

2017 Women of the NALC Annual Gathering Speakers

The Rev. Dr. Amy C. Little

Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church; Monroeville, Ohio
Submissions Editor, Sola Publishing

Pastor Amy has served Trinity Lutheran Church in Monroeville, Ohio, since 2002. She graduated from Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio, in 2002 and finished a Doctor of Ministry degree in 2012 from Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. Her thesis focused on using Bowen Family Systems Theory and Luther's Catechisms to revitalize a congregation's sense of mission and purpose.

She is a part-time editor at Sola Publishing and a varsity swim coach at Norwalk High School. Amy has been married to Jeff for 23 years and they have two children: Noah (20) who is a student at The Ohio State University, and Anna (15) who will be a high school junior this fall.

Amy serves on the Candidacy Committee for the NALC, the PCAT team for the Ohio Mission Region, and the Executive Council of the North Central Ohio Mission District.

The Rev. Paula Murray

Pastor, St. Jacob's Lutheran Church; Glen Rock, Pennsylvania

My middle name is Leah, an accident of my father's momentary inability to remember his foster mother's name, Leila, when the nice lady with the clipboard came to register my birth for the hospital admissions office. That incident is a decent summation of life, anyone's life, for usually we are aiming at one thing but actually achieve something altogether different.

My original plan was to earn a doctorate in molecular biology and work and live in the northwestern states of Oregon or Washington. Born in Montana and raised in the high desert of southern Idaho, I saw no reason to leave the West. My biology career went sideways when the college that gave me a scholarship ride could not afford to repair its broken electron microscope, so the biology career led to a master's in experimental psychology from the University of California, Santa Barbara, which in turn led to a divinity degree from the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. I have lived in exile in south central Pennsylvania for the last twenty years. You do see what I mean about the difference between what we intend and what we accomplish?

For the last 16 years, I have been privileged to serve as the Pastor of St. Jacob's Lutheran Church. I have been accompanied throughout life's journey by my husband of 35 years, Henry Stuckert, an electrical engineer whose career took its own strange bends from testing radar systems for the Navy to developing communications programming for United Parcel Service. We have raised two sons together: Adam, who is completing his doctorate in biology, and Ian, who is a Flight Paramedic with the U.S. Army.

Parenthood is not a bad model for pastoral ministry, so long as one understands its limitations. Like any parent, a pastor wants the lambs he or she shepherds on Jesus' behalf to grow in the grace of God and to be as well-rounded as disciples as possible. Much of the work I do as a pastor is to provide the conditions which will encourage my brothers and sisters in Christ to allow the Holy Spirit to renew and transform their minds, that they may better understand the gifts God has given them and use those gifts for their own spiritual benefit and that of their family and community.