

# NALC News

North American Lutheran Church

July 2018

## NALC Convocation to meet in Denver

Members of the North American Lutheran Church will gather for the church's annual Convocation Aug. 15-17 at the Crowne Plaza Denver Airport Convention Center in Denver, Colo. The theme of this year's Convocation is "The Holy Spirit: Calling, Gathering, Enlightening, Sanctifying."

The Convocation is the annual meeting of the NALC. It is a time for church members to gather for inspiration, encouragement and business.

The Convocation opens with the church's annual Mission Festival — a time to focus on the mission of the Christian Church and to equip congregations to carry out that mission.

Bishop John Bradosky will preach for the opening worship service at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 15, and preside at the Holy Communion service on Thursday afternoon. Bishop Charles Master of the Anglican Network in Canada, a diocese of the Anglican Church in North America, will preach at the Thursday worship service.

Featured speakers for the Mission Festival are Sherry Anne Weddell and Katherine Coolidge of the Catherine of Siena Institute in Colorado Springs, Colo. They will offer two keynote addresses — one on Wednesday and one on Thursday.

Sherry Anne Weddell is co-founder and executive director of the Catherine of Siena Institute. She created the first spiritual gift discernment process specifically designed for Catholics. She has developed numerous unique formation resources that are used around the world. She has trained, and helps lead, an international team that has worked with over 130,000 people in hundreds of



CALLING



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SANCTIFYING

2018 NALC LUTHERAN WEEK

parishes on five continents. She is the author of the book, *Forming Intentional Disciples*.

Katherine Coolidge joined the Catherine of Siena Institute as the Called and Gifted Coordinator in 2014 after two decades of parish ministry as catechist, program coordinator, youth minister, director of evangelization, liturgist and pastoral associate. She also works with parish and diocesan leaders and presents days of formation on evangelization and disciple-making for parishes, dioceses and Catholic schools. She is a contributor to the book, *Becoming a Parish of Intentional Disciples*, edited by Sherry Weddell, and is co-author of *Ananias Training*.

Pastor Gemechis Buba, Assistant to the Bishop for Missions, will deliver the third keynote address during the Mission Festival.

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*Charles Masters*



*Sherry Weddell*



*Katherine Coolidge*



*Gemechis Buba*



*Brad Hales*

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Mission Districts will meet on Wednesday evening for a time of study, discussion and business.

A wide variety of breakout sessions will be offered on Thursday morning. The list of breakout sessions is available online at [www.lutheranweek.com](http://www.lutheranweek.com).

The business portion of the Convocation begins on Thursday afternoon. Delegates will hear reports from Bishop Bradosky and receive written reports from other church staff.

Task forces on structure, ministry, stewardship, and life-to-life discipleship will report on their work.

Convocation delegates will elect members of the Executive Council, Court of Adjudication, Canada Section Board of Directors and North American Lutheran Seminary Board of Regents. (See Pages 3-4 for more information.)

Financial reports will be presented by Treasurer Ryan Schwarz. Delegates will consider a proposed \$2.1 million Operating Budget for the NALC, as well as proposed budgets for the Theological Education Fund, Great Commission Fund and NALC Disaster Response Fund.

A keynote Bible study will be given on Thursday by Pastor Brad Hales, the NALC's new Director of Domestic Mission.

The Convocation will also hear from a variety of guests representing Ministry Partners.

Registration for the Convocation and Mission Festival is \$200 and includes three meals.

Events preceding the Convocation are the Braaten-Benne Lectures in Theology, Women of the NALC Annual Gathering, Discipleship Coaching workshop, and the Ventures in Youth Ministry Symposium. The Convocation and the events preceding it comprise the NALC's annual Lutheran Week.

**Braaten-Benne Lectures in Theology** is on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning. The theme of this year's lectures is "The Person of the Holy Spirit." Registration fee for the theological lectures is \$125 and includes lunch on Wednesday. (See Page 6 for more information.)

**Women of the NALC Annual Gathering** is on Tuesday. "God is Our Refuge and Strength" is this year's theme. The featured speaker is Pastor Pamela Thorson of House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Elizabethtown, Ky., and Dean of the Heartland Mission District. The \$80 registration fee includes lunch.

**A Discipleship Coaching Workshop** will be offered on Tuesday morning by the NALC's Life-to-Life Discipleship Team. The workshop will focus on the NALC's commitment to discipleship and ways to extend this work into your congregation. There is no fee for this workshop.

**Ventures in Youth Ministry Symposium** will meet on Monday and Tuesday. This is a gathering of congregational leaders interested in developing a sustainable ministry to young people. This year's keynote speaker is Thomas O'Neill. The registration fee of \$90 includes lunch on Monday.

More information on Lutheran Week is available at [www.lutheranweek.com](http://www.lutheranweek.com). Hotel reservations may be made through a link on the website.



# Nominees for NALC Executive Council, Court of Adjudication, Canada Section

Three pastors and two lay people have been nominated for the NALC Executive Council. The 2018 NALC Convocation Aug. 15-17 in Denver, Colo., will elect one pastor and one lay person to four-year terms on the council.

Nominees for the lay position are Richard E. Jansak of Hendersonville, N.C., and Larry D. Shull of Spartanburg, S.C.

Nominees for the clergy position are Pastor Timothy E. Johnson of Abbotsford, British Columbia; Pastor Melinda H. Jones of Summerville, S.C.; and Pastor James R. Palan of Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

The Executive Council oversees the work and policies of the NALC, acting as the church's Board of Directors.

James Gale of Washington, D.C., and Pastor John J. Moffett of Ashland, Ohio, have been nominated for four-year terms on the NALC Court of Adjudication.

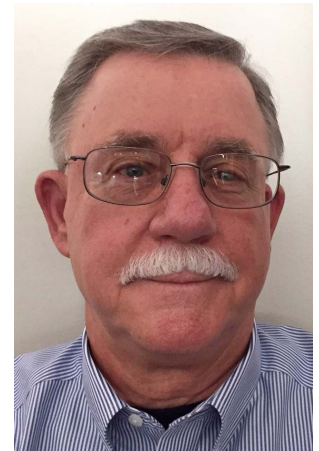
The Court of Adjudication decides appeals from disciplinary decisions and questions regarding interpretation of the NALC's governing documents.

Biographical information on the nominees is available at [thenalc.org](http://thenalc.org).

Nominations for Executive Council and Court of Adjudication are closed.



*Richard Jansak*



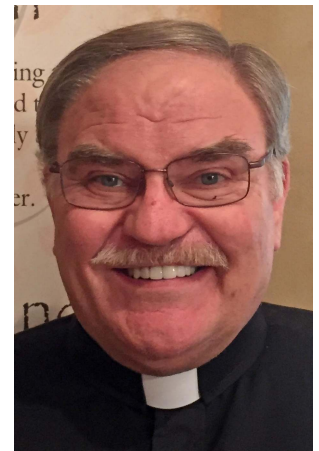
*Larry Shull*



*Timothy Johnson*



*Melinda Jones*



*James Palan*



*Rolf Bjornstad*



*Ralph Wold*



*James Gale*



*John Moffett*

The 2018 NALC Convocation will elect two members to serve four-year terms on the NALC Canada Section Board of Directors. Ralph Wold of Red Deer, Alberta, and Pastor Rolf Bjornstad of Sherwood Park, Alberta, have been nominated by the Canadian Mission District Convocation for those positions.



# Nominees for North American Lutheran Seminary Board of Regents

Ten people have been nominated for the North American Lutheran Seminary Board of Regents. The 2018 NALC Convocation Aug. 15-17 in Denver, Colo., will elect three members of the seminary board for six-year terms.

The Board of Regents nominees are Pastor Wendy A.W. Berthelsen of Midlothian, Texas; Pastor Dennis R. Di Mauro of Herndon, Va.; Pastor Phillip E. Gagnon of St. Albert, Alberta; Kevin D. Langholz of Pittsburgh, Pa.; Pastor James T. Lehmann of Fithian, Ill.; Pastor Troy A. Mulvaine of Tonawanda, N.Y.; Pastor David M. Phillips of Watertown, Wis.; Pastor Donna Hacker Smith of Champaign, Ill.; Pastor Norman J. Sulaica Jr. of Three Rivers, Texas; and Roger Weyersberg of Owosso, Mich.

Biographical information on the nominees is available online at [thenalc.org/nominations](http://thenalc.org/nominations).



*Wendy Berthelsen*



*Dennis Di Mauro*



*Phillip Gagnon*



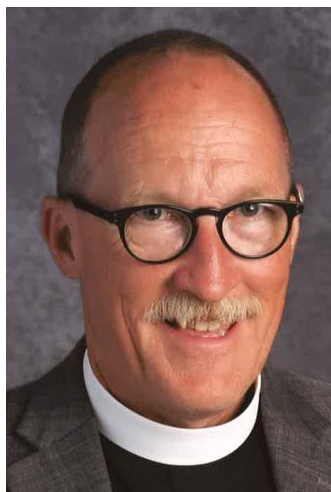
*Kevin Langholz*



*James Lehmann*



*Troy Mulvaine*



*David Phillips*



*Donna Smith*



*Norman Sulaica*



*Roger Weyersberg*

# NALC Operating Budget update

## *Treasurer reports progress in reducing budget deficits*

**By Ryan Schwarz**  
NALC Treasurer

As a whole, the North American Lutheran Church is on solid financial footing, but operating expenses have exceeded income over the past few years.

While the budget is not yet balanced, I am glad to report that significant progress has been made in reducing these operating deficits.

A bit of background: For the past two years, NALC Convocations approved budgets with significant operating deficits, principally so that new resource persons could be added to serve NALC congregations in key ministry areas — domestic mission, communications and youth and family ministry, among others.

These deficits were financed with surpluses accumulated in the early years of the NALC. While the church was fortunate to have those accumulated surpluses, they are not unlimited. With that in mind, the NALC Executive Council and staff believe it is important to move toward a balanced budget in the near term. Fortunately, progress has already been made.

The 2018 NALC Operating Budget, approved by the 2017 Convocation, called for an operating deficit (amount by which expenditures exceed income) of almost \$145,000. Due to strong congregational benevolence in the first part of 2018 and some temporarily unfilled staff positions, we now forecast that the actual deficit for 2018 will be approximately \$100,000 — 31 percent smaller than budgeted.

The proposed 2019 Operating Budget, which will be considered by the 2018 Convocation, includes a deficit which has been further reduced to less than \$50,000 — which is 67 percent lower than the 2018

	2018 Budget	2018 Forecast	2019 Proposed
<b>Income</b>			
Congregational Benevolence	\$1,670,000	\$1,660,000	\$1,700,000
Individual Donations	\$90,000	\$115,000	\$100,000
All Other Donations and Income	\$192,844	\$163,660	\$281,250
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,952,844</b>	<b>\$1,938,660</b>	<b>\$2,081,250</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>			
Organizations and Programs	\$680,686	\$641,150	\$679,417
Communications	\$58,775	\$54,350	\$37,050
Administrative Expenses	\$101,205	\$119,316	\$104,531
Staff Salaries, Taxes and Benefits	\$1,139,971	\$1,098,037	\$1,189,686
Ministry Partner Grants	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$90,000
Other Expenditures	\$27,100	\$35,700	\$27,700
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$2,097,737</b>	<b>\$2,038,553</b>	<b>\$2,128,384</b>
<b>Deficit</b>	<b>(\$144,893)</b>	<b>(\$99,893)</b>	<b>(\$47,134)</b>

budgeted deficit. This savings is the result of decisions by the Executive Council and staff to prioritize spending around key ministry initiatives and reduce or eliminate certain other expenditures.

Proposed spending reductions include elimination of cost-of-living salary increases for the executive staff, decreased funding for the Global Forum of Confessing Lutheran leaders hosted in past years by the NALC, phase out of the paper version of the *NALC News*, use of creative scheduling plans to reduce costs for task force and committee meetings, closure of the NALC's small Ohio office, and the conclusion of the work of the Task Force on Structure.

The resulting deficit is relatively modest and certainly within reach of closure. Moreover, forecasted

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# Person of the Holy Spirit is topic of Braaten-Benne Lectures in Theology

“The Person of the Holy Spirit” is the topic for the 2018 Carl E. Braaten and Robert D. Benne Lectures in Theology.

The theological conference, held prior to the annual NALC Convocation, will be Aug. 14-15 at the Crowne Plaza Denver Airport Convention Center in Denver, Colo.

This year’s lectures are:

## **Scripture’s Witness to the Holy Spirit**

by the Rev. Dr. Kathryn Schifferdecker, associate professor of Old Testament at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn. She holds a Th.D. from Harvard University, an M.Div. from Yale University and a B.A. from St. Olaf College. She is the author of *Out of the Whirlwind: Creation Theology in the Book of Job*.

*Kathryn Schifferdecker*



**“The Lord is the Spirit”: The Person of the Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul** by the Rev. Dr. Orrey McFarland, pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in Thornville, Ohio. He has a Ph.D. and master’s degrees from Durham University in Durham, England. He is the author of *God and Grace in Philo and Paul*.

*Orrey McFarland*



*Maurice Lee*



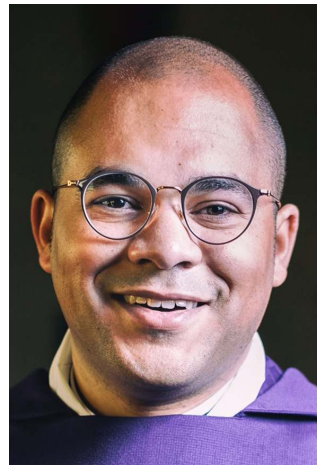
## **God is Free: Robert W. Jenson’s Doctrine of the Holy Spirit**

by the Rev. Dr. Matthew Burdette, priest at Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd in Dallas, Texas, and leader of the Pleasant Grove Episcopal Renewal Project. Dr. Burdette is an associate director of the Center for Catholic and Evangelical Theology. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Aberdeen in Scotland.

*Mark Mattes*



*Matthew Burdette*



**Filioque Piety: The Holy Spirit in the Triune Life** by the Rev. Dr. Maurice Lee, pastor of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Santa Barbara, Calif. The *Filioque* question is the 1,200-year-old disagreement between Eastern and Western Christians over the addition to the Nicene Creed that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son, as well as the Father. Dr. Lee earned a Ph.D. from Yale University, M.A. from Fuller Theological Seminary, M.S. from California Institute of Technology and B.S. from Wheaton College.

**The Holy Spirit in Luther’s Catechisms** by the Rev. Dr. Mark Mattes, professor of theology and philosophy at Grand View University in Des Moines, Iowa. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, an M.Div. from Luther Seminary and a B.A. from St. Olaf College. Dr. Mattes has authored several books, including *Luther’s Theology of Beauty: A Reappraisal* and *The Role of Justification in Contemporary Theology*.

Registration fee for the theological lectures is \$125 and includes lunch on Wednesday. You may register for the theological conference online at [lutheranweek.com](http://lutheranweek.com).

# Stuff the Tonka truck for NALC Disaster Response

*Bring gift cards to Lutheran Week to help disaster victims*



The Women of the NALC will again “stuff the truck” for NALC Disaster Response during Lutheran Week Aug. 13-17 in Denver, Colo. However, this year the “stuff the truck” event will feature a Tonka toy truck. Instead of bringing household goods (like last year), we will stuff gift cards into a Tonka toy truck.

When purchasing gift cards, please consider chain stores that are in many places across North America, such as Home Depot, Lowe’s, Target or Walmart. Gift cards can be in any amount.

Please bring the gift cards to the Women of the NALC Annual Gathering on Tuesday, Aug. 14, or to the Women of the NALC table in the Ministry Expo during the rest of Lutheran Week.

If you can’t be at Lutheran Week in Denver, but you would still like to be involved in the project, please send gift cards to: NALC Disaster Response; 810 Main Street; Caldwell, OH 43724.

## NALC closes office in Hilliard, Ohio

After reassessing its office needs, the North American Lutheran Church has decided to close the NALC office at Upper Arlington Lutheran Church in Hilliard, Ohio.

The NALC office in New Brighton, Minn., will now be the NALC’s primary office — receiving all phone calls and mail. Joan Corniea will be serving as the main receptionist in addition to her responsibilities as financial assistant. The Minnesota office will continue to oversee financial operations and store NALC records. Anne Gleason, NALC Financial Administrator, oversees the Minnesota office.

Most of the NALC staff work from home offices. Maddie Benson, who worked as receptionist in the Ohio office, will now work from home as a communications specialist. Maddie and her husband, Aaron, are moving to Nevada.

“The NALC is growing, which always presents challenges for making structural changes as we have witnessed in the development of the structure proposal. Thanks be to God, we are not saddled with expensive office buildings, and can be relatively nimble in making changes in office and staffing arrangements,” said Pastor Mark Chavez, NALC General Secretary.

“We thank Upper Arlington Lutheran Church for their generosity and kindness these past eight years. Their willingness to provide office space, as well as printing and technical support has been so valued,” Pastor Chavez said.

The NALC office may be reached by phone at 651-633-6004 or 888-551-7254 (U.S. toll free). Mail may be sent to 2299 Palmer Drive, Suite 220; New Brighton, MN 55112-2202 or [info@thenalc.org](mailto:info@thenalc.org).

# Consider the work of the Holy Spirit

Dear Disciples of Jesus,

As we prepare for our Lutheran Week experiences, it is my hope that you are preparing by contemplating the person and nature of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the focus, not only for our theological conference, but also for our Mission Festival and Convocation.

I encourage you to read about the work of the Holy Spirit throughout the Bible and to reflect on Martin Luther's explanation to the Third Article of the Apostle's Creed.

We will focus on the first and second chapters of the book of Acts and specifically on Acts 1:8: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Our world fails to acknowledge the existence of evil, opting for acceptance and thinking that everything is good. There is no place for sin in such a worldview. Many live denying sin's effect in the pursuit of pleasure, power, pornography, drugs, alcohol and a host of other perverse behaviors — destroying both our relationship with God and our relationships with others. In believing that our inherent goodness, knowledge, political agendas and personalized spirituality will save us, there is little need for a Savior or for the Gospel of Jesus Christ or for life as a disciple of Jesus. We blame the futility, despair, anxiety, loss, grief, emptiness and depression on circumstances rather than the condition of our soul, struggling to survive apart from Christ.

There is an old saying among evangelists: "The hardest work is not getting folks saved but getting them lost." Peter's preaching on Pentecost bears witness to that truth. The disciples received the power of the Holy Spirit and immediately they were witnesses of Jesus Christ. Peter announced that the kingdom Jesus proclaimed was for all people. When they heard the truth and were "cut to the heart," they asked, "What should we do?" Peter told them exactly what Jesus proclaimed. The Kingdom



*From the Bishop*

**Bishop John Bradosky**

of Heaven has broken into this world in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Repent and believe in him!

Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus was offering himself to all who believed. He offers what only the Messiah, the Christ, can provide for all people for all time — forgiveness, salvation and eternal life. He does not offer a philosophy for living, a political platform, a new set of rules, a new religion, and certainly not an organization or institution. Jesus is the Gospel. He is our focus, our life, our hope and our salvation. He comes to us and invites us to follow him. He calls us to be his witnesses, his disciples, with a mission to invite others and disciple them. Pentecost reminds us that this is all the work of the Holy Spirit.

At Pentecost the Holy Spirit delivers power — *dunamis* (in Greek) — dynamite to the Church. The more important questions are how open are we to the work of the Holy Spirit and how do we rely on the Spirit's power and strength? When we hear of people speaking in tongues, miracles, bold witnessing, healing, transformation and great growth, some get concerned because they believe such experiences would cause them to feel "out of control."

That is a primary difference between having a religion and having faith. Religion is our attempt to regulate a chaotic world. Faith is complete trust in Christ's sovereign control over all things. 2 Timothy 3:4-5 says that in the last days the Church will have people who are "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God — having a form of godliness but

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denying its power.” Apart from the Holy Spirit, the Church can accomplish nothing that is consistent with Christ’s will and mission.

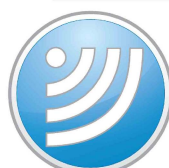
On Pentecost, wind and fire are both manifestations of the presence of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus’ teaching, the most profound discussion about the wind and the Spirit is in John 3. Jesus told Nicodemus that people must be born of water and the Spirit. Jesus says, “You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit” (*John 3:7-8*).

You cannot control it, but you can clearly see its effects. You cannot control a tornado. But, after it has passed through, you can see its path and its power. Between the wind and the tongues of fire, every person gathered together could hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their own language.

Jesus said, “I will ask the Father and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever — the Spirit of Truth” (*John 14:16-17*). “He will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you” (*John 14:26*). “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth” (*John 16:13*).

In describing the reality of the world to Timothy, Paul wrote that some people are “always learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth” (*2 Timothy 3:7*). It is only through the work of the Holy Spirit that we are able to discern the truth and proclaim it boldly.

That same Holy Spirit is available today! The Spirit’s purpose is still the same today. The Spirit provides comfort, convicts us of the truth, including our own sin and the truth about Jesus. The same Spirit assures us of forgiveness and salvation. Through that same Spirit we are equipped with gifts to build up and strengthen the Church. Some will speak in other languages or work signs and wonders or bring healing and wholeness of life in the name of Jesus to hurting people throughout this world. Through that Spirit we are equipped to share the Gospel of Jesus, to be his witnesses to the



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ends of the earth. He helps us to connect the dots of information that lead people to Jesus, just as those first disciples did on Pentecost.

We would do well to remember that the disciples were not just filled with the Spirit once. Prior to Pentecost Jesus breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” Then he told them to wait until they were filled again with the Spirit at Pentecost. Later, Acts reminds us that they were filled again and again. In fact, Paul writes in Ephesians 5:18, “Be filled with the Spirit.” It is an ongoing action that is never completed.

The entire Church can only experience the transforming power of the Spirit one disciple at a time. The Holy Spirit resides in the Church by residing in the heart and life of each believer who is a part of the body of Christ. Those first disciples were frightened and lacked faith. They didn’t fully understand the plan, even though they had been with Jesus for three years. But the Holy Spirit brought unity, strength, courage to act and just enough faith to speak out. And the results were amazing. The string of events changed the entire world. Without Pentecost we would not be here today!

Paul tells the Corinthians, “Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is

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## ***Continued from Page 9***

in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

While the church is often preoccupied with programs and styles, techniques, methods and marketing, Jesus is concerned about one thing — our openness to the work of his Holy Spirit as his faithful disciples.

C.S. Lewis in his book, *Mere Christianity*, reflects on the fact that, when you consider the transforming power of the Holy Spirit that equips you to be Christ’s witnesses, you may be thinking this is more than you bargained for in becoming a Christian, a follower of Jesus. He writes, “I think that many of us, when Christ has enabled us to overcome one or two sins that were an obvious nuisance, are inclined to feel (though we do not put it into words) that we are now good enough. He has done all we wanted him to do, and we should be obliged if he would leave us alone. But the question is not what we intended ourselves to be, but what he intended us to be when he made us. ... Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what he is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on. You knew that those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised. But presently he starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make sense. What on earth is he up to? The explanation is that he is building quite a different house from the one you thought of — throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making courtyards. You thought you were going to be made into a decent little cottage, but he is building a palace. And he intends to come and live in it himself.”

While such a transformation may seem overwhelming, it is far better than to slip into an unintentional affirmation of universalism. If we aren’t living as faithful disciples, witnessing, proclaiming the Gospel, making disciples of all nations, what are we assuming? Do we believe they will hear the truth from someone else? Do we believe it doesn’t matter if people don’t believe in Jesus? Would people conclude from our lack of passion for sharing our faith that all people must be

saved, and that Jesus offers us nothing that we don’t already possess?

Being a disciple, making disciples, being witnesses, evangelizing others is central to our faith because it was central to Jesus’ mission. It is the very reason he came and is present with us. It is only the power of the Holy Spirit that transforms us into such followers of Christ Jesus who care so deeply that we cannot refrain from sharing the Gospel and discipling others.

Looking forward to seeing you soon.

**Bishop John Bradosky**

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## **Treasurer’s report**

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increases in congregational benevolence are relatively small. For 2018 and 2019, we forecast a 2.5 percent increase in benevolence each year — after a very rapid 7.8 percent increase in 2017. Even a small additional increase in benevolence next year would make a significant dent in the remaining operating deficit.

The NALC maintains its commitment to a lean organization focused on service to its congregations. Yet, there are so many additional opportunities to invest in missions, pastoral development, congregational services, discipleship mentoring and youth, family and senior ministries, if funding is available. For that reason, I would like to thank all NALC congregations and individual donors for your partnership in funding and advancing the ministries of the NALC.

The table on Page 5 summarizes the NALC Operating Budget for 2018, our current forecast for 2018, and the proposed budget for 2019. The full Operating Budget will be included in the package of reports for the Convocation and posted on the NALC website.

NALC members with questions may direct them to [treasurer@thenalc.org](mailto:treasurer@thenalc.org).

# NALC Senior Ministry Conference

The second annual NALC Senior Adult Ministry Conference will be held Oct. 30-31 at Reformation Lutheran Church in Culpeper, Va. It will begin at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 30, and conclude at noon on Wednesday.

Topics covered will include renewing a congregation through older adults, developing a discipleship-centered senior adult ministry, compelling mature adults to follow the call to service and incorporating an inter-generational ministry into the life of the local church. The event will also include workshops and breakout sessions.

Featured presenter will be Dr. Charles Arn, visiting professor of church ministry and outreach at Wesley Seminary in Marion, Ind. He is a pioneer of senior adult ministry in the United States, having written several books in this field including, *Catching the Age Wave* and *White Unto Harvest*.



**Charles Arn**

Dr. Arn is a popular speaker known for his creative communication. He is considered one of the leading authorities and spokespersons in the field of congregational health and growth. He is past president of the American Society of Church Growth, an association of professors, executives, pastors and consultants dedicated to the study of evangelism and congregational outreach. Dr. Arn has more than 30 years of experience and leadership in the field of congregational life, health and growth. He has authored 15 books, edited five others and is a regular contributor to several well known pastoral websites. He is a popular speaker nationally and overseas.

Registration fee for the conference is \$25 and includes conference materials and lunch. For more information visit [www.thenalc.org](http://www.thenalc.org) or contact Pastor Brad Hales, NALC Director of Domestic Mission, at [bhales@thenalc.org](mailto:bhales@thenalc.org).



## Youth and Family Ministry

Last call for the Ventures in Youth Ministry Symposium, Aug. 13-14, Monday and Tuesday of Lutheran Week in Denver. Registration numbers are up over numbers from this time last year.

Youth and Family Ministry in the NALC is taking big steps forward, and the symposium is quickly becoming an anchor event. Consider sending someone from your congregation to get connected with the NALC nationwide.

Our keynote speaker for the symposium is Thomas O'Neill. Tom is a philanthropist at Second Harvest Food Bank and former president of Youth Encounter. He has been involved in ministry to young people for much of his life and has much to offer us.

To register for the Ventures in Youth Ministry Symposium, please visit [lutheranweek.com](http://lutheranweek.com).

Otherwise, be on the lookout for our children's and youth ministry survey. This fall we plan to survey as many of our congregations as possible. The purpose is to gather information about what your congregation is currently doing and/or hopes to be doing in ministry to young people. Eventually, we want to connect like-minded congregations with clusters and events.

Hope to see you in Denver.

***Gary and Laurie Pecuch have served in youth ministry for more than 30 years at St. John's Lutheran Church in Grove City, Ohio. They serve the NALC as youth ministry coaches and provide a variety of no-cost resources for NALC congregations through their website. Visit [faithwebbing.com](http://faithwebbing.com) and fill out the contact form.***



# All Saints Lutheran in Arlington, Texas, begins a Spanish-language ministry

**By Pastor John Schneusner**

All Saints Lutheran Church in Arlington, Texas, strives to embrace the NALC's Core Values: Christ Centered, Mission Driven, Traditionally Grounded and Congregationally Focused. As we continued to intentionally find ways to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with those in our neighborhood, we recognized that many of us didn't speak the same language. While some are endeavoring to learn Spanish, we knew it was time to take the next step.

Last year, we started with zero: zero budget and zero people for a Spanish-language ministry.

Through a referral from Pastor Pedro Portillo, Pastor Jose Torres came to us willing to start a service. He has established a core of more than 30 people who worship regularly at a Spanish-language service, even though it is held at 1:30 p.m.

During the past year, Pastor Torres, formerly an ELCA pastor, went through the process and became certified by the NALC. He also has been able to serve in a crucial role as interim over at Santa Maria Lutheran Church in Irving, Texas, since January, and will conclude that role at the end of July.

Pastor Torres' compensation at All Saints thus far has simply been 90 percent of the offerings received from that service, which is about what he would get as pulpit supply. (The other 10 percent goes into a benevolence fund as tithe.)

In January, we were awarded a \$10,000 grant from the NALC's Great Commission Fund for a Spanish-language ministry. We've deferred the grant's distribution until July, so that it may be more effectively distributed when Pastor Torres is no



**Pastor Jose Torres**

longer financially subsidized by his interim work at Santa Maria.

Then, for the second half of this year, we've set out to call Pastor Torres to All Saints, normalize his compensation within our budget and move the Spanish language service to 11:30 a.m. — even if it means meeting in our fellowship hall.

Adding this \$10,000 grant to the expected income from Spanish language worship made it possible to have a conversation about a part-time salary for Pastor Torres. But then last month our finance team recommended that All Saints match the \$10,000 grant from the NALC each year it's given, out of our savings!

So this grant has not only made it possible to expand Great Commission ministry here in Arlington, Texas, it has inspired All Saints to match the funds in order to prioritize this mission!

We cannot thank enough those who, through their generous donations, made possible the blessing this allows us to be to others and to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

In July, All Saints Lutheran Church voted to call Pastor Torres to a two-thirds time position as Associate Pastor, starting immediately, in order to expand and prioritize Spanish-language ministry in the community through All Saints. We invite you to celebrate God's abundant work amongst us as we strive to be Christ Centered, Mission Driven, Traditionally Grounded and Congregationally Focused.

***Pastor John Scheusner is senior pastor of All Saints Lutheran Church in Arlington, Texas. To learn more about the work being done at All Saints, please visit [thenalc.org/GCS](http://thenalc.org/GCS).***

# Water Mission project in Indonesia

**By Kevin Herr**  
*Water Mission*

I recently returned from a trip to Indonesia where we visited some of Water Mission's safe water projects. It was encouraging to see how God is at work in this distant part of the world.

Indonesia is the fourth largest country in the world following China, India, and the United States. It is also the world's most populous Muslim country. The differences between predominantly Muslim and predominantly Christian communities were fascinating and apparent as we visited a wide range of communities. It was amazing to learn how God is using all of these projects to transform people's lives.

The highlight of the trip came when we went to the project commissioning celebration in Lae Hundulan. This village is so remote that the only way to access it is to travel the last few miles on the back of motorcycles. As we arrived in the mountainous community, a large tent was set up next to the school and several hundred people were gathered under it.

The joy of the villagers overflowed as the celebration — full of speeches, dancing, and a lot of food — started in full force. Before the safe water project, their only source required community members to walk down a steep hill to the nearby river. Now, thanks to Water Mission, there are eight



access points throughout the community, each targeting common areas including a school and health clinic.

One of the workers at the health clinic shared that since the water system started operating, no one had come to the clinic because of diarrhea or waterborne illness.

I met a woman named Sela who used to walk four times a day to collect water. She shared that before, when they had to drink the contaminated river water, her kids were always getting sick. Sela was eager to show me the water tap near her home and talk about the changes she's seen in her family. She was incredibly grateful to have finally access to safe water!

Just as importantly, I was encouraged to hear about how our staff, after spending countless long, hard days working on the technical parts of a water project, would gather together community members and hold candle-lit Bible studies to proclaim God's love.

Our Indonesian staff members' hearts to serve and see lives touched by God reminded me of Hebrews 10:24-25, "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."





# Texas congregation continues Hurricane Harvey relief efforts

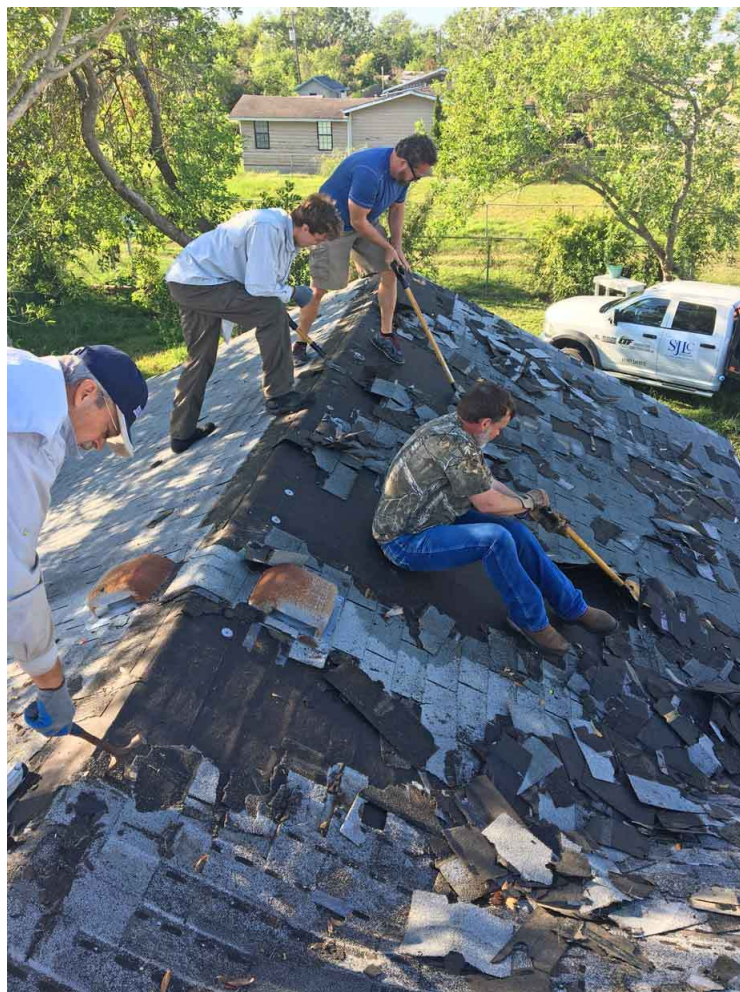
Hurricane Harvey made landfall in August of 2017 and devastated the lives of millions of people on the Gulf Coast of Texas. The congregation of St. John Lutheran Church in Boerne, Texas, has been helping with the cleanup and rebuilding efforts ever since.

Monthly relief trips have become the norm for St. John Lutheran Church. Every month, teams ranging from 10 to 30 people from St. John and other area churches head out to the coastal towns and Rockport area.

Led by Lance Folkerts, a congregation member and owner of LTF Innovative Construction, these teams help to cleanup, rebuild and provide comfort and hope to those affected by the hurricane.

In the months just after the hurricane, the monthly trips handled tasks such as debris removal, clean-up and demolition. In December 2017, St. John Lutheran Church received a \$20,000 grant from NALC Disaster Response to help cover the material expenses of the rebuilding efforts.

In the past several months, volunteers have begun to reconstruct homes that were damaged or destroyed by the hurricane. The grant funds are being used to purchase lumber, electrical wiring,



drywall, framing material and other items necessary when building a home.

St. John has also qualified for a second grant that will be distributed once the initial money has been depleted. Currently, there is a list of more than 100 people that will need homes and the volunteers from St. John are committed to be there to help.

In addition to offering physical assistance, the disaster relief volunteers provide fellowship, prayers and comfort.

The people of St. John Lutheran Church are unwavering in their desire to make a difference and

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help people get back on their feet.  
The support they offer is deeply  
appreciated.

Tencha Keiser of Aransas Pass,  
Texas, a thankful woman who lost  
her home and was helped by the  
team from St. John, wrote this poem  
for the volunteers:

### ***One Dark Friday?***

*My heart is breaking, Aransas Pass.  
My heart lies broken, America.*

*Still,  
your spirit soars,  
my dear Texans  
my fellow Americans*

*Too numerous to count  
my gentle, generous friends,  
I'd never met before,*



*from everywhere.  
You cook me meals.  
You feed my soul.*

*You,  
lovely, Lutheran ladies  
sent homemade blankets  
to warm my heart,  
for always.*

*You,  
dedicated workers,  
we have no home to put you.  
You sleep quickly in your trucks  
so that tomorrow  
you can help us again.*

*My town  
now completely covered  
with quick smiles  
and generous hearts.*

*Your great spirit, America,  
has healed my heart.*

*Thanks ya'll!  
All of ya'll!*

***Gifts to support NALC Disaster Response may  
be given online at [www.thenalc.org/donate](http://www.thenalc.org/donate) or  
sent to NALC Disaster Response; 2299 Palmer  
Drive, Suite 220; New Brighton, MN 55112-2202.***



# NALC delegation attends GAFCON

The North American Lutheran Church sent a delegation of three as ecumenical observers to the third Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) in Jerusalem in June. Attending as observers were Bishop John Bradosky, Pastor David Wendel and Pastor Bassam Abdallah. The invitation to attend this “by-invitation-only” conference was extended to us by representatives of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA). The NALC and ACNA have been in ongoing ecumenical consultations since the formation of the NALC.

The *Initial Statement on Ecumenical and Inter-Lutheran Commitments* of the North American Lutheran Church states:

*Our confessional commitment leads us to participate in ecumenical and inter-Lutheran associations in response to Jesus’ prayer that all his believers may be one. We intend to engage in ecumenical and inter-Lutheran endeavors at the international, national, and local levels, in accordance with our commitment to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. ...*

*As an initial strategy the North American Lutheran Church will ... give priority to relationships, including ecumenical dialogues, with churches such as the Anglican Church in North America, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Orthodox Churches. ...*

*The bishop of the NALC will initiate contact with and respond to all Christian churches, denominations, bodies, judicatories, and fellowships that desire to be in communication and conversation with this church, for the sake of Christian unity and the mission of the Gospel. Through our ecumenical and inter-Lutheran relationships, the NALC wishes to be an expression of our oneness in Christ, the uniqueness of Christ as the Savior of the world, and the apostolic mission we share in his name. ...*

As the NALC was being formed in 2010, an invitation was extended by the Most Rev. Robert Duncan, Archbishop of the also newly-formed Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), for an ecumenical consultation to begin.



## *Ministry Matters*

### **Pastor David Wendel**

Assistant to the Bishop  
for Ministry and Ecumenism

Although our paths out of previous church bodies were markedly different, we shared a firm commitment to Jesus Christ as the unique and only Savior of the world. We stood firmly together on the truth and authority of God’s unchanged and unchanging Word, especially with regard to marriage, human sexuality and the sanctity of all human life.

We accepted their invitation and the first ACNA-NALC ecumenical consultation took place March 27, 2012, at Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pa. After that meeting, Bishop John Bradosky and ACNA Archbishop Robert Duncan affirmed:

*It is our mutual commitment to pursue the development of ecumenical relationships between the ACNA and the NALC on the basis of Holy Scripture. Jesus’ prayer “that they all may be one ... so that the world may believe” (John 17:21) calls us to give expression to our unity in Him as a vital part of our witness to the world and an expression of the power of the Gospel. It is further our commitment to pursue this relationship on the basis of strengthening the capacity of both church bodies for mission and ministry; strengthening both pastoral leadership and congregational outreach.*

We were blessed by the experience, witness and courage of the ACNA and their bold leadership as we formed the NALC. Since that time, we have continued meeting twice a year for consultations, which have resulted in a joint affirmation on the biblical understanding of marriage together with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the Lutheran Church—Canada.

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In 2017, we completed and made available to congregations four *Pastoral and Educational Affirmations* stating our consensus on *Jesus Christ, the Gospel and Justification, Holy Baptism, Holy Communion* and *Holy Scripture*.

We are currently developing an affirmation on our shared understanding of, and commitment to, discipleship and the Great Commission, which we hope will lead to a joint conference called, *Disciple Life 2020*, in conjunction with the NALC Pastors Conference in February of 2020.

An important aspect of our developing relationship has been mutual conversation, support and encouragement. We have invited representatives of the ACNA to attend and greet our annual Convocation, and we have been present for their Provincial Assemblies. Together with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and other religious leaders, we have met to discuss and prepare open letters regarding marriage, religious liberty and gender identity.

Separating from previous church bodies and taking firm stands with regard to these issues are not easy or simple tasks. We have benefitted by having faithful partners with whom we stand, pray, consult and cooperate.

In that regard, early in 2017, ACNA leaders in our consultation shared with us that plans were underway for the third Global Anglican Future Conference to be held in Jerusalem in June 2018. These GAFCON gatherings were first organized by the Global South Anglican Network, with the initial conference taking place in 2008 in Jerusalem.

The first GAFCON was in response to actions contrary to the Word of God and historic Christian teaching by the Anglican Church in Canada and the Episcopal Church (USA), which would be followed later by actions of the Episcopal Church of Brazil and the Scottish Episcopal Church.

The first GAFCON produced the *Jerusalem Statement and Declaration*, through which the Conference “took up the challenge of restoring biblical authority (and the teaching on human sexuality in particular) by affirming the primacy of



***The Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) met June 17-22 in Jerusalem.***

the Bible as God’s Word written and going back to the other sources of Anglican identity ... The Conference also constituted a Primates Council and authorised it to recognise Anglican churches in areas where orthodox Anglicans had been deprived of their church property and deposed from holy orders.”

In other words, GAFCON directly challenged the move away from the truth and authority of Holy Scripture. It challenged the reinterpretation of biblical Christian teaching with regard to sexuality and marriage and affirmed the Anglican Christians in Canada and the United States who, in response to the lack of repentance in their church bodies, believed they were compelled by the Word of God to leave those church bodies and form new communities that would respect and uphold “the Bible as God’s Word written,” in accordance with Anglican belief, teaching and practice. Eventually, provincial Anglican bishops in the global south provided support, oversight and encouragement to Anglicans in North America, leading to the formation of the Anglican Church in North America.

GAFCON was foundational in supporting those biblically and confessionally faithful Anglicans who now, largely, comprise the ACNA. Because GAFCON is so important to the history of the ACNA and critical to the calls for repentance and renewal in the Anglican Communion, the NALC was invited to send a delegation to GAFCON 2018. This is the first time an ecumenical delegation has been invited to GAFCON and is an important first step toward recognizing the global and ecumenical impact of these gatherings.

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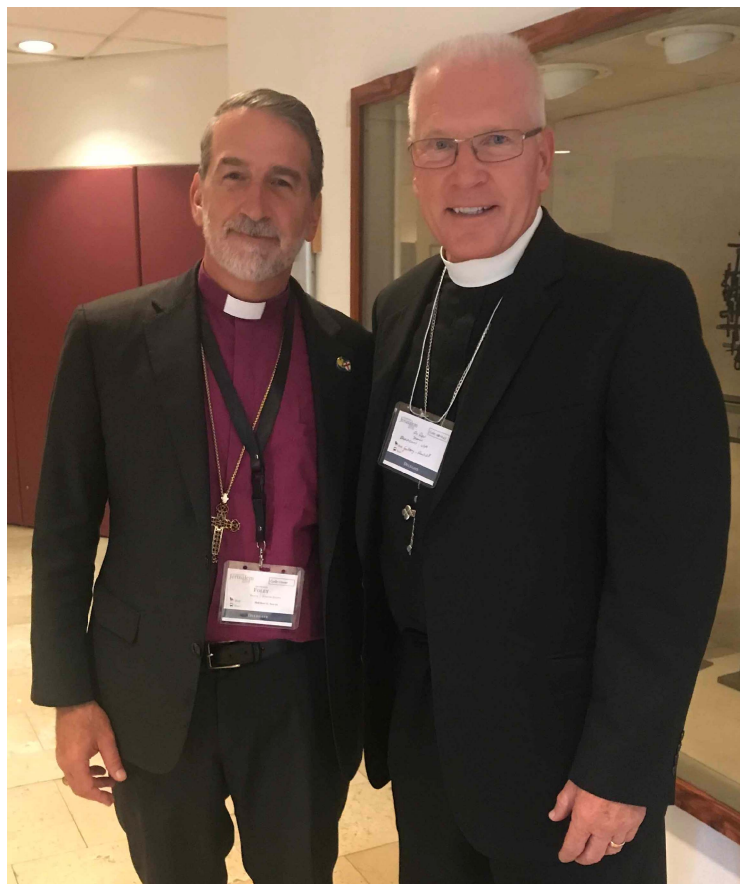
There were several goals for NALC representation at GAFCON. Primarily, we were invited to attend in support for our coworkers in the Gospel from the Anglican Church in North America.

“Our folks in the NALC understand that it is not easy to take such a stand against the institutional church and the dominant culture. We know from first-hand experience the criticism and opposition that comes from holding fast to the truth of God’s Word,” Bishop Bradosky said. “ACNA has been under fire in many ways since they first left the Episcopal Church (USA), by the Episcopal Church and the Archbishop of Canterbury, who have refused to acknowledge and recognize them as part of the Anglican Communion. We were invited to come observe, but also to support our brothers and sisters in ACNA as they continue ‘to fight the good fight of the faith,’ as we read in 1 Timothy 6. They asked us to come, so we went ... and we were blessed by the strong stand they are taking and their witness to Anglicanism and the world.”

The 2018 GAFCON Assembly culminated in a public *Letter to the Churches*. It may be found at [www.gafcon.org/news/letter-to-the-churches-gafcon-assembly-2018](http://www.gafcon.org/news/letter-to-the-churches-gafcon-assembly-2018). A few excerpts from the letter may communicate the boldness with which the participants preach, teach and witness as they seek to call Anglicanism, and the Christian Church as a whole, back to the Word of God:

*The third Global Anglican Future Conference (Gafcon) was held in Jerusalem in June 2018, a decade after the inaugural Gafcon in 2008. Gafcon 2018, one of the largest global Anglican gatherings, brought together 1,950 representatives from 50 countries, including 316 bishops, 669 other clergy and 965 laity. A unanimity of spirit was reflected throughout the Conference as we met with God in the presence of friends from afar. We celebrated joyful worship, engaged in small group prayer and were inspired by presentations, networks and seminars.*

*We met together around the theme of “Proclaiming Christ Faithfully to the Nations”. Each day began with common prayer and Bible exposition from Luke 22-24, followed by plenary sessions on God’s Gospel, God’s Church and God’s World.*



***Archbishop Foley Beach of the Anglican Church in North America and NALC Bishop John Bradosky at the GAFCON Assembly in Jerusalem.***

*We renewed our commitment to proclaim the gospel of the triune God in our churches and in all the world. Our Chairman reminded us in his opening address: “God’s gospel is the life-transforming message of salvation from sin and all its consequences through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is both a declaration and a summons: announcing what has been done for us in Christ and calling us to repentance, faith and submission to his Lordship.” It involves the restoration and reaffirmation of God’s original creative purposes. It is addressed to men, women and children and it is our only hope in the light of the final judgment and the reality of hell.*

*This is God’s gospel, the gospel concerning his Son (Romans 1:1–3). The center of the gospel message is this one person, Jesus Christ, and all that he has done through his perfect life, atoning death, triumphant resurrection and glorious ascension. In our daily expositions, we followed Jesus’ path from the judgments by Pilate and the Jewish leaders, to his death for us on the cross, to his breaking the*

**Continued on Page 19**

bonds of death on Easter morning and to his commission to the disciples to proclaim “repentance for the forgiveness of sins in his name to all nations” (Luke 24:47). The uniqueness of Jesus Christ lies at the heart of the gospel: “there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). The gospel confronts us in the midst of our confusion and sin but it does not leave us there. It includes a summons to repentance and a call to believe in the gospel (Mark 1:15), which results in a grace-filled life. The ascended Christ gave his Spirit to empower his disciples to take this gospel to the world.

Yet faithful proclamation of this gospel is under attack from without and within, as it has been from apostolic times (Acts 20:28-30). ...

Over the past twenty years, we have seen the hand of God leading us toward a reordering of the Anglican Communion. Gafcon has claimed from the beginning: “We are not leaving the Anglican Communion; we are the majority of the Anglican Communion seeking to remain faithful to our Anglican heritage.” As Archbishop Nicholas Okoh stated in the inaugural Synodical Council: “We are merely doing what the Communion leadership should have done to uphold its own resolution in 1998.” ...

*In light of the recommendations of the Synodical Council, we respectfully urge the Archbishop of Canterbury*

*+ to invite as full members to Lambeth 2020 bishops of the Province of the Anglican Church in North America and the Province of the Anglican Church in Brazil and*

*+ not to invite bishops of those Provinces which have endorsed by word or deed sexual practices which are in contradiction to the teaching of Scripture and Resolution I.10 of the 1998 Lambeth Conference, unless they have repented of their actions and reversed their decisions.*

*In the event that this does not occur, we urge Gafcon members to decline the invitation to attend Lambeth 2020 and all other meetings of the Instruments of Communion.*



***Bishop John Bradosky, Pastor David Wendel and Pastor Bassam Abdallah represented the NALC at the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) in Jerusalem.***

It should be noted, the last statements quoted from the letter carry the most weight, practically speaking. For Anglicans, the next worldwide gathering of bishops and archbishops of provinces (Lambeth 2020) is critical to the maintenance of “communion.”

GAFCON is calling for the inclusion of ACNA and the Province of the Anglican Church in Brazil and for the rejection of those bishops of Provinces which do not repent and reverse their decisions. If this doesn’t happen, the GAFCON bishops are urged not to attend Lambeth 2020. This action on the part of GAFCON bishops and participants is powerful and demonstrates their unwavering commitment to the Word of God and faithful biblical teaching and practice. Together with the ACNA faithful, we applaud their decision and support them in their efforts to uphold God’s Word of truth.

At the end of the Conference, we were reminded of Martin Luther’s words at the Diet of Worms in 1521, when Luther stood against church and empire, confessing, “My conscience is captive to the Word of God. Here I stand, I can do no other. God help me. Amen.”

Witnessing firsthand the courage and commitment of these faithful Anglicans, Bishop Bradosky said, “It is my hope and prayer that Lutherans from around the world would be so faithful and so bold.”



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