dean, Iowa Mission District, NALC Oct. 2011-2014.
+ Provisional Dean, Iowa, NALC Oct. 2010-Sept. 2011.
+ 90+ presentations from July 2009 to April 2012 for Lutheran CORE and the NALC across the Midwest (Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, South Dakota, and Missouri) to congregations, councils, pastor gatherings and open forums attended by representatives from half a dozen to several dozen congregations.
+ Participation in Navigator coaching process Oct. 2013-Sept. 2014.

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- + Elections Chair for the 2011, 2012, and 2013 NALC Convocations.
- + An original member of the Lutheran CORE Steering Committee, Nov. 2005-Aug. 2010.
- + Co-author with Bishop Paull Spring of Lutheran CORE Statement on Holy Scripture (2007).
- + Volunteer for Solid Rock, 2005 Churchwide Assembly, Orlando, Fla.
- + Founding member of Call to Faithfulness Steering Committee (regional reform group in northeast Iowa), Oct. 2003-July 2012.
- + Member of WordAlone Network, 2007-2010.
- + Member of Society of the Holy Trinity (STS), Aug. 2007-present (Iowa-Nebraska chapter).
- + I appreciate the ecumenical length and breadth and depth of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church and believe in the importance of our relationships, joint witness, and cooperative ministries with orthodox believers and church bodies across denominational lines. At the same time, I am a Lutheran by conviction and I believe that our Lutheran theological and confessional heritage is a gift for the Church catholic and that we neither ought to hide nor compromise our core confessional convictions and practice.

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

At the heart of who I am are my ordination vows, above all, that I would preach and teach in accordance with the Holy Scriptures, the Creeds, and the Lutheran Confessions. This vow has been the touchstone for my decision making as a pastor and in leading my congregations through the ecclesiastical tumult of the last 25 years. The teaching and preaching of the Word, as with its hearing and receiving, cannot be compartmentalized separately from the rest of life, whether that be the life of a person or the life of the church. Through the turmoil of the years leading up to 2009 and since then, my ordination vows guided my involvement in reform/renewal groups including Lutheran CORE and my involvement as one of many who had a hand in the forming and launching of the NALC. Those with whom I have worked in Call to Faithfulness, Lutheran CORE, and the NALC can better attest as to what spiritual gifts and skills I have or have not, but I think I have shown ability to work as part of a team, able to shoulder

specific individual responsibilities as part of a larger team, able and willing to take direction from others (I am one under authority), and able, when necessary and right, to exercise leadership, in a collegial manner.

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

1. As Billy Graham was said to have once commented, "Lutherans have the best theology; they just don't know what to do with it." We live in an increasingly unchurched and pagan culture and society. We must reject the temptation to settle comfortably into shrinking enclaves, comfortable with our possession of truth, and apathetic toward the growing number of those without Christ. We need to continue to grow in graciously and thankfully receiving the wisdom of our non-Lutheran brothers and sisters regarding the priority and practice of evangelism and discipling but without displacing our distinctive Lutheran convictions. Rather we must make it our own in a way in which evangelism and discipling flows out of and reinforces our convictions regarding the centrality of Word and Sacrament, the distinction and application of Law/Gospel, our recognition of the depth and pervasiveness of sin, and our understanding of God's sovereign grace. At the same time, we should not let our commitment to Lutheran distinctives be misused as an excuse to avoid or evade our Lord's command to evangelize and make disciples and His call to us to grow in our own discipleship.

2. We have to come to grips with the reality that we live in a culture and society increasingly hostile to Christ and His Church. We need to grow in responding graciously, confidently and firmly without either becoming defensive and fearful or compromising God's revelation of His identity, salvation, and His gracious and purposeful ordering of human existence.

3. We need to develop and hone strategies for effective and faith outreach in urban areas while at the same time helping our rural congregations find ways to be effective in evangelism and outreach in the face of shrinking demographics (but helping them see their local mission field among the high percentages of unchurched around them). Critical to

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doing this is helping our congregations, pastors, and lay leaders not despair over what they don't have in terms of numbers and resources and instead see the tools and resources that God has made available for them in their location.

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

1. The high quality of our pastors and lay leadership, having been tested and pressed by what we went through in our previous church body and the challenging, often bruising, struggles we endured in taking leave of our previous church body, gives me great hope. We paid a price for taking a stand on Biblical truth and confessional integrity, and yet we have grown in our faith and commitment to God's truth. It was a refining process. The high quality of our pastoral and lay leadership is a tremendous resource that can be tapped for effective evangelism and discipleship.

2. The very hostility and increased paganization of our culture and society gives us a gift of clarity and freedom. The clearer the distinction between the Church and the hostile secular society, the less enmeshed and compromised we are by the values of that society. Admittedly that clarity and freedom comes with a cost but the clearer are the lines and boundaries. The less we are able to place our hopes and faith in secular society and culture, the more our hope and faith rests in the promises and power of God.

3. I have great hope in the NALC's ability to learn and share what is learned with each other so that we will find a way by the grace of God and help of the Holy Spirit to integrate our distinctive Lutheran theological commitments and practices with a culture of discipling within our congregations and among our pastors and lay leaders. We will find and learn ways to meet the challenges that face us.

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

1. Quality seminary education that produces pastors who possess confessional integrity, a deep personal faith and discipleship rooted within and committed to the whole church, and passion and

competency in preaching, teaching, and leading congregations in effective evangelism and discipling that flows out of Word and Sacrament ministry — and that does not leave pastors with crippling educational debt.

2. Redressing the Biblical and Confessional illiteracy that was part of our unfortunate baggage from our former church body (and even before that).

3. Take the best of the wisdom and counsel from our partners in Navigators and integrate it solidly within our confessional Word and Sacrament culture. The sooner the NALC makes this integration an in-house reality the better, i.e. that the NALC is doing this with leaders and teachers from within the NALC. Being Lutheran matters. Lutheran theological and confessional convictions and practices are of value to the whole Church catholic and therefore we need an integration that reproduces Lutheran Christians, not Baptists, not Pentecostals, not evangelical Protestants. Luther may not have liked the term "Lutheran," but it remains an effective short-hand for a confessional theology and practice that is critically essential leaven within the one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

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 body?

1. First we have to be continually grounded in the Word of God, in the Lutheran Confessions, and the Creeds. Teach! Teach! Teach! Especially adults! Create opportunities and offerings for deepening our people and pastors at every level — NALC, Mission Districts, and congregations. You cannot give away what you do not have. Catechesis must be for the whole church, the whole congregation, and all ages — to know what and Who we have in Christ (and Who has us) — so we can give Him away to others.

2. Raise up a volunteer corps of ordained and lay leaders within and across Mission Districts who can be deployed at the request of a Mission District to share leadership and energy and encouragement and direction in helping congregations see the councils and deans, and congregations and pastors, mission and outreach possibilities around them, see

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the steps that can be taken, and then take the steps, and build from there. Crawl. Walk. Run. As an example: here in Iowa, rural congregations that have been long shrinking are often at a loss as where to begin in reaching out. No real evangelism has been done in the surrounding townships for decades. Sitting down with a current plat book and charting out the folks within five miles of the congregation is often an eye-opener for folks who thought “well, we already know everybody in the area and where they go to church” to discover the number of new and unknown folks and to simply make the step of a personal contact and invitation (sometimes with a goody basket or free tickets to the annual church supper). Of course that means being prepared to welcome those folks when they come and to be prepared to draw them into life in Christ in the congregation — which means our own relationship with Christ needs deepening. You cannot share or draw someone else into a relationship with Christ and His Word and His Church if your own relationship with Christ and His Word and His Church is non-existent. You cannot give away what you do not have. Similarly, the old saw “the medium is the message” is true. If the level at which you draw people into Christ and His Church is shallow and superficial, then that’s likely to be their understanding and level of commitment (or lack thereof).

3. Use mission congregations as training sites for pastors and lay leaders in hands on outreach and evangelism. There’s a mission congregation in our Mission District where pastors have brought members from their congregations to help with making neighborhood calls to invite folks to the mission congregation. It is low key and not the end all of evangelism and discipling but it has a place and it’s a start.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

Despite being raised Lutheran (baptized and confirmed), I had fallen into a skeptical and professing agnosticism by the time I went to college. Jesus brought me back to faith in Him amidst the secular environs of the University of Michigan under the auspices of the charismatic renewal (largely Roman Catholic). I learned that Jesus and His love

for me was real and the course of my life was changed. The reality of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, has deepened for me over the years — even as I became ever more aware of the uncovering of the depth of my sinful self (like the layers of an onion). I am a Lutheran by conviction of Scripture and the unfolding of the depth and center of the Scriptures by the Lutheran Confessions. I find nourishment for my soul also in the writings of C.S. Lewis and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. As one who has subscribed to the Rule of the Society of the Holy Trinity, I try to pray the prayer offices daily (Matins, Vespers, and Compline) and make use of the *For All The Saints* resource from American Lutheran Publicity Bureau (ALPB) that gives me three daily lectionary texts plus Psalms to read.

I read Scripture aloud to myself. I am also much influenced by Brother Lawrence's *The Practice of the Presence of God* — which invites a person to pray not just during set times during the day but throughout the day in all circumstances. Being a rural Lutheran pastor often traveling about alone, I pray throughout the day. I recite the *Small Catechism* daily along with passages from Scripture. It may seem overly mystical to some, but I sense the Lord’s presence and reality and His speaking to me through His Word. I use the word “sense” because it’s not emotion or feeling based — my feelings and emotions are often in conflict with that “sense” — just a recognition of the reality of Christ Jesus, God the Son Incarnate, crucified, and risen. He made Himself real to me and I can no more deny it than the disciples to whom He appeared bodily after His resurrection. I make no claim to having swallowed the Holy Spirit “feathers and all” (Luther’s mocking of the enthusiasts) and all spirits and words must be tested against the written Word of Scripture. But of this I am certain, that this faith-sense is pure gift from Christ — it is not something I could work up or sustain in myself — I still have that old skeptic’s heart that sniffs out any effort to psychologize myself into believing. But that sense of Christ’s reality has stood me through incredibly difficult times both personally and as a pastor. My wife and I pray together before meals and together at night before sleep. I am blessed to see God at work through His Word and in the lives of the people of my parish with whom I minister, and in the lives and fellowship with other pastors, both in the NALC and the Society of the Holy Trinity. Above all, I experience the reality of

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God's presence and especially that of Christ Jesus in the Word and Sacrament ministry of the two congregations I am blessed to serve. I also take part in an on-going men's Bible study in my parish — this was a critical support God worked through during the years of tumult leading up to 2009 and after.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you.

“God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.” — Romans 5:8

Jesus loved me and died for me — before I ever responded, before I ever became a disciple, before I ever tried to repent and clean up my life and get right with Him. He loved me and died for me not at my best but at my worst, when I was lost in my sins, when I was His enemy, when I despised and rejected Him, when I was an agnostic and wanted no Lord in my life. He loves me still, even when I stumble and fall, even when I sin, even when my old sinful self comes roaring back and I am beset by temptations to anger, bitterness, lust, envy, idolatry of self, and the like. And when the Law rightly shows my sin and condemns and kills me, then it is this verse that speaks the Gospel to this dead sinner; that shows my Savior. And once again I am brought to life and faith in the Savior Who suffered and died for me at my worst, in my lostness and hypocrisy and self-pitying paganism. And I am brought before the throne of grace along with the whole Church. I can't earn this. I can never pay the debt I owe Him for this love but by the power of His Gospel I can only thank Him and seek to express that thankful faith in a life of service to Him — even if I'm stumbling in the next minute and He starts all over with me.

William Maki

Nominee for Executive Council - Clergy

Name:

William E. Maki

Address:

New Bremen, Ohio

Congregation:

Zion Lutheran Church
Saint Marys, Ohio

Occupation:

Pastor



Basic Biographical Information:

I am married to Ann. I have a son, Eric, a daughter, Heather, and a stepson, Jeremy. My daughter is married, and she and her husband have blessed me with two grandsons.

I graduated from Michigan State University in 1978 with a degree in Criminal Justice. I received a Masters of Divinity from Trinity Lutheran Seminary in 1999. I enjoy reading a variety of fiction and developing mobile apps.

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

I have 17 years of ordained ministry and have participated in monthly congregational council meetings and in annual and special congregational meetings. Prior to entering seminary I was a District Manager for a private security company and was responsible for every aspect of company business (i.e., administration, sales, operations, inventory, client relations, budget) in the state of Indiana. Prior to this I was an Assistant Administrator for Safety, Security and Environmental Services for a health care corporation in Detroit, Mich., that had five hospitals, 45 clinics, a warehouse, a print shop, a general office building, corporate office space leased in the New Center Building in Detroit.

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

The spiritual gifts of leadership and wisdom are two of the gifts others have identified in me.

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

1. Continuation of growth.
2. Sustaining the congregations we have with clergy and resources.
3. Implementing the priority of discipleship within our congregations.
4. Seminary education.
5. Expanding our social media recognition and improving our public witness.
6. And connecting with other denominations of like-minded Christian values.

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

1. That the NALC would continue to grow so that we would be represented in every state and province of North America.
2. That the NALC would continue to identify mission partners so that local congregations would be able to support missions with confidence (continue to educate member congregations about the Great Commission Society).
3. That the Heart-2-Heart campaign would be embraced by increasing numbers year after year by member congregations.

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

1. Identifying and educating potential clergy to fill the vacancies of those retiring.
2. Identifying and utilizing many avenues to rostered leadership.

3. Adding a ministry assistant position to serve with/under the Assistant to the Bishop for Ministry and Ecumenism to be able to respond quickly to the needs of congregations and clergy.

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 body?

1. Commit to the discipleship program Heart-2-Heart.
2. Commit to the welfare of our clergy by sending them to the February Ministerium gathering.
3. Commit to participating and attending our Convocation.
4. Commit to the realization of the importance of current and cutting edge technologies to make Christ known locally, regionally, and globally, without trying to reinvent what might already be available to reach the public.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

I experience God active in my life differently each day. Sometimes Christ is revealed through the words of a friend, or in the convergence of circumstances. I pray frequently and have realized answered prayers. And I am grateful for the many opportunities I have to share the Sacrament of Holy Communion with congregation members in worship, in their homes, and in visits to the hospital or extended-care facilities. It is in serving others that I most often experience Jesus in my daily life.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you.

"This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." — Psalm 118:24.

When I was a boy living at home with my parents, my mom woke me up each morning by saying this verse to me and to my brother. My mom joined the church triumphant in March of 2001 and I miss her terribly, but this verse, which she quoted so often, reminds me of her, and its positive attitude helps to set my day.

David Schafer

Nominee for Court of Adjudication

Name:

David E. Schafer

Address:

Waukon, Iowa

Congregation:

Old East Paint Creek Lutheran
Waterville, Iowa

Occupation:

Pastor and Mediator



Basic Biographical Information:

Spouse: Loretta K. Schafer, Educator. Son: Paul D. Schafer, senior at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa.

Education: Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minn., B.A. 1978; Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., M.Div.; 24 graduate hours toward a Doctorate of Ministry Degree. Mediation Training, University of Iowa, 2005.

Internships: Vicar, Mental Health Institute, Independence, Iowa; Vicar, Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Independence, Iowa. Six Units of Clinical Pastoral Education. Substitute Teaching License (State of Iowa). Author, *Waukon: Now & Then 1853-2003*. Creator: "The St. John's Hour" Radio Ministry. Former Representative to the Committee on Disability, LCA & ELCA, National Council on Disability. Planning Team, National Youth Gatherings, ELCA. Former board member, United Cedral Palsy, Nebraska Chapter. Former board member, Boy Scouts of America, Overland Trails Council (Nebraska) and North East Iowa Council. Former Church Council Member, Old East Paint Creek Lutheran Church, Waterville, Iowa. Vice President, Old East Paint Creek Lutheran Church Cemetery Committee, Waterville, Iowa.

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

I have served the Church as an ordained pastor in congregations in Nebraska and Iowa. These

congregations ranged from a three-point parish to a congregation with 1,200 members. I am currently serving as an interim pastor in a small Iowa community that has experienced years of trauma. Throughout my years as a pastor, I have been able to use my skills to reconcile and to minister with individuals, couples, families, and congregations who have been broken by the forces of human sin. In part, I have relied on the Means of Grace to carry out St. Paul's directive in 2 Corinthians 5: "Christ has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God."

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

I believe that God has gifted me with experience. By this, I mean that through my years as a husband, parent, pastor, and mediator, I have had a host of situations in which God has allowed me to apply both the Law and the Gospel in attempts to bring about workable resolution.

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

I believe that the challenges for the NALC in the next few years include increasing the number of congregations, helping members to become faithful disciples, and reaching out with the Gospel to a society that is becoming increasingly secular.

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

It is my hope that the NALC will not shrink from the challenges that will come our way as the people of God. It is my further desire that with the armor of God, the denomination will be able to be faithful as it meets the future.

With God's help, I believe that we, with our Core Values, will be able to advance the ministry and the mission of our Church. It is imperative that we take to heart our Lord's words in St. Matthew: "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The future presents, for us, a bold opportunity to go forth, trusting and believing that

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we are called and blessed to make disciples of all nations.

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

It is my opinion that our denomination should invoke the following priorities:

+ Faithfulness and fidelity to the Great Commission. More and more, the Great Commission, for many denominations and congregations, has become the Great Omission. While serving both small and large congregations, I made a commitment to increase the size of the parishes. Mission work requires both pastors and lay members to take our Lord at His command.

+ Faithfulness and fidelity to the Word. It has been my experience that people are longing for solid teaching and preaching in the congregation. Too often, I believe, pastors and congregations have compromised the Word for the sake of popular appeal. In a time of political correctness and multiculturalism, both pastors and congregations are afraid of offending individuals and groups of people. The proclamation of the Law needs always to be offensive to our sin. It is only through this environment that the Gospel, Salvation through Jesus Christ, can have weight and standing.

+ Faithfulness and fidelity to the Eucharist. Within the last 30 years or so, hymnals suggest that the order for Confession and Absolution be omitted before the celebration and the reception of the Sacrament. It is my understanding, in accordance with the Scriptures and the Confessions, that this omission flies in the face of the grace that is ours in the Holy Communion. Jesus says, in St. John in chapter 6, "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you." Our life, both physical and spiritual, comes to us through Christ's gift of grace. As such, it is only fitting and right that we prepare ourselves to receive the Real Presence by confessing our sin. The Eucharist gives us the strength we need to live in a fallen world. In addition, the Eucharist gives us the power to proclaim and live out our faith in Jesus Christ.

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 body?

I believe that the structures within our church can live out our commitments to be a Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven when we rely, first and foremost, on the Means of Grace. The treasure that our Lord has gifted His Church with is the foundation for our focus on Christ and the mission of Christ. The temptation is, of course, to rely on human wisdom and strength. I have witnessed other Lutheran bodies use approaches that have more to do with Madison Avenue. It is my opinion that such adventures tend not to bear fruit.

Our church is best governed by St. Paul's words in Ephesians, "We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ" (Ephesians 5:14-15).

Relying on the Word and the Sacraments alone, Christ's Church will be centered on her Lord and Master. With Jesus Christ as our cornerstone, the mission of our church will come as a natural extension. Because we begin with Christ, the Spirit will lead the church into mission, both home and world-wide.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

For most people, life often dishes out a host of challenges. My life is no different. Yet God has walked and continues to walk with me through each and every challenge. Through my daily prayer life, study of God's Word, and worship I am able to face the challenges that life brings to me. The death of family and dear friends, the worry and anxiety about the future, the multitude of choices I face on a daily basis, and the constant pull of an increasingly secular world can be faced with confidence and assurance that all will be well with God by my side.

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List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you.

While we each have Scriptures that we treasure, two verses have been an inspiration and comfort to me. The first verse comes from Genesis 50:20, "Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good." The second portion of Scripture comes from Psalm 46:10, "Be still and know that I am God!"

Both of these verses speak to our human desire to be in control of, not only our lives, but our world. These two verses stand in opposition to our temptation to govern our circumstances. The truth of the matter is that our heavenly Father is always in charge of the situations that we find ourselves in.

While our inclination is to regulate the circumstances of our lives, the Gospel News is that God is always in charge of our lives. With God as the captain of our ships, our lives can have smooth sailing, even though rough waters may come and go.

Although evil can confront our lives, God alone has the power to conquer all evil. More than this, God has the ability to redeem evil. This is demonstrated, most clearly, in the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because Jesus took to the cross, He destroyed sin, the world, and the devil. Through Jesus' resurrection, Jesus redeemed the whole of God's creation, including you and me.

I have experienced times when it seemed that there was no way out. God, in Jesus Christ, made a way for me. Not only did I survive, with the grace of our Savior, I thrived. My experience fits well with the great narrative of the people of God. Indeed, the hardships transformed into victories are an extension of the Biblical narrative.

I believe that God is calling me to serve on the Court of Adjudication. As you have read through and considered my biographical background and reflections, I trust that you will come to an understanding that I, by God's grace, have the temperament, experience, and knowledge to serve God through His Church.

Cathi Braasch

Nominee for NALS Board of Regents

Name:

Catherine I.H. (Cathi) Braasch

Address:

Elwood, Neb.

Congregation:

Trinity Lutheran Church
Gothenburg, Neb.

Occupation:

Pastor



I retired from full-time parish ministry in 2011. In retirement I've been an interim pastor (four interims of 6-15 months duration in four states); a spiritual director for seminarians and clergy; teaching pastoral theology for St. Paul Lutheran Seminary; writing (including a monthly devotional column for a national magazine); volunteering in NALC ministries (Candidacy Committee, Holy Families! Initiative, mentoring pastors, and as an assistant dean in the Great Plains Mission District). I'm a Missionary Dean in the Society of the Holy Trinity (STS), a pan-Lutheran ministerium, forming a STS Chapter in Nebraska.

Basic Biographical Information:

Family: I've been married nearly 50 years to "Red," a semi-retired rancher. We have a daughter (Sara, 45) and son-in-law (Jim), and two Godchildren (Jerry, 4, and Raina, 2).

Education:

+ B.S.Ed. Journalism (summa cum laude),
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

+ M.A. Organizational Leadership (Research project: Exemplary pastoral leadership in mission congregations). Awarded Ignatius of Loyola Magis Medal for integration of leadership, scholarship and service, Gonzaga University, Spokane Wash.

+ M.Div. Lutheran School of Theology-Chicago
(Thesis: Lutheran Witness to an Emerging World

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Religion [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or Mormon]).

+ Three-year Certificate in Spiritual Formation and Direction, Heartland Institute for Spirituality, Great Bend, Kan.

+ D.Min. in Applied Ministry, Graduate Theological Foundation, Indiana (emphasis on spiritual formation and direction and ministry leadership).

+ Certificates in Intentional Interim Ministry (Basic and advanced with mentored practicum), from the Intentional Ministry Network.

Hobbies: Reading, quilting, volunteering with FFA and 4-H, helping around our ranch.

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

+ 1974-1987: congregational lay leader (president, vice-president, financial secretary, council member; chair of stewardship, constitutional revision); adult and youth Bible teacher, youth group leader. Lay leader in synod/district/regional Lutheran bodies (LCMS, LCA and ELCA), including convener, Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod Planning Group.

+ 1988-2002: Denominational executive for ministry development and redevelopment (Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Wyoming) and later rural ministry, synodical relations, leadership in outreach ministries (U.S. and Caribbean); Women of the ELCA (executive director).

+ 2002-2011: Solo pastor of a large rural congregation in Nebraska. Selected for Fund for Theological Education's ecumenical "Calling Congregations" initiative and related national consultations. Served on several synod task forces and committees, (Bishop's consultation committee, rural ministry, stewardship, communications, Parish Ministry Associate educator and steering committee member), before leaving ELCA in early 2010 for Biblical and theological reasons.

+ 2009-2010: Member, Lutheran CORE Vision and Planning Group, which developed overall design

and coordinated work with several other task groups in forming the NALC.

+ 2010-present: Past Provisional Dean, NALC Nebraska Mission District (later merged with the Great Plains Mission District); currently an assistant dean for GPMD.

+ Additional NALC volunteer service: I've planned and led four annual retreats for NALC seminarians; served on the NALC Candidacy Committee as a member and scholarship coordinator since 2013; as a coach, mentor and trainer for intentional interim pastors; Grant writer and team member, Holy Families! Initiative (funded by Thrivent Foundation); and on the Mission District Deans' Strategic Planning group in 2014-15.

+ Other relevant church service:

- Member, Sola Publishing board of directors.
- Teaching and developing required Master of Divinity-level courses in pastoral theology, formation and practice for St. Paul Lutheran Seminary.

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

+ Faith and Prayer — Faith is that Holy Spirit-given capacity to believe the promises of God, as revealed in Jesus Christ through Word and Sacraments. Prayer keeps me centered on Christ and others.

+ Proclamation — Relating God's Word to ordinary life and extraordinary circumstances, in rural, urban, suburban, cross-cultural, ecumenical and inter-faith contexts.

+ Wisdom and Experience in Governance — Extensive knowledge and experience in focusing large-scale organizations, both church and secular, on envisioning, planning and evaluating their work.

+ Stewardship — Leading by example and advocacy in institutional advancement through sound stewardship and development of legacy resources (planned giving/wills and bequests/endowments).

+ Administration — Nearly four decades of practical, progressively responsible, results-

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oriented experience in team-focused executive and program management, for both church and secular organizations.

+ Teaching — Recognize and taking advantage of teachable moments and learning opportunities that present themselves to organizations, their leaders and constituents.

+ Passion for Spiritual Formation and Leadership Development — Raising up leading servers and serving leaders for both church vocations and for ministry in daily life.

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

The overall priority must be to make Christ known in an age when indifference and hostility to Christ and His Church are increasing. Our core values — Christ Centered, Mission Driven, Traditionally Grounded and Congregationally Focused — must guide all our actions. With this in mind, I envision the NALC focusing on:

+ Grounding: Every congregation as a center for Christian spiritual formation and discipleship at all ages and stages of life, giving first-order attention to biblical and confessional literacy, worship and prayer life, discipleship training, and stewardship of gifts, skills and resources.

+ Guiding: The North American Lutheran Seminary has the challenge and opportunity to raise up the next generation of pastors who are biblically and confessionally solid, practical and congregational in their focus, and fully willing and able (professionally, personally and financially) to go and serve wherever the Lord has need of them.

+ Generating: Identify, develop and implement the best available principles, knowledge and practices in evangelization, discipleship and ministry leadership development. Focus on providing readily accessible, reliable information and referral services. Avoid unnecessary duplication of ministry programs and services.

+ Growing: Prepare for sustainable growth as a denomination, including a potential doubling or

tripling of the number of NALC member congregations in next 5-10 years, while maintaining a lean, cost-effective organizational structure that honors and supports congregations as the heart of a missionary church body.

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

+ That the NALC will not forget our founding purpose – enduring Lutheran biblical, confessional witness in North America, and in partnership with others around the world.

+ That the North American Lutheran Seminary will lead the way in preparing Christ-centered, mission-driven, traditionally grounded, congregationally focused pastors for congregations that share NALC beliefs — and in raising up faithful teachers for seminary classrooms, houses of studies and continuing education of clergy and laity alike.

+ That we'll recognize, learn from, and celebrate congregations that already lead the way in living the Great Commission—healthy, vital, multiplying congregations that are known for fruits of discipleship as seen in their worship life, life-long faith formation, evangelical witness, loving service to neighbors near and far and generous stewardship.

+ That all NALC congregations will be known for practicing the five “I’s” of evangelization: *Identifying* with those who seek what only Christ can offer, as well as those who are alienated from or indifferent to Him; *Inviting* them to a new or renewed relationship with the unique person and work of Jesus Christ; *Incorporating* them into the body of Christ through ministry of Word and Sacraments; *Involving* each in discipleship that shapes every part of life; and *Inspiring* life-long faithfulness in the face of social, cultural, economic and religious opposition.

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

+ Focus on primary evangelization, continuing faith formation and discipleship growth.

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+ Forge strong, mission- and outreach-focused connections between congregations through the Mission Districts.

+ Identify and address the growing pains that come with the NALC's transition from a movement into a nimble, streamlined, sustainable church body.

+ Strategically identify and respond to opportunities for new congregational development in places that are not in our current congregations' back yards.

+ Recover biblical stewardship practices of returning to the Lord the first fruits of our time, ability and material resources, both from day-to-day and year-to-year and in the designation of our assets at the end of our earthly lives.

+ Prepare for sustainable growth, including the NALC's potentially doubling or tripling in size over the next 5-10 years.

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 body?

1. Assure that NALC congregations will continue to have biblically and confessionally faithful, energetic, mission-driven pastors, educators and other church workers, by:

A. Fostering a "culture of call" whereby congregations intentionally and systematically invite men and women to discern and prepare for vocations in parish ministry, para-ministry organizations and educational institutions.

B. Developing and supporting seminary education that is accessible and affordable without sacrificing biblical, theological and practical integrity.

C. Create and maintain information and referral networks so that every congregation and leader has prompt access to best available knowledge, practices and peer consultation in mission and ministry.

2. Address the reality that most NALC congregations are going through one or more

major transitions, beginning with the transition from one church body into another.

A. Recognize how issues affecting congregational vitality do not just go away by changing denominations.

B. Equip congregational leaders and Mission District deans to identify congregational strengths and weaknesses and respond quickly to ministry opportunities and threats.

C. Provide timely, accessible, affordable assistance, such as a corps of interim pastors and transition consultants, to help congregations re-focus on their mission future our Lord is preparing for them.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

The sign of God is that I'm being led where I didn't plan to go, through doors to opportunities that I'd never imagine and probably won't see completed in my lifetime.

I'm a convert to Christianity by the grace of God and the outreach of Christ's Church. Four generations of my forbearers were Mormons. I was introduced to the authentic Jesus as an 8-year-old who wandered into a Lutheran vacation Bible school. That experience of welcoming grace stuck like the glue we used when spelling out the Lord's Prayer in macaroni letters on a thin board plaque. Grace stuck while I was still being raised in a Mormon home and later, when my siblings and I were placed in a Roman Catholic foster home. Grace stuck when I went to college and connected with a Lutheran congregation and pastor. They invited me to worship and preparation for baptism. My faith formation continued by the young man — a cradle Lutheran! — who has been my husband since 1966, and in Lutheran mission congregations that took faith formation, discipleship and evangelical outreach seriously enough to live it 24/7/365.

Daily remembrance of my baptism into Christ continues to remind me that I am a sinner in need of the saving, sanctifying fullness of God — Father,

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+Son and Holy Spirit. The Word-steeped daily prayer offices of the Church keep me grounded and focused, ready to respond when opportunity for witness and service present themselves in the course of everyday life. In this way, I'm continually being prepared for our Lord knows what. I pray for the grace to keep on saying "Yes, and I trust God to help and guide me."

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you.

Just as lectionaries invite us to look at groupings of texts, these four verses continually shape my life and response to whatever it brings:

Habakkuk 2:2-4 — After a lengthy lament, Habakkuk hears the Lord's words of encouragement and instruction. Write the vision boldly. Wait for it; it will come, in God's time. And remember: the righteous will live by faith.

Psalms 37, especially verses 5-6 — The psalm mirrors the reading from Habakkuk, especially about steadfastness in the face of delay, opposition and disappointment. "Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him and He will act" (v. 5).

Philippians 2:5-11 — This ancient Christ-hymn shows God's missionary people the heart-and-mindset we are to have as leading servers and serving leaders. Have the mind of Christ among you, in order that, "at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

John 3:26-30 — "Christ must increase, I must decrease." John the Baptizer's words remind all disciples that it's all about Jesus, not us. For leading servers and serving leaders in Christ's church, there's no room for envy, pride or self-promotion. If Christ is not increased as a result of what we proclaim, profess and practice, then we've missed the point of the Cross and our ministry is in vain, or even worse, fatally misleading. Our egos need to be converted daily, in the words of author Ken Blanchard, from 'Edging God Out' to 'Exalting God Only.'

Donna Evans

Nominee for NALS Board of Regents

Name:

Donna W. Evans

Address:

Pittsburgh, Pa.

Congregation:

Zion Lutheran Church
Pittsburgh (Brentwood), Pa.

Occupation:

Public Relations-Issues
Management Professional and Homemaker



Basic Biographical Information:

Married to Jon E. Evans, who presently serves on the NALC Board of Adjudication. Together we have three children: Alice (19) a nursing student at St. Francis University, Grant (16) a sophomore and Elena (13) in eighth grade. Obtained a B.S. degree from Capital University. Love reading, current events and spending time at our cabin.

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

Initially served on the interim Board of Regents as the NALS was being developed and was subsequently elected to a two-year term in 2014. I have served as board vice chair during that period. Throughout the years I also have served my local congregation on staff as a Parish Education Director and Director of Discipleship and as a volunteer as a Christian education teacher for youth and adults, worship leader and Call Committee chair. I've been blessed to have used my professional experience with Lutheran CORE during the establishment of the NALC and currently serve on the NALC Communications Committee.

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

I believe my leadership and discernment abilities, along with my professional skills can be of most

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help to the NALS. I have 30+ years as a corporate marketing and issues management specialist and recognized expertise in public affairs programming, constituency relations, and business-to-business marketing. During my tenure as Senior Vice President and Director for Burson-Marsteller, the world's largest public relations firm, I gained management and strategic planning experience that will be beneficial to further establish the NALS. Given the growth and development issues ahead for the NALS, my work in ally and coalition building can provide valuable experience in identifying partnering opportunities that enable the NALC, seminary, and other organizations to reach mutual objectives.

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

It seems our current cultural climate may provide many challenges over the coming years. We will need to rely on the example of the saints and the Holy Spirit to forge the path ahead. We also are acutely aware of the need for additional pastors to serve our growing congregations and to step in where current pastors retire. Identifying and properly educating these new servants is critical. We also continue to need to address the needs of congregations and clergy while binding us together as the NALC.

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

Blessedly, our Core Values direct our mission effectively. My hope is that mission remain focused. Our growth in members, ministries and discipleship creates many challenges. We are well positioned to further our mission if all congregation members use their individual gifts to engage and contribute to this mission.

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

While our mission priorities are in order, our ministry priorities will need to extend to recruiting, identifying and educating new shepherds for the flock and caring for the existing pastors within the

NALC. The establishment of the North American Lutheran Seminary has been critical, and its continued success and development should be among the top priorities 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 body?

It is a tangible action to follow the command to love God with all of our heart, mind and soul. That said, it is quite impossible to accomplish without the help of God. If each individual, congregation, and Mission District becomes intentional about this command in our personal and corporate lives, transformation will occur and the NALC will be recognized as Christ Centered and Mission Driven. With God's help, if our focus is clear the outcomes will be as well.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

I experience God active in my daily life by using the Bible as the basis of my time with Him each day. It is His Word, and He speaks clearly through it. I am always amazed and thankful for the gift of Scripture and His time with me. While He is clear. I do not always hear Him with clarity. That is why I am so utterly thankful for the Body of Christ. God is active in the lives of my brothers and sisters in Christ and it is through them that He constantly ministers to me — and, hopefully, through me to them.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you.

"For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen." — Romans 11:36.

In a world filled with uncertainty, this verse constitutes my foundation and puts in perspective exactly where my trust is focused — in the sovereign God whose authority and grace are so very worthy of praise.

Jeffray Greene

Nominee for NALS Board of Regents

Name:

Jeffray S. Greene

Address:

Brooks, Ga.

Congregation:

Word of God Lutheran Church
Peachtree City, Ga.

Occupation:

Pastor



Basic Biographical Information:

Married 31 years to Lorene, we have three children: Rosalynne, who has been married to Daniel five years; Dane, who has been married to Liz for one year; and Alisa, a college junior.

Education: a B.A. in History/Geography, an M.Div. and a Ph.D. in Church Administration.

Hobbies are varied, but have the common thread of making and fixing things. This is based upon a love of learning and the challenge of understanding things and how they work.

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

A lifelong love of learning, commitment to seeking not just information, but understanding, and an observation and experience in business and ministry at many levels has provided an ability to look ahead and seek to meet challenges. I have served on the first Board of Regents and with my feet wet, so to speak, I believe I am up to the challenges that face us in preparing those who will serve our church in the future. I have served the NALC in various capacities and have a passion for its growth and preparing for that growth through our seminary.

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

One of the places where I have seen my gifts be used by the seminary is in my pastoral understanding of numbers and systems with a heart that knows it is really about God's people. I have an analytical mind, but also a love to convey ideas in the most understandable way so that others can see the insights and issues I have wrestled to understand.

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

Specific to our seminary, we will need to dramatically increase the number of pastors who serve our church. I sometimes think we have been infected with the cultural notion that things will work out without having the passion to actually commit ourselves to the reality that something needs to be done. We are blessed with many excellent and gifted pastors, but they are, as a whole, older. We're going to need more pastors (and soon). We will also need to think outside the box and (again) not deflect the stewardship that will be required to train these pastors. I do not think it is reasonable to expect our pastors to struggle with a huge financial burden to become a pastor and then live out a call saddled with debt. With all the constraints of increased cost for labor (health insurance as one huge example), we need to think about the best stewardship to accomplish training our pastors. These are real challenges that are going to need real insight to address. With the Lord's blessing, there is also great hope as we meet the challenges.

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

I believe the NALC is poised to make significant strides in meeting the ministry needs in an age in which things have been changing dramatically. Bound to the greatest cause, the Great Commission, we have ability to make a great impact for Christ with the mission and ministry He has given us. We are poised to meet the challenges in our age.

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

Being Traditionally Grounded and Christ Centered is at the heart of who we declare ourselves to be. As such, if our culture continues to head down the path of being hostile to those who are faithful, we will need to increase our ability to be resilient in thinking, while firmly grounded in commitment to hold fast to the truth which has been entrusted to us to share with others. We are not our grandparents' church and this is not our grandparents' age. Unchanging in faith, but resilient in adapting to circumstance, it is a new time in which we live.

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 body?

Much as our seminary is intentional about being committed to not just convey head knowledge but whole-person character development, so also, our church should be committed not just to Sunday services, but the reality that living out the faith is a whole-life adventure. Fellowship with education and the challenge to put into practice actual ministry with as many as will be involved in ministry places and points. We also have the best theology available. Coupled with trained and equipped mission and ministry leaders, we have great potential to grow into and throughout North America.

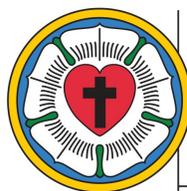
Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

Jesus teaches us to pray without ceasing. Prayer should be as natural as breathing. Yes, there are those times of formal prayer, but also constant prayer that happens all the time. I begin each day with devotion and Scripture and meditate on the Lord, His Word, and the world throughout the day. Our Lord is not an idea, but my all in all. Sharing Him with others through who He has made me to be is a simple extension of my daily living. I cannot look at the sunrise, drink that first cup of coffee, write that first devotion, read a single word of the

Word without thanking God for all He has done, is doing and will do. I experience God as good all the time, in times that are great and in times of tribulation.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you.

With the above in mind, one of many favorite verses is Romans 8:28 which reminds me that all things (and Scripture means what it says, so it means all things) work together for good for those who love the Lord. As a lover of reading, history and a seeker of understanding, I have come to the place where I accept many things by faith. I know the Lord is sovereign and has a purpose in all things. This verse is especially helpful with those things that happen that I am unable to understand. God is still in charge. He is still good and His promise is that it is all working together perfectly, just as He has always intended. This is a great comfort in the midst of those times which are perplexing.



NALS

North American Lutheran Seminary

Ralph Kempski

Nominee for NALS Board of Regents

Name:

Ralph A. Kempski

Address:

Aiken, S.C.

Congregation:

Trinity Lutheran Church
North Augusta, S.C.

Occupation:

Retired Clergy



Basic Biographical Information:

Married to Mary Jan for 60 years; three children; seven grandchildren; four great grandchildren.

B.A. Augsburg College (1960); M.Div.
Northwestern Lutheran Theological Seminary
(1963).

Gardening and travel; being available to congregations that need assistance.

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

Eight years on the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago Board.
Eight years on Lutheran Southern Seminary Board.
Three years on Trinity Seminary Board.
Served on finance committee of each.
19 years as Bishop of Indiana-Kentucky Synod.

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

Commitment to Jesus Christ and His Church; sensitivity to the needs of the Church; concern for committed and well trained clergy.

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

The need to provide young well-trained and committed clergy. To evaluate the present structure in order to better serve and support the congregations and clergy.

To establish new preaching points or congregations.

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

That we will be able to sustain the enthusiasm that existed as we began our life together.

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

Have an excellent clergy candidacy program. Structure so that congregations will be better supported.

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 body?

More frequent gatherings of lay leaders and clergy for support and encouragement and reminding them of their responsibilities in making the Church Christ Centered and Mission Driven.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

Daily devotions; the blessing of having a loving wife and family; experiencing the beauty of God's creation and the miracle of growth. I am grateful for persons who touch my life in a special way on a daily basis. Presently I serve as an interim ministry and witness God's grace active in lives of those who need His healing and grace. They witness to me of God's love.

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List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you.

2 Corinthians 5:16-21 — I am a former Roman Catholic who 60 years ago married a Lutheran in a Lutheran Church. My cousin, who was a priest, told his large Polish family not to recognize our marriage. When we gathered for many family gatherings we experienced his brothers and mother moving away from any group we were in or when we approached a group. This went on for a number of years. While I was at seminary and we were in Milwaukee visiting our family, I visited my aunt who had been ill for a long time. When I entered the hospital room she was shocked and asked for my forgiveness for all her family had done to us. We cried and prayed and I left. She died one week later. This is a mark on me and my ministry that has focused on reconciliation.



Kristopher Madsen

Nominee for NALS Board of Regents

Name:

Kristopher Madsen

Address:

Fresno, Calif.

Congregation:

Immanuel Lutheran Church
Fresno, Calif.

Occupation:

Pastor



Basic Biographical Information:

I was born and raised in Solvang, Calif., (a community located a half hour north of Santa Barbara). At the age of 19 I was elected to the church council during which time I also served for two years as a lay youth director. Throughout my youth I sensed that God was calling me to ordained ministry. After graduating from California Lutheran University in 2004, I moved to St. Paul, Minn., where I attended Luther Seminary. While at Luther I became involved in the WordAlone Network. I received my M.Div. from Luther in 2008.

Upon graduation from Luther Seminary I accepted a call to Antioch Lutheran Church, Hoagland, Ind., (Fort Wayne area). I served there for four and a half years (Feb. 2009 - Sept. 2013). It was during that time that the congregation and I joined the NALC. In the summer of 2014 I accepted a call to Immanuel Lutheran Church, Fresno (Easton), Calif.

At the time of the Convocation, I will have been married to my wife Jenn for seven years. In addition to being a wonderful pastor's wife, Jenn is a teacher by trade and has been the crew chief of the Lutheran Hour Ministry float in the Rose Parade for the last 19 years.

In my free time I enjoy watching baseball, skiing, traveling, golfing, and spending time with my wife and our family.

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

While at Luther Seminary I was given some opportunities that directly apply to preparing me for service on the NALS Board of Regents. One such opportunity was being a student representative to the seminary visioning task force. As a student representative my responsibility was to bring a student's perspective and critique to the visioning team with regard to such topics as the overall mission of the seminary, the seminary's curriculum, plans for future campus development, and how the seminary balances its commitments to ecumenism with its Lutheran heritage and Confessions. Additionally, I was also privileged to be part of a student panel which participated in the hiring of two faculty positions.

Additional experience that has helped to prepare me for service in this position includes serving as the assistant to the Dean in the Heartland (Indiana-Kentucky) Mission District. In this position I represented the district and the NALC more broadly to congregations in northern Indiana that were considering becoming members of the NALC, helping them navigate the constitutional process of leaving the ELCA, and becoming a congregation of the NALC. I have also had the privilege of sitting on two ministry boards as a clergy representative: Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Indiana-Kentucky and Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries. Most recently I was an internship supervisor for one of our candidates for ministry in the NALC.

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

Perhaps the most notable gift God has given me to bless this ministry is passion. Since graduating from seminary (and even before graduating) I have had a desire to help shape the future of pastoral and theological education for future pastors. My time in seminary was and continues to be the most formative time in my life of faith, and I have a desire to be part of the process that helps shape and guide pastors for the church. I see this nomination as an opportunity to do just that.

I'm passionate not just for seminary education but also about the NALC. The formation of the NALC has been one of the most exciting things I've been a part of, and I am excited about the possibility of serving the church in this manner.

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

I think that the biggest challenge that the NALC faces over the next few years is continued growth. The house church initiative seems to be a good answer to meeting this challenge. The challenge of church growth is not one that is peculiar to the NALC, but it is a challenge that we share in with other church bodies. I pray that we grow for the sake of God's kingdom, and I pray that we grow for the strength of our fellowship within His kingdom. As the nation around us grows increasingly secular and as our God-given right to the free exercise of our faith comes increasingly under attack, this challenge is only heightened by our shared commitment to orthodoxy.

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

To piggyback on my answer to the question above, my hope and fervent prayer for the NALC is continued growth in the number of congregations in our fellowship as well as growth for the congregations themselves and Christ's church more broadly.

I'm excited about some of the resources that the church-wide office has been making available to us, most notably what has been coming out with respect to intergenerational ministries. As my congregation has begun to make movements to this style of ministry, there's definitely a level of excitement to see how God will mold and shape us through it.

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

The establishment of the North American Lutheran Seminary is so important to the ministry of the NALC. Having our own seminary means a level of

continuity and standards in the educating of new pastors and it shows a commitment to the future of the congregations of the NALC. The establishment of the NALS is a commitment by the church-wide body to be serving both the present and future pastoral needs of the congregations that make up the NALC. I think that continued focus on the seminary and particularly establishing the houses of study needs to be a top priority.

Of course, raising up pastors in the church is of little use unless there are congregations in which to place those pastors. That being said, an equally important priority for the NALC needs to be support for the house church initiative and helping all of our mission congregations grow into vibrant, self-sustaining centers for ministry.

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 body?

+ I think that it is important for Mission Districts and the congregations that make them up to look for ways to do things together (mission trips, discipleship training, youth ministry, etc.). In doing ministry together we strengthen our fellowship with each other and we are made more mindful of wider Body of Christ.

+ From the church-wide office, having regular, regional events for discipleship training and spiritual renewal would be a blessing.

+ I think that it is important for the NALC in cooperation with the NALS to develop a lay "school of theology" type of program to help further equip for pastoral ministry those who are stepping up to lead congregations (or house church/mission centers) without pastors.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

I experience God most active in my daily life through the mutual consolation and fellowship of the saints: the love of my wife and our family, conversing with elders in my congregation, and hanging out at youth group on Sunday afternoons.

In 1 John 1:3 we read that the purpose of the church's proclamation is so that we may be brought into fellowship with the community of faith, and to have fellowship within the body of faith is to have fellowship God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

I also experience God active in my life through music; I enjoy playing spiritual songs on my guitar as part of my devotional time and I enjoy singing in the church choir. To borrow a quote I once came across by J.S. Bach, I find that "with devotional music, God is always grace present."

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning to you.

The passage that has had the most meaning for me in my life is Jeremiah 29:11, "'For surely I know the plans I have for you,' says the Lord, 'plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope'" (NRSV). There have been several points in my life when all of a sudden things have come to a standstill and it seemed as though everything I had been working towards or trying to do came to a screeching halt and I found myself wondering, "Okay God, what's next?" There are times in the natural cycles of daily life where I find myself asking that same question and looking for the strength and wherewithal to get through.

Hope is a powerful force, and that God promises me a future with hope means that whatever my struggle is today, this week, or in this season of my life, it won't last forever. Hope doesn't downplay the present circumstances of life, but it gives you the encouragement and the drive you need to press onward into that promised future.

Dennis Meyer

Nominee for NALS Board of Regents

Name:

Dennis A. Meyer

Address:

Grayslake, Ill.

Congregation:

Immanuel Lutheran Church of Flatville
Thomasboro, Ill.

Occupation:

Retired Pastor
Interim at St. John's Lutheran Church
Danforth, Ill.



Basic Biographical Information:

Only child of “older” parents in suburban Chicago. Married to Pastor Sally M. Meyer for 36 years. Three grown daughters, five grandchildren. A.B. in History from Stanford University in 1971. M.Div. from Yale University Divinity School in 1975. Internship at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Eureka, S.D., in 1973-74. Member of the Society of the Holy Trinity. Hobbies include reading — both theology and novels (i.e.: John Grisham, Daniel Silva, David Baldacci, James Patterson, John Lescroart). Diehard Chicago Cubs Fan. Other spectator sports. Caring for our two dachshunds, Belle and Mina. “Copy editor” for my wife, who is about to become a published author of a work of fiction based on a true story.

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

Service in five congregations (one small congregation in the city of Chicago, three medium-sized congregations — one in rural central Illinois, one in a county-seat community in southwest Iowa, and one in a bedroom community to a large state University in east-central Illinois, and one large congregation in east central Illinois) over 40 years of ordained ministry. Consistent participant in continuing education opportunities. Outspoken participant in church assemblies for over 40 years.

Mentor/Supervisor for LSTC Teaching Parish Students, for three seminary interns, for my wife, who entered Seminary about eight years after our marriage, and for an associate pastor (other than my wife) in the congregation I served in Iowa. And most importantly, a life-long passion for faithful, historic Christian theological education.

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

A spirit of collegiality and a commitment to building strong relationships. Excellent communication skills and gifts both in writing and speaking. Both interpersonally and theologically, I believe I would bring a passionate presence to the Board of Regents and would work hard to grow the seminary into a model institution for theological education in the years to come.

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

Attracting to the Ordained Ministry and training pastors to replace so many of us who are beyond or nearing retirement. Being imaginative in the ways we go about training our pastors, so that we will continue to staff our congregations and others which will become a part of the NALC in the years to come. We need to be the NALC because we believe in what the NALC stands for and not be content to identify ourselves over against other Lutheran bodies. We have a chance to do something very important in the life of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. We need to do all we can to achieve this end!

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

That we will be recognized more and more by other Lutheran churches around the globe and become true partners in mission with them — as we are presently with the Ethiopian Church. That we can find the right balance in our staffing — remaining lean” in our structure, but having enough staff truly to serve the needs of our congregations that would benefit by professional guidance and direction (and maybe some hand-holding along the

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way as well). That we will take major strides in finding ways to establish new congregations that will enable increasing numbers of Christians to join us in our greater mission to God's beloved people here on the North American continent and around the world.

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

Continuing to work hard on making the NALC Seminary an institution/entity of higher learning that is on a par with the best seminaries in existence. To fight every impulse to become a church that is a top-down entity, and focus on truly being a church where all members recognize they are parts of "the priesthood of all believers." To continue to grow the theological conference into a premier event on an annual basis! To grow in numbers and in faithfulness to the Word of our loving God!

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 body?

Risk being "judged" by the world for always, unapologetically "lifting high the Cross" of Christ in word and deed, and enthusiastically and winsomely inviting neighbors, friends and family to follow Jesus Christ, no matter how high the cost, as a denomination, as Mission Districts, and as NALC congregations. Reach out consistently, asking not for "volunteers" to join us in ministry, but personally inviting individuals — by name — to share with us and learn with us as we commit to being the disciples our Lord Jesus needs us to be for the sake of the world He loves so much. Boldly to engage more and more of our brothers and sisters in Christ as together we share the Good News of the Gospel with neighbors, friends, and family. To succeed in these endeavors, we need to do serious Bible, book, and topical studies that are faithful to our Savior, we need to use all the technology available to us to attract the attention and the commitment of new followers of Christ, and we need to create more and more opportunities for those who are already followers of Christ to meet

together and support and encourage one another in being Christ-Centered and Mission-Driven.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

I experience God active in my life as my wife and I pray daily and invoke His help with our own lives, our family, and the people we serve. I can see and feel God at work, intervening to answer those prayers. Just recently, we find ourselves being reconciled to a dear daughter who had estranged herself from us for almost exactly 18 years. God has been working on this relationship all this time, and now he has initiated the process by which we can once more be family. That is God at work in a very real and tangible way.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you.

My new favorite Scripture is John 16:33: "I have told you these things so that *in me* you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart. I have overcome the world."

I don't understand why I've never heard anyone claim this verse as a "favorite" before. What could possibly be better news in a world that is inundated with "trouble" — serious, seemingly unending "trouble"! "I have overcome the world," Jesus announces, assuring us that no matter what we experience in life, He is there with us, this moment and each and every moment of our lives. He will not leave us alone, helpless, hopeless, lost in despair. He will lead us through it all — all the way to redemption, the forgiveness of our sins, everlasting salvation, and new life "in him"! He has overcome the world, and because he has, we too will have the strength and the will and the capacity to overcome the world "in Him." We can't do it on our own! But we don't need to! It's already done! Already won! Already accomplished! Good News! Undoubtedly! Whenever you are struggling and needing assurance, call on this verse. Yes, in this world, we will have trouble! It is inevitable. But "take heart," Jesus tells us, "I have overcome the world!" Thanks be to God!

Thurmond Plexico

Nominee for NALS Board of Regents

Name:

Thurmond C. Plexico

Address:

Concord, N.C.

Congregation:

Union Lutheran Church
Salisbury, N.C.

Occupation:

Retired pastor.
(Supply preached 30 times in 2015)



Basic Biographical Information:

Born in Columbia, S.C., in October, 1928. I married Mary Katherine Wilhelm, Salisbury, N.C., in 1952. Her professional life involved teaching piano, and serving as church organist and choral director in four congregations. Best friend, constructive critic, loves the Lord and the man He put at her side. Our son, Byron Kent Plexico, concert artist in violin and viola. His wife, Ginger, an executive in the corporate world. My hobby, golf for years; now: gardening, checkers, music, travel, and bridge.

Academics: Lenoir-Rhyne College, A.B., honors in intercollegiate forensics; Declaimer's Medal, Orators Gold Medal. Member Pi Kappa Delta, rank of "Special Diamond Distinction" – national forensic fraternity. Lutheran Seminary, Columbia, S.C., M.Div.

Graduate Studies: University of South Carolina; Princeton Seminary; Institute of Advanced Pastoral Studies, Bloomfield, Michigan; Southern Seminary Pastors' Institute; World Center of Liturgical Studies; Parish Leadership Seminars, Indianapolis, Indiana.

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

The following summary is lengthy, but I have shared it because I believe that the varied experiences in parish ministry and leadership

beyond the parish and in the community give me the experience to bring ideas, leadership and support to the Board of Regents.

It is obvious that in college and my introduction to public speaking that God's grace had gifted me in communication. This is apparent in that over the years I had the privilege of doing so many preaching missions, public speeches, opportunities for special presentations and leadership roles.

+ At age 19, the end of the first seminary year, I was asked to be the interim-preacher at Ebenezer Church, mother church of Lutheranism in Columbia, S.C.

+ End of the second year, interim at Saint Andrew's Church, downtown Charleston, S.C. Ordained by the S.C. Synod in 1951.

+ 1951 – Call to Union Lutheran Church (NALC charter congregation), Salisbury, NC. Two interims there in recent years. Pastor Emeritus.

+ 1953 – Call to develop a promising mission field in Jacksonville, N.C., the home of Camp Lejeune Marine Base. A second call from the Lutheran Service Commission was to develop a ministry to service personnel. Organized as the largest mission in synod history, The Church of Our Savior began with 150 members, representing 12 different Lutheran bodies. The Servicemen's Center became the largest in the United States, averaging 4000 military personnel monthly. Averaged 450 to 500 in attendance. The congregation served over 2500 members in 10 years of ministry. Of note is that the church was selected by the Dept. of Worship (LCA) as one of four for study at a worship conference in Pittsburgh where synodical leaders and scholars like Paul Strodach and Luther D. Reed were present. Mary and I made presentations to explain how the Spirit had worked through the liturgies of the Church, a strong music program and preaching to form a unified congregation from such a diversity in worship backgrounds and geography.

+ 1963 – Saint James, Concord, N.C., was recognized as one of the top 200 in the United States in per capita giving. Forty ranks pipe organ

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(chancel) and four octave trumpet *enchamade* (gallery). A three octave Flemish tower carillon installed: education-administration building program. Development of and involvement in several outreach agencies.

+ 1988 – Retirement time. Bishop McDaniel encouraged me to work for the renewal of a congregation, Saint Martin, Concord. From ten in attendance, in eight years we grew to over 200 members, attendance average of 150. Thirty plus adult baptisms in the first six months. Two building projects completed debt free. Pastor Emeritus.

+ Retired, 1997ff. Seven interims.

Church Leadership Involvement:

+ Preacher for 44 Preaching Missions in the Lutheran Church and other major denominations. Three terms as a representative of the LCA to the Lutheran Council in the USA.

+ 1972 Convention of the Council in Minneapolis, chaplain and preacher. Baccalaureate Preacher, 1964 Commencement at Lenoir Rhyne College. Dean and Chaplain of the 1966 LCA Institute of Church Music.

+ Chaplain, N.C. Synod Convention.

+ Chaplain, N.C. Luther League Convention.

+ World Council of Churches convention in Evanston, Ill.

+ Lutheran World Federation meeting in Helsinki, Finland.

+ Charter Member of the Lutheran Society of Worship, Music, and the Arts.

+ Three years as President of the Eastern Conference of the N.C. Synod.

+ Six years as chair of the Synod's Worship, Music and Fine Arts Committee and three years as chair of the Professional Cabinet. Chair, American Missions Committee;

+ Publicity Committee chair; interviewed chief leaders of the LCA on radio and television.

Community Leadership Involvement:

+ I have always been involved in leadership in civic activities: United Fund, American Red Cross and Boy Scouts of America. Rotary Club, District Governor, speaker at four Rotary regional meetings here and overseas; president several ministerial associations. In a time of community crisis I was appointed by the city and county boards to serve as the president of the newly formed Cabarrus County Human Relations Board.

+ As a speaker and humorist, I have addressed over 1,600 civic, church, and commercial gatherings over the years.

Literary:

+ Contributor to: *A Mighty Fortress*, Lutheran Military publication; *The Home Altar*; *The New Day's Worship* edited Charles B. Foelsch; *Today* edited by Reuben Youngdahl; long time columnist for *The N.C. Lutheran* publication, writing on worship, music, and liturgical practices.

+ Author: *The Church Wedding*, excerpts published in the Journal of Church Music (LCA).

+ Author: *A Journey in Faith – The History of Saint Martin Lutheran Church; 1997-1994.*

Special Awards and Recognitions:

+ Named as a Paul Harris Fellow of Rotary International; my wife also was named.

+ Twice listed in Who's Who in the South and Southwest.

+ 1978: Who's Who in America in Religion. Third Edition of International Who's Who in Community Service. Sixth Edition of Men of Achievement–International Biographies.

+ I was humbled in 2003 by the presentation given by the seminary alumni/ae association. The award, in memory of a much loved professor of New

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Testament, reads: “Given to The Reverend TC. Plexico and to honor him with The John Benjamin Bedenbaugh Award for Distinguished Pastoral Leadership in recognition of his ministry as a pastoral shepherd, who has encouraged bold congregational witness to the Great Commission, and offered exemplary service to the church at large.”

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

Whatever has been accomplished through me, I give God the glory. He began shaping me in college particularly to handle all of the challenges ahead. Surely the gifts were there before, but opportunities to develop skills were so limited. Dad's health began to fail in my last two years in high school. By the end of my second year in college, his business was bankrupt. We were penniless. I was already working three jobs on campus. I was blessed to have a professor who pushed me hard in forensics. Skill developed. Confidence grew. A donor gave the college \$200 for a needy student, which the president applied to my tuition. I would be able to graduate.

You can see why I have this great interest in working toward the development of scholarship funds for our seminarians.

My gifts from God: preaching, leadership skills, building relationships with people.

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

First, the challenge of moving beyond the point of the “sex thing.” I answer, “Yes, that was involved, but that's only because when you take the Word of God as the sole authority in life, sex is certainly a part of life.” That opens the way for continued discussion and witness.

Secondly, continued study, research, covered with prayer to discover vital ways to reach youth around us. Certainly involved in this is the matter of contemporary, (I don't like the term) and our high levels of traditional liturgy and music. I am glad that

many of our congregations are experimenting. We should be getting reports from congregations that are involved. Difficulties? Tension? Success? Blending?

Thirdly, as we move into the unknown future through the menaces of secularism and immorality, I wish that we might have an annual national day of prayer in our congregations, twenty four hours of holding up our church, our congregations, our denominational leaders, our pastors, teachers, and of course, those for whom we should be praying, the unsaved, before God's throne of grace. I do this every day. Prayer strengthens. Prayer unifies. Above all, God answers prayer!

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

The mission has been clearly defined by the Savior: Go into all the world! When we drop a pebble in the water, the circles move outward. So with us. Our lives become the pebbles of the Word of God dropped into the lives of the people and culture around us. “The Word is never returned void!” Let's ask God to strengthen “the tie that binds” us already. The “tie” is that closeness that we feel as we gather around Word and Sacrament. I felt that strength then, after months of praying about leaving the ELCA and being threatened by the bishop with excommunication for serving as interim at a heretical NALC church. Then a blessing came — spending a day with our Bishop John.

I had been invited to be at a church dear to my heart, Saint John, Statesville, (NALC), to officiate at their anniversary celebration. Bishop John was the preacher-celebrant for the day. I knew when we left the church that afternoon that, if given the privilege, I would move on in faith. Soon thereafter, I received a communication from him which included an invitation to be a pastor in the NALC. The die was cast.

My life has been enriched by this gift of new life, strengthening of faith, and the emphasis on the primacy of the Word in faith and practice. This, I

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believe, is the kind of testimony that will help other ministers and congregations who feel as I felt to take that leap in faith and move to where they can say without fear, "This I believe!"

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

In prayer and in financial commitments, let's strive to make our seminary the best it can be by the grace and mercy of God. The possibility of a church-wide seminary Sunday with bulletin inserts, special speakers — not enough of us to go around — but it would help. Special offerings and information about how to remember the seminary in our trusts or wills, as we intend to do, could be part of the day. Videos with a message from Bishop John, Dr. Schifrin and possibly one or two seminary students could be a part of the service. Continue to emphasize the foundation of our church, the inspired, authoritative Word of God. Our people need to be better informed about what this means.

Westward forward in mission! How can we do this best? God already knows. Let's ask him. Certainly a priority is how we act to take shepherding care of our very small congregations. I read their job descriptions and think about how we can be sure that they are cared for and how they can be assured that the church is concerned about them.

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 body?

First, strive to keep primary focus on mission possibilities around us. I love what is happening close by in the Carolinas where one mission is looking to sponsoring a mission on the other side of the city.

Secondly, congregations within reasonable distance of each other could do joint Bible study sessions, choir programs, youth programs, and worship experiences. Be sure to publicize them and include an invitation to the public to attend.

Thirdly, take advantage of all available media coverage. Opportunities abound. Most newspapers will welcome news of special events. Every congregation should appoint a publicity chairperson. Let the NALC be known for its positive work.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

I am always aware of the abiding presence of God, certainly not every waking moment, but there is a sense that whatever I might be doing that God in His omniscience knows. What a blessed assurance it is to know that whatever the circumstance God is in the midst of it with me.

Prayer just happens off and on during the day. During the day maybe something as simple as "Thank You, Father; Thank You, Jesus; Thank You, Holy Spirit." Read the Psalms. Let them become a conversational matter with the Father.

Scripture study is always covered with prayer for understanding. To think that I can fail in a sermon to prepare someone for the pending moment of exodus is a painful thought.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you.

These verses are always with me:

+ "If Christ be not raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost...But Christ indeed has been raised."

+ Christ said, "Because I live, you also shall live!"

+ In Romans – "And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?"

"How can they hear?" It is a haunting question that has prompted me through the years to make preaching a strong priority. I pray that God will continue to bless our seminary so that we might raise up among us strong preachers who will tell the good news with a warm pastoral message.

Allen Schoonover

Nominee for NALS Board of Regents

Name:

Allen Schoonover

Address:

Noblesville, Ind.

Congregation:

Bethel Lutheran Church
Noblesville, Ind.

Occupation:

Associate Pastor



Basic Biographical Information:

My wife, Karen, is an elementary school teacher and current household manager for our family, including our two children, Abby (19) and Amy (9). When not at church, we enjoy camping, exploring zoos, museums, and other local points of interest, and spending time with family and friends. I was ordained in 1989, and in that time I have served as either a solo or an associate pastor, in congregations ranging in size from 50 to 385 in average weekly attendance.

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

It has been a privilege to serve two congregations that have hosted teaching parish students, and I have enjoyed being a mentor, coach, and supervisor.

In 2013 I earned a Doctor of Ministry degree from George Fox Seminary (Portland, OR) in Leadership and Spiritual Formation. My specific interest is developing the spiritual leadership capabilities of a congregation's governing board (i.e., its Church Council). Different leadership capabilities are required to assist congregations shift their ministry paradigm from a maintenance / chaplaincy model to discipleship. The Church needs lay and ordained leaders who are theologically grounded and equipped to exegete the culture in which they are called to serve.

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

I am primarily gifted in leadership, administration, pastor / shepherd, teaching, and mercy.

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

I am grateful for our community's continued emphasis on outreach and disciple-making. This focus will help us maintain clarity with what we are for, not just what we are against; who we are, not just who we are not. This clarity about our identity will provide an attractive witness to a world that is becoming increasingly secular. As a whole, the Church will only continue to move towards the margins of the post-Christian society in which it finds itself. At the same time, we will find ourselves increasingly at odds with the prevailing culture and what it accepts — and promotes — as permissible. Being able to proclaim clearly the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ in this environment will set us apart.

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

I hope that we will continue to strengthen the leadership potential of leaders within the congregation and amongst the pastors in our community. I hope we will continue to strengthen congregations as mission centers that raise up disciples who in turn make disciples. I hope that we will continue to maintain a healthy balance of promoting the local congregation's engagement in the world without making church-wide political policy statements. I hope the mission of the NALC continues to keep the main thing - proclaiming Christ crucified and raising up disciples who do the same - as the main thing! If these first 5 years are any indication, we are off to a great start!

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

1. Making disciples
2. Proclaiming the Gospel
3. Raising up lay and ordained leaders to do #1 and #2.

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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 body?

Congregations can continue to preach the Gospel and make disciples. They can offer projects and activities that relate faith to daily life, and create hand-on opportunities for disciples to live out their faith in the community where God has planted them. These activities should create a healthy balance of "insider" spiritual formation and "outside" ministry to our neighbor.

Mission Districts and the NALC can continue to gather annually to support and encourage congregations in their primary ministry. This partnership will bring out resources from within congregations to fulfill their ministry. It will also be a conduit for resources from outside the congregation as needed; those outside resources can help foster healthy congregations.

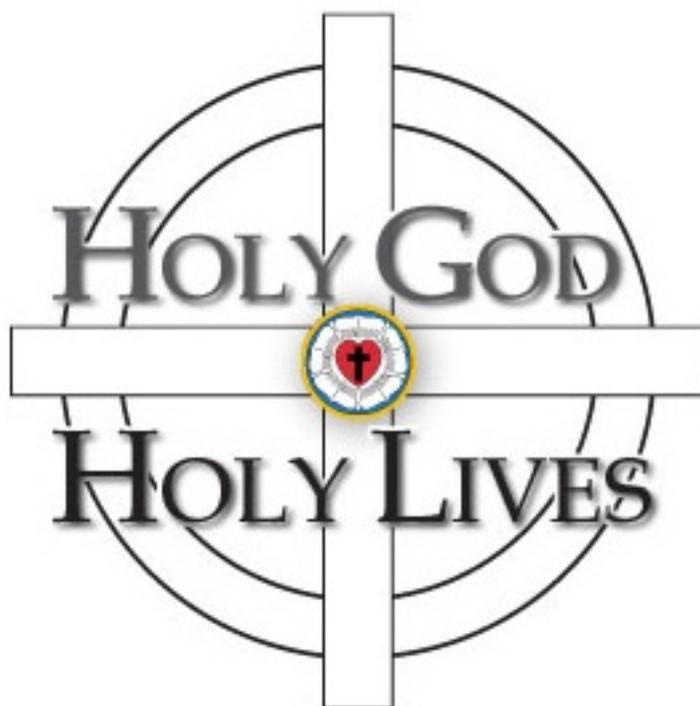
Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

I experience God daily in my devotions with the Daily Office (morning prayer, evening prayer, and night prayer) and in the community of the faithful God has called me to serve in Noblesville, Indiana. God is present in my prayers and in our corporate worship, in the acts of service our congregation supports, in the lives of the members, and in the preschool children God has placed under our care.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you.

My favorite passage is the so-called "Parable of the Prodigal Son" — I prefer the title "Parable of the Loving Father" (Luke 15:11-32). In different seasons of my life, I resemble one son more than the other; however, I have been both sons at some point. And yet, my loving Heavenly Father comes out to me, whichever son I am at the moment, offering me the same reconciling, renewing, and restoring love from His deep wellspring of divine forgiveness. Bit by bit, this love transforms me.

God's desire for me is not that I remain like either son; rather, it is to transform me more and more into the likeness of my Heavenly Father. This transformation happens in fits and starts, and it will only be complete when my baptism is complete at my death. In the meantime, God comes to me (and all the faithful) — in the sacraments and in the community of faith — giving what is needed to grow into the "imago Dei" God intended.



Kris Snyder

Nominee for NALS Board of Regents

Name:

Kris Leland Snyder

Address:

Gonvick, Minn.

Congregation:

Gonvick Lutheran Parish
Gonvick, Minn.

Occupation:

Pastor



Basic Biographical Information:

Single father of two daughters — Kjersti Margit (11) and Ambjør (7). Received my B.A. in English from Luther College, Decorah, Iowa (1998) and my M.Div. from Luther Seminary (2002). Was ordained July 15, 2003, at Brooklyn Park Lutheran Church, Brooklyn Park, Minn. I received a Master's in Human Services degree from Liberty University in 2012. Additionally I am enrolled in the Doctorate of Ministry degree program at Trinity School for Ministry, Ambridge, Pa. I enjoy singing baritone with the Bemidji Chorale, which is a choir comprised of community members in the greater Bemidji area. Additionally, I serve as a volunteer fireman for the Gonvick Regional Fire District.

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

I thoroughly love the seminary experience and want to do everything I can to enrich this experience for those sensing a call to Word and Sacrament ministry. I also sense a greater more intentional need to connect congregations to the work of the North American Lutheran Seminary. I have in the parish enjoyed teaching, making connections to external ministries of the NALC, and finding ways for members of the parish to connect with partner organizations to further discipleship and mission work.

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

Prayer, preaching, and ministry of presence with our seminarians.

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

Where will we get our future pastors? How can we build relationships with current students and foster vocational interest in Word and Sacrament ministry within our youth? If we do not find points of connection between seminarians, seminary, and the congregations, we run the risk of creating a learning experience that is detached from the actual service of pastoral ministry in the church. Who are the internship congregations? Are there pastors or congregations that would be interested in mission sponsorship of seminarians, the seminary itself, and supporting those exploring seminary from high school through seminary?

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

It is a great time to be the church. We have a valid and life-giving message which cannot be institutionally focused or aimed at preserving the buildings and ways of doing and being the church. Are we Mission Driven, Congregationally Focused, Christ Centered, and Traditionally Grounded? How do we live out these values each day as a church body that by doing so attracts others to follow Christ with us?

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

Seminary education, youth ministry, development of multigenerational resources for catechism and Biblical learning, and discipleship modeling.

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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 body?

What makes us stand out as a church body? If we are Christ Centered we must be willing to live out loving God and loving our neighbor. People outside of the church, other denominational bodies, and non-Christians will be watching to see how we live out the great commission.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

Through the baptismal life of living and serving the church! God has been so good to bring me to the Gonvick parish, and I have thoroughly enjoyed raising my family in this context. I see God at work in the ministry of the parish, serving God as a Word and Sacrament minister, and working alongside of other area pastors.

List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you.

“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” — Romans 8:37-39.

I call it a life verse — something to hold fast to in times which are challenging and a world where Christianity is constantly under attack. We are conquerors through Christ who loved us and gave up His life for us. God’s grace is great enough to reach me in my lost and sinful nature and declaring me free everlasting. Law and Gospel speak through these verses and truly sum up why being a Lutheran Christian matters.

Paul Spring

Nominee for NALS Board of Regents

Name:
Paull E. Spring

Address:
State College, Pa.

Congregation:
Emmanuel Lutheran Church
State College, Pa.

Occupation:
Retired pastor
Supply preached 30 times in 2015



Basic Biographical Information:

Married to Barbara Shaffer for 49 years, three daughters, seven grandchildren, five great grandchildren. Graduate of Gettysburg College and Gettysburg Seminary. Hobbies: reading, classical music.

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

Fourteen years as ELCA synodical bishop; one year NALC bishop. Parish pastor, 25 years. Chair, Solid Rock Lutherans. Chair, Lutheran CORE. Ordained 50 years. Presently on Board of Regents of seminary. Member of candidacy committees.

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

A listening ear, administration, capacity to teach and preach the Word of God, a passion for evangelism, a commitment to Confessional Lutheranism.

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

Remaining faithful to the Word of God and spreading it to others in a time when the Christian faith finds itself at the margins of society.

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

That we may increase our zeal and faith in the Gospel and increase our numbers, for the sake of the Gospel.

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

Theological education, mission, ecumenism.

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 body?

Build support for the seminary, participate on the Global Forum, join the International Lutheran Council.

Describe how you experience God active in your daily life.

Through regular devotions — prayer, reading of Scripture, and in the interaction with family and friends.

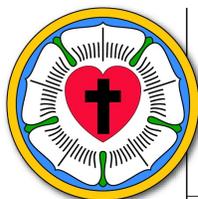
List a favorite Scripture verse and tell why it has meaning for you.

“Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life” — Revelation 2:9. This was my confirmation verse.



NALS

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NALC

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