NORTH AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

WESTERN AREA NEWSLETTER

July 2026

Greetings!

I am Rev. Marv Combs, the Western Area Assistant to the Bishop (AAB). This newsletter is a resource of what is going on in the Western Area of the North American Lutheran Church. It provides a place to find information for pastors and congregations of the NALC.

The NALC Annual Convocation -August 7th @ 4pm PDT

ONLINE-ONE LAST TIME

The North American Lutheran Church holds gatherings called Convocations that attend to the business of the whole denomination. All clergy and congregations participate in this. When I recently heard Bishop Dan Selbo remark, "this will be the last year we hold an online NALC Annual Convocation," it really hit me. I had finally gotten used to them. We went through COVID with them and we're pretty good at them now. The pattern was one year in person, the next year online. Save time and money yet still get the business of the North American Lutheran Church attended to. Reports, elections, and approvals; we got them all done through either the online or in person process. Now we are closing that pattern after this coming online Convocation in a few weeks.

How and why are we doing this? From now on we are going to in person only Convocations every other year. If you remember, we voted and approved moving to a two-year budget rather than an annual one so an approval vote is required every other year. Elected positions terms are synced up now so all elections can be held every other year as well, corresponding with the Convocation. And the reports are becoming more and more accessible online anytime as we intentionally move to bring our internet presence more present.

The optimum has always been to meet in person, face to face, as the body of Christ. The hope is with having this standardized schedule congregations can better plan to be able to send more members to these NALC in person gatherings.

For this last online gathering, here is the link to register, attend pre-Convocation forums, and other material. Just click on this link to get started. Make sure to register using the 'CLICK HERE TO REGISTER TO ATTEND'

https://thenalc.org/en-us/event/online-convocation/

The cut-off date to register is August 6th

At this site you will also find

- Rules of procedure (Who votes/how?)
- Proposed agenda
- The nominees for the North American Lutheran Seminary Board of Regents

All information on how this online format will work can be found at the above website as well.

Pre-convocation Online Forums

There will be two forums held online before the Convocation to hear the details of the upcoming business before the actual Convocation. Both forums are the same. The dates are;

- July 30th from 4pm-5 PDT
- August 4th from 4pm-5 PDT

The online connection information will go out to those who registered for the Convocation before the forum dates.

Congregations and Clergy

We welcome these congregation to the Western Area

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Brush, Colorado

Clergy roster info can be found at:

https://thenalc.org/en-us/people/

Congregation roster info can be found at:

https://thenalc.org/en-us/congregations/

A Highlight as We Welcome

TRINITY OROMO EVANGELICAL CHURCH, PORTLAND, OR and PASTOR KAMISO BORU

Did you know? The congregations of the North American Lutheran Church (NALC) out here in the western region of the United States are so spread out that we can easily miss out on hearing about significant happenings in our region. Did you know that we have a new start-up congregation in our Mission District? They are Trinity Oromo Evangelical Church.

Trinity Oromo Evangelical Church, Portland, OR, (NALC), an Afan Oromo-speaking congregation serving the Oromo diaspora community, began as a Bible study group on August 31, 2025, and officially launched worship services on September 28, 2025, with sixteen founding members. Now, as of early 2026, Pastor Kamiso Boru serves Trinity Oromo Evangelical Church. Pastor Boru, originally from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, has a strong history as a leader and church planter in Houston, Texas, with the NALC. Membership of Trinity Oromo Evangelical Church, Portland, has continued to grow, with many of the members baptized and Confirmed in the Lutheran tradition through the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY).

TRINITY OROMO
EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN OREGON

As it says on their FB page, Trinity Oromo is "a Christ-centered Community where people gather to worship, grow in faith, and serve with love. Rooted in God's Word and led by the Holy Spirit, we seek to glorify Jesus Christ through prayer, worship, and service."

Now you know! We thank God for Pastor Kamiso Boru and our sisters and brothers at Trinity Oromo Evangelical Church! Please keep them in prayer as they continue to grow and serve as ambassadors for Christ in the mission field that is Portland, Oregon.

Trinity Oromo shares space at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 7810 SE 15th Ave, Portland, OR 97202. Their email is trinityoromoevachurchoregon@gmail.com

-- Pastor Phil Lee, Dean, Northwest Pacific Mission District, NALC (plee4433@gmail.com)

Annual Mission District Gatherings

The NALC is organized into geographical subdivisions of congregations called Mission Districts. These Mission Districts all have a Dean who connects you to the Office of the Bishop of the NALC. In many ways the connection with your Mission District is the most meaningful one as it is the local partnership that put you together with other local NALC congregations and the communities you have in common. Each year your Mission District members gather to worship, share, learn, and, plan for the future.

The **Southwest Pacific Mission District** will have their annual in person gathering October17th at Westchester Lutheran Church, CA.

An Important Note:

Your Mission District and Dean are there to serve you with a local presence. It is important for congregations and individuals to support your Dean financially to be able to cover their expenses. Please connect with your Dean to get details for support and donations.

Rev. Randy Ouimette
Southwest Pacific Mission District
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Rev. Taylor Stempniak
Central Pacific Mission District
ptmarie96@gmail.com

Rev. Phil Lee
Northwest Pacific Mission District
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Rev. Ken Hohag
Rocky Mountain Mission District
pastorbflc@bflchurch.org

This Newsletter is meant to be a short reminder about the upcoming Convocation. A follow up newsletter will come after to recap the results of the Convocation.

Connect with Area Assistant to the Bishop (AAB); Let me know if you would like me to come for a presentation, consultation, or event and I'll work with your Mission District Dean to make that happen as schedules allow. My email is;
mcombs@thenalc.org