



# WESTERN AREA NEWSLETTER

## Summer 2024

**Greetings!** This newsletter is a resource meant to gather some of what is going on in the Western Area of the North American Lutheran Church as well as provide a place to find a lot of what is available to pastors and congregations from the NALC and its members. I am Rev. Marv Combs, the Area Assistant to the Bishop (AAB), for our area here in the West. You can see our Western Area on the map above. I provide a direct connection of support for your Mission District Dean from the Office of the Bishop of the NALC.

### FIRST THINGS

With Summer ending this month we look back at where we have been and look to what is ahead in the Fall. It's been vacation time for many along with some graduations too. Schools are back in session. For congregations, September is traditionally the time to restart with things like 'Rally Sunday' on the calendar. **First let's look back a bit.**

#### Continental Youth Gathering: July 1-4

Over 300 youth and leaders attended the NALC Youth Gathering at St. John's Lutheran Church in Boerne, Texas. They came from NALC congregations all over the U.S.A. and Canada for a time together living out the theme of the event, "We Belong." Stay tuned for when the next event is announced.



**WE BELONG**  
"I KNOW MY OWN AND MY OWN KNOW ME"

NALC  
Continental  
Youth Gathering  
2024

#### 2024 Annual NALC Convention-Online

On August 9<sup>th</sup>, The NALC annual Convocation was held virtually. As you may know, the NALC congregations have voted to have alternating in-person and virtual convocations. This makes a difference as the resources needed to attend the in-person events can put a crunch on many congregation's budgets. Got to this link for information.

<https://thenalc.org/2024-lutheran-week-archive/>

And Looking Forward –

#### Annual Clergy Retreat, January 2025, San Antonio, Texas

Registration is now open for the Annual Clergy Retreat. Come and relax on the Riverwalk; spouses are welcome. You can find all the information about where, where, and what is happening with the event. Info can be found at:

<https://thenalc.org/clergy-retreat-2025/>





## **Congregations & Clergy**

<https://thenalc.org/congregations/category/western/>

This has been a quiet Summer in regards to receiving new congregations and pastors. There are a few Western Area congregations in the call process with one parish having just recently called their new pastor.

Denny Park Lutheran Church has called Rev. David Norland (LCMC) as their new pastor. He is to be installed Sunday, Sept. 22.

You can find those congregations in the call process at [www.thenalc.org/call](http://www.thenalc.org/call)

### **How About Hawaii?**

Chinese Lutheran Church of Honolulu is looking for an associate pastor to serve their English-speaking ministry. Pastor Randy Ouimette is serving them as interim pastor. If you would like to talk with Pastor Randy about the call or as their next interim, his number is 805-550-7708



### **Speaking of Icebergs and Interim Pastors**

Congregations seem to be like icebergs in a way. They can become frozen in place. Staff is the same for years. Worship has a familiar and predictable flow. Ministries have their committees and work with the same partners they always have. All this is a good thing! But when a pastor's time ends with the parish things change. This too is a good thing! Its as if the 'iceberg' that the church functioned in has thawed and is now open to examination and change where needed. This is where a trained interim pastor can help guide the congregation through this process before the new pastor arrives and the 'iceberg' re-freezes. Here are the five main tasks of the interim pastor leads the congregation through.

## **Five Developmental Tasks for the Congregation during the Interim Time**

- Come to terms with the congregation's history (listening to groups and individuals)
- Reclaim/rediscover their identity (being honest about who they are today)
- All needed leadership/staff change (shifting power)
- Help make a commitment to
  - A new future
  - New leadership
  - New directions in ministry
- Rethink/reconnect to denominational ties



## **Considering Becoming a Trained Intentional Pastor**

Many pastors have the gifts to be a trained interim pastor. Maybe you're retired, semi-retired, or in a specialized ministry or position. A parish in need may want a part time interim while another full time. Some are local and some are in another area for those pastors eager to get out and see a different part of the country. The North American Lutheran Church is looking to provide the training that will equip you to serve congregations in this unique ministry during their time of change in pastoral leadership.

I am building a list of pastors interested in Interim Training so we can develop a cohort group out here in the West for such a training event. If you are interested or might just be considering it, please email me at [mcombs@thenalc.org](mailto:mcombs@thenalc.org). Please also in that email message cc it to Bishop Emeritus John Bradosky as he heads up this effort at [jbradosky@thenalc.org](mailto:jbradosky@thenalc.org)

## **Short Take- Online Class on the Book of Revelation**

The class will be taught by the Rev. Dr. Mark Braaten, Southern Area Assistant to the Bishop for the NALC. Pastor Braaten's Doctor of Ministry degree is in Revelation studies. He has taught on the book of Revelation for 30 years. He is the author of two books on Revelation, *Come Lord Jesus: A Study of Revelation* and *Engaging Revelation*.

- Oct. 3 — The Dragon, Beast, 666, Revelation 12 and 13.
- Oct. 10 — Why I Don't like the Theory of a Rapture.
- Oct. 17 — Armageddon, Revelation 16 and 19.
- Oct. 24 — New Jerusalem, Revelation 21 and 22.

For more information <https://www.thenals.org/learn-with-us/engaging-revelation/>