



Good News

From the WNALC



Chair's Corner

Happy Resurrection Sunday!!!

My greeting may be a little early, but it is the Easter season, and I am excited that many more people will be able to worship together in person this year. Easter egg hunts may return, and it will be a time of celebration worthy of a new colorful spring outfit or at the very least a new spring hat.



Jacqui El Torro

Sadly, some people think that is what Easter is about. There is the annual viewing of the Mel Gibson movie, "The Passion of the Christ". The reading of the Gospels where Matthew, Mark, Luke and John have detailed the crucifixion. We have the story and the events down pretty good; but we treat Lent as though it is football season and Easter is the Superbowl. Food, drinks and laughter abound as family and friends gather together. "Will it be ham or lamb this year?" and "Since we couldn't get together last year let's do both!"

Is that it? Is that what Easter has become?

What is the real reason for the Easter season? Like nearly everyone else, I have had a lot of time to ponder Easter this year, and I wanted to approach it

differently. The Bible explains Easter in one simple verse, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16 ESV). This is why I prefer to think of it as Resurrection Sunday.

Think about the words of the 1984 song by Michael Leslie Jones aka Mick, and made famous by Foreigner, "I Want to Know What Love Is"

"I've gotta take a little time
A little time to think things over
I better read between the lines
In case I need it when I'm older
Now this mountain, I must climb
Feels like the world upon my shoulders
But through the clouds, I see love shine
It keeps me warm as life grows colder
In my life, there's been heartache and pain
I don't know if I can face it again
Can't stop now, I've traveled so far
To change this lonely life"

A lot of us are at that point of loneliness; it has been a very lonely year for many. Yet next the chorus of the song says "I wanna know what love is, I want you to show me. I wanna feel what love is, I know you can show me." In the Easter message, God wants to show us what love is. He wants us to feel what love is. We just need to receive God's abundant, *Continued on pg. 3*

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Council has had five virtual meetings since the last newsletter. We met January 22, 2021 in the evening to begin our virtual Annual Retreat, and we reconvened on January 23, 2021 in the morning and again in that late afternoon to finish up the retreat. We discussed our goals for this year and spent a lot of time discussing the Annual Gathering. Our February meeting was February 23, and it was also virtual. We are discussing how to best communicate with all of our churches in various mission districts. We have tentatively decided to turn this all over to the Fellowship/Community Chair (currently myself) and hope that if members have questions, concerns, etc. they will either contact me or one of the other council members. Our contact information is included in every newsletter and on the website. PLEASE reach out to us with your questions, concerns and news! We love to hear from you. Our last meeting was March 1 to conclude the February 23 meeting - discussing only the upcoming Annual Gathering. We are so looking forward to seeing many of you in Corpus Christi, Texas! Look for details about the Annual Gathering elsewhere in this newsletter. Also, please consider applying for the \$800 travel scholarship — it's open to all women who will be attending the Gathering. Details application are available the WNALC website and are attached to this newsletter.

Council Update



Sandy Strohecker

As you get ready for Holy Week, do you have special devotionals that prepare you for Easter? One of the devotionals I use is actually an app by YouVersion. This app provides many reading plans, devotionals, and the verse of the day that you can use to stay in the Word and grow closer to God. YouVersion is free and there is no advertising. It is rich with 2,232 versions of the Bible in 1,522 languages! Wow! Imagine over 2,000 different versions of the Bible! According to the website Bible.com, there have been over 465 million app installations on unique devices. YouVersion has Bible apps for iOS, Android, Voice (Google Home or Amazon Echo) and computer (Bible.com).

"It is great to learn how popular YouVersion is," you may say, "but how will it help me become more intimate with my Savior?" First, it is easy to use and easy to sign up. Download the app on your smartphone or tablet or access their website (Bible.com) from your computer. Join with Facebook, Google, Apple or sign-up using your email address. Once you are in the program you will find tabs labeled "Home", "Read", "Plans", "Discover" and more. Using the app on my Android phone the tabs located are at the bottom of the screen, but on the computer, they are at the top of the screen. If you just want to read the word of God select Read. From there you can choose a Book, Chapter and Verse. Then, you can choose which language and version of the Bible you would like to read. Some of the versions have audio, and some can be downloaded. I have two versions downloaded, so, when I don't have a cell signal, I can still read the Bible. As I am reading, I can bookmark, highlight, or make notes on a passage. When highlighting a verse there are a rainbow of colors available. Verses about one topic can be highlight the same color, and a different color can be used on verses related to a book you are studying.

Let's say you want to find a devotional plan for Easter on YouVersion. On my computer, I easily found more than six pages of possible plans, with 23 plans per page, ranging from three days to 40 days long. You could do a plan before and even another during Holy Week! A neat thing about this app is that you can add friends or family and schedule a devotional plan to do together! When you read a plan with others the last page of the plan is called, "Talk it over." Here you share the "one thing God is saying to you." Since you are studying as a group, you can respond to each other's thoughts and make plans for your next devotional plan! Plans range from readings, meditational, video, and audio. They vary in length from a couple of days to 15 days, 21 days, 30 days or

even 365 days!
Devotional plans can be selected to be saved for another time, and once a plan is completed, you will find it in your completed plans. When starting a devotional, you can read it privately or share your progress where friends see which devotional you are doing.

Spiritual Growth



Peggy Jording

The Verse of the Day pops up on your home screen. These are great for encouragement, memory verses, further reading, praying and for making verse images. Verse images can be made from the verse of the day or from any verse in a devotional or in the Bible. In addition, you can make a verse image using stock photos or personal photos on your phone or computer. Not only can you create a verse image, but you can share your insights on social media, email, texts, etc.

Other aspects of YouVersion are videos, prayers and building a Bible habit. Videos can be docudramas broken into scenes, such as *Son of God* and *Jesus* or broken into chapters like *Paul's Letter series*, "YouVersion Rest", and "Jesus in all of John". Videos may be teaching clips, or videos embedded in the devotionals themselves. Prayers can be added to your prayer list. You can share prayer requests with others, mark prayers answered, and archive them. To add a prayer, create a title and write down the prayer. Building a Bible habit is encouraged as you see the of number of days in a row you have visited YouVersion and read a devotional. You develop current streaks and perfect weeks, which are the number of weeks you have read each week. YouVersion can be found at Bible.com, and the app is available through your phone app store.

How do I become more intimate with my Savior? I take time every day to read a devotional, listen to the Bible being read, and connecting to others, as I grow closer to God. Please join me and take the Bible with you wherever you go.



Chair's Corner *Continued...*

unconditional love.

There are some people that I would give my life for, but as a parent I can't think of anyone that I would give my children's lives for. God sent His only begotten son, Jesus the Christ, to earth to sacrifice His life for us. God loves us so much that Jesus came, suffered and died for our sins. That's what love is. Love is the feeling you get deep down in your soul and spirit when you know God is your problem solver and your way maker; that blessed assurance that all is well within you.

That is what Easter is all about — love and the example Jesus Christ set for us to love one another unconditionally. We will have differences, yet if we have and share the divine love of God with everyone, believing and knowing that Jesus Christ came to Earth to set that example for us to live by, we can get past the differences. Christ suffered for our sinful natures and died upon the cross; but in defiance of death, He rose from the dead to show us what true love is.

Live in Love,

Jacqui

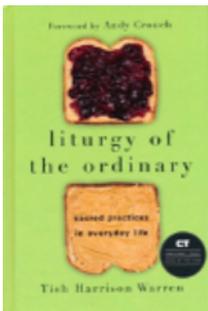
Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live," (John 11:25 ESV).

Recommended Reading

Four young women from Calvary Lutheran Church in Brookfield, WI

recently completed a book study of *Liturgy of the Ordinary: Sacred Practices in Everyday Life* by Tish Harrison Warren. Each short, easy-to-read chapter describes a portion of the worship liturgy and how it relates to a habit or practice in our everyday lives, such as eating leftovers and Communion. The author shares insights

about her own busy life, both serious and humorous, and references numerous Christian authors. There are also questions for discussion and suggested practices at the book's conclusion. *Liturgy of the Ordinary* provided for rich weekly discussions about the meaning behind the rituals of our worship, how they reflect our daily routines and how to be more intentional about our faith from Monday-Saturday in simple but meaningful ways.



Disaster Response



Marcella Nelson

Ten years ago, our family experienced a major flood in our city of Minot, North Dakota. As I reflect back on June 2011 there are many things I will never forget. Our city had warnings that a flood was coming so we had time to evacuate, but that was only possible with the help of many friends and relatives. Over 11,000 residents in the Mouse River Valley in the heart of Minot had to evacuate with whatever possessions they could move in a hurry. Our home had six feet of water on the main floor when the Mouse River was done raging. Thankfully there was no loss of life directly from the floodwaters. However, the impact on life as we knew it was great. About a third of our church families were flooded along with many businesses, churches, parks and roadways. It took us about a year and a half to restore our home.

Thinking about that time in our life, I remember the sorrow, despair, hard work and especially the waiting and waiting for contractors and workmen. I also remember the paperwork and the expense. However, even greater in my memory is the amount of help we received from friends, relatives, strangers and those groups who came to our town to help restore it. Many different church groups came and cleaned up mud, repaired homes and prayed with us in our time of need. I will never forget those kindnesses as long as I live. Because I've lived through a flood, I am dedicated to helping the NALC disaster response in any way I can. Our collection of physical items, money and gift cards and the work groups going to help disaster areas are so important. Knowing that there are Christian people who want to help and give of their time and resources, and many others who spend their time in prayer, makes a tremendous impact on the disaster victims. I thank you for all the support you give to NALC disaster response, and I encourage you to keep up the good work in Jesus'



Financial Matters

(God doesn't only want our money)



Jill Nesheim

When we think of giving, our mindset is usually financial. The word "tithing" comes to mind when we think of giving to the church and to God. In Deuteronomy 14:22 it says, "Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year."

Now giving money is important, giving to your church and other places that serve God. But sometimes I like to think about giving my time. Time can be a more valuable commodity than money! We place a high value on our time. We never seem to have time to do what we want or even need to do.

So, let's think about tithing our time. We can spend our time doing for others as Jesus said in Matthew 25:40, "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." What do you like to do? What are your talents and gifts? Some people teach Sunday School, others make quilts, and still others serve in the kitchen, on the church council, or by helping at the local food pantry. Sometimes serving others is as simple as visiting a sick neighbor or lending a helping hand.

When we spend time reading the Bible and devotionals or singing songs to praise and thank God we are giving Him our time. Going to church and spending that hour in God's house with God's family is an easy way to give Him your time.

However you choose to give to God, be it money or time, give with a joyful heart. Our giving never earns our way to heaven, but it comes from loving Him and a desire to give back when He has given us so much by dying on the cross for our salvation.

An Open Call

Pastor Trina Petersen has shared an open invitation to join together in prayer on Monday evenings at 8:46 pm (EST). To join, please call (712) 832-8330, access code: 107 5527#

But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me" (Luke 8:46 NIV).

Annual Gathering

It's Time to Start Planning

What is a delegate? According to our friend Daniel Webster, a delegate is "a person sent or authorized to represent others; in particular an elected representative sent to a conference." At the WNALC Annual Gathering each and every congregation in the WNALC is entitled and encouraged to send one representative. If you are your church's appointed or elected delegate to the Annual Convocation, you might also serve as the delegate to the Annual Gathering and vice versa (the events are scheduled on different days to allow for this).

What do I have to do if I'm a delegate? You will vote for council members, Mission Bank recipients and the budget. You are only allowed to vote if you are registered as your church's WNALC delegate. There is no additional charge to be a delegate, and theoretically, every woman at the gathering is representing a congregation. If there are two of you from the same church, one of you should register as the voting delegate. If you are the only one attending from your church, you should register as the voting delegate. It's easy, it's fun — you get to be the one to mark the boxes on the ballots. (If you have several from your church there, it can even be a "group" decision!) Please make sure that your congregation has one registered delegate!

"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:4 ESV).

We Need Your Gift of Service!

Having served on the WNALC Council faithfully for the last four years, Jacqui and Marcella will both be rotating off the council at this year's Annual Gathering. While the rest of the council will miss their joyful spirits, wisdom and presence



†, we look forward to getting to know the women who will be stepping up to fill their seats! Will it be you? Please begin to prayerfully consider whether this might be something that God is preparing you to do. If you have questions, are interested in running for WNALC council or would like to nominate a candidate — with her permission — please email Kim, kisiminger@gmail.com.

Mission Minded

Grace Grace, Favor Favor,

That greeting is sort of a trademark of my Pastors that has been adopted by our entire congregation. I use it here because I need a double portion of grace and favor from all of you.

When we looked at our Mission Bank offerings for this year, our funds are far from the goals we set and anticipated. I must take some of, if not most, of the blame for that. I have not been writing articles on the great work our two Mission Bank recipients do on a daily basis to impact the lives of the people they serve. To play a bit of catch up I am going to share some of the wonderful work that is being done with the funds that go to the Great Commission Society. Those dollars go to support the mission work of the church, from servants in the mission field, to church new starts, our partners in ministry around the globe.

Disaster Response needs no introduction, Mary Bates and her team go where God calls them to be. They need our flood buckets, gift cards, bibles and funds. Who would have ever thought that Texas would freeze over? Disaster Response was there to help people in need. That's where the funding and gift cards come in. They allow the Response Team to purchase whatever is needed for that situation. Enough from me; check out the work being done in our NALC mission fields and please support the WNALC Mission Banks.

Jacqui



Jacqui El Torro

Mission Driven The Faithfulness of God

As we approach Holy Week and Easter, we are celebrating God's goodness and faithfulness. In 1 Peter 2:6 ESV we read:

For it stands in Scripture:

"Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

There are many discouraging things that we face today in this world: a continuing global pandemic, civil unrest, political instability throughout the world, and natural disasters.

But these things should not come as a surprise to us since the fall in Genesis 3. We do not ignore the challenges, but rather, we proclaim the faithfulness and goodness of our God. We proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ which does not change, even in the midst of a changing world. And we know that other things may be shaken and fall away, that we rest securely because of the unshakable cornerstone. We rejoice in the privilege that God has called us into mission together as living stones, built upon the rock that is Jesus Christ.

To that end, our strategy for 2020-2021 continues:

A Paradigm for Revival – in Psalm 85, we have a paradigm or blueprint for revival. The practical nature of what the renewal and revival of the Church looks like practically speaking.



The Rev. Dr. Gemechis Buba

vv. 1-4: Remember God's Faithfulness – The same God who has called us His own through the death and resurrection of His son, who has claimed us in Baptism, sealed us by His Holy Spirit, and continues to feed us at His table is faithful. He who began a good work in us will bring it to completion in the day of Jesus Christ.

vv. 5-6: Acknowledge The Present – it is critical not to dismiss our current reality. Not dismissing the difficult things that stand before us or in our midst, the struggles, and our own need for repentance.

vv. 7-9: The Word – renewal and revival only come by the Word of God. It is critical that we listen and submit to the Word of God and be sustained by His Word.

vv. 10-13: Look to God's Promises – looking to the future as we are called to be ambassadors, living agents of God's grace. Living into our call of the Great Commission to: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

"For it stands in Scripture: Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame" (1 Peter 2:6 ESV).



Great Commission Society of the NALC Ministry Opportunities

The NALC encourages all congregations to have an active, intentional relationship supporting a local community ministry, one of the NALC mission congregations in North America and one global mission. The Great Commission Society of the NALC strives to facilitate partnerships between congregations and ministries that are passionate about spreading the Gospel. Following are links to several of the Great

Commission Society's Ministries and Mission Partners. To explore the full listing of mission opportunities supported by the Great Commission Society of the NALC, please visit thenalc.org/gcs/#find-ministry-adopt and click on the "Find Ministry to Adopt" button.

**Mission Update: Transfiguration Lutheran Church,
Pastor Pedro Portillo**



The last fifteen months my merciful God has blessed Transfiguration Lutheran Church in many ways. Our call to help with word and sacrament to many people in the middle of COVID-19 has been a special challenge. Learn more: thenalc.org/partners/iglesia-luterana-la-transfiguracion-irving/



Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch helps at-risk children and their families succeed in the name of Christ. Learn more: thenalc.org/partners/dakota-boys-and-girls-ranch/
Our story began over 30 years ago with 28 street children



desperately needing a safe place to call home. Recognizing the inequalities of life and need for abandoned children to have hope for a better future, we started a school for abandoned children so these children could have a safe childhood filled with love, access to education and career opportunities. Learn more: thenalc.org/partners/india-transformed/

LCBI is a Lutheran high school. Their mission statement reads, "LCBI is a Lutheran Discipleship school offering



grades 9-12. LCBI has strong academic, sport and choral programs. LCBI's Discipleship program is intended to provide students with team leadership opportunities. LCBI's is operating in its 109th year and continues to focus on "'We Would See Jesus'." Learn more: thenalc.org/partners/lutheran-collegiate-bible-institute/

**New Starts in the NALC – Starting New Missional Communities to Expand the Kingdom of God
NALC Mission Office & New Starts Team**

The NALC is committed to the renewal of all our congregations, and working to develop and deliver resources that challenge and open the NALC to the work of the Holy Spirit in our ministry and mission. .

In I Corinthians 3:6-9 the Apostle Paul writes, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but God gives the growth. He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to the labor. For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building."

Some of our mission congregations are:

- Faith Lutheran — Wilmington, North Carolina
- Grace Point — Sedona Arizona
- Peace — Clifton, Texas
- Rindal Lutheran — Viking, Minnesota
- Pueblo De Dios — Compton, California

To learn more about these congregations or to see a list of all mission starts visit:

- thenalc.org/ministries/ and select
- Partner Status: GCS Ministry and
Ministry Focus: Mission Start

To learn more about the GCS New Starts Team visit thenalc.org/new-mission-starts/



FACEBOOK CHALLENGE

Our Facebook page has become a lot more active in recent months, but we're still hoping for more! In September 2020, Jill Nesheim issued a challenge to see if we could double our followers from 441 to 882. Anyone who invites someone to join will have their name put in a drawing for some fun quilted table runners made by Jill. How many winners? "Well, that depends on how many I make between now and when our membership reaches 882!" As of this newsletter, our Facebook page is up to 562 members! If you are not a member, please visit our Facebook page and ask to join. If you are a member, help us keep growing by inviting the women of your church (or anyone who would benefit from positive, faith-based posts) to join. Find our page at facebook.com/groups/WNALC. Page members are welcome to post on the page so if your church is doing something special, please post it. We'd all enjoy reading about it.

Register Now!

Many thanks to those churches that have already updated their contact information for this year. If yours has not done this yet — it is not too late!

Visit WNALC.org > About Us > Contact Us and click on the "Join the WNALC" button.

If there is not a women's group at your church, you are encouraged to register as an individual.

Stay connected



www.wnalc.org

Want to learn more about our
2021 Mission Bank Partners?

Visit WNALC.org/missionminded

Contact Us

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 Sandy Strohecker — [sstrohecker52@gmail.com](mailto:ssstrohecker52@gmail.com)
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 Kim Isiminger — kisiminger.wnalc@gmail.com
 Peggy Jording — peggyj@rtconnect.net

THANK YOU for Supporting the WNALC & our Mission Bank Partners!

WNALC General Fund donations help cover the costs of our website, the WNALC Annual Gathering, our display table at Lutheran Week and more.

WNALC Mission Fund donations are collected and divided evenly between the two Mission Bank recipients voted on at the previous year's Annual Gathering.

We thank you for choosing to support the Women of the NALC! We hope you continuously lift up the WNALC in your prayers that we would always serve according to God's will.

North American Lutheran Church
 PO Box 860565
 Minneapolis, MN 55486-0565

(Please Note that this is the new mailing address for all donations)

Be sure to make checks payable to the North American Lutheran Church and note on your check whether it is for WNALC General Fund - or - WNALC Mission Fund



Newsletter Deadline

How is your congregation reaching out as things start to open up? Email kisiminger@gmail.com by May 1st to share your stories in the May/June newsletter.

Women of the North American Lutheran Church Scholarship Application for the Annual Gathering 2021



The Women of the North American church are offering scholarships to women interested in attending our Annual Gathering. Scholarships can be used to reimburse the cost of transportation, hotel, attendance fee and \$50 per diem for food for a total of no more than \$800.00*.

Application Due Date: April 30, 2021.

Notification of scholarship receipt by May 10, 2021.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Age group: _____ 20-40 _____ 41 - 60 _____ 60 +

NALC Church you attend: _____

Have you ever attended the WNALC annual gathering? _____ Yes _____ No

Is there any other information that you would like to include to support your application?

You may complete the online version of this form on the WNALC website or print this copy, complete and mail or email to:

Jill Nesheim
805 Walford Rd
Devils Lake ND 58301
icnquilter@gmail.com

***Save all receipts for reimbursement.**

Jording/Nesheim Jan 2021