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2016**

Volume 3 – Issue 6

A Publication of the Mid-Northeast Mission District

western New York, western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, western Maryland

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. (Galatians 2:20 a)

The Word At Work Among Us

The Rev. Dr. Alden W. Towberman, Dean

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

This month I want to speak with you about the Power of God's Word that is at the center of our life together in The North American Lutheran Church and in the Mid-Northeast Mission District. But first, I first I want to update you regarding our Mission District Convocation on November 19th and to share with you our apology that it has been almost six months since we have been able to publish and mail The Witness to our pastors and congregations.

Of first importance, I received a phone call last week from Bishop Bradosky's Office indicating that the Bishop regrets he will not be able to be with us for our convocation to report on the work of the Church in China and to speak to us about the missionary work of The North American Lutheran Church. Due to the death of Laurie Hoyum, wife of Pastor Ron Hoyum, Bishop Bradosky needs to be in Rollinghay,

Washington where he will be officiating at the funeral service for Laurie Hoyum on November 19th. Pastor Mark Chavez, General Secretary of the NALC, will be with us in place of Bishop Bradosky. I look forward to seeing all of you at our convocation at St. John's in Kittanning for a day of worship, fellowship and inspiration grounded in our convocation theme: "Building Relationships With God and One Another," - Holy God and Holy Lives.

Communication is a priority in our Mission District. It keeps us connected with each other, builds relation-

ships, and furthers the mission of the church.

Difficulties relating to printing *The Witness* have now been resolved and we are at long last back to a regular schedule of sending the Mission District newsletter to every congregation and pastor. Moving forward *The Witness* will be published every two months. Thanks for your patience and my thanks to those of you who have told me how much you have missed the Mission District newsletter over these past six months. Note: Beginning with this issue of *The*

Witness, we are also mailing the newsletter to our Mission District Authorized Clergy and Lay Supplies – greatly valued members of our pastoral and lay leadership in the Mission District. Information about our Mission District can also be found on our website.

...And now to – THE POWER OF GOD'S WORD.

A remarkable and historic event occurred

on October 31, 2016 marking the 499th Anniversary of the Reformation. Joint Ecumenical Commemoration Services of the Reformation were held in Lund Sweden between Lutherans and Roman Catholics. The Lutheran World Federation was founded in Lund, Sweden in 1947, in an effort to renew and unite the ministry of Lutheran churches after World War II.

Growing out of our joint Lutheran – Roman Catholic Dialogue in recent years, this past Reformation Day,

continued on page 6

***True renewal
(reformation)
always finds its
center in God and
His Word – that
powerful life-
changing Word that
shapes our hearts
and lives in harmony
with the Will of God.***

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PRAYER REQUESTS

This month, our prayers for:

The Rev. Craig Duffield who recently underwent surgery to remove a brain tumor and will be proceeding with additional treatment. *Pr. Duffield is on leave from parish ministry at First in Ridgway, PA.*

The administrative office has the following new email address:

randrae.midnemdnalc@gmail.com

Please update your email contacts to reflect this change.

Thank you!

Please visit our mission district web site at

www.midnemdnalc.org



**Love. Grow. Serve.
In Christ.**

OUR LEADERSHIP

Dean

The Rev. Dr. Alden W. Towberman

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vda@atlanticbb.net

**JOIN US IN OUR MISSION
DISTRICT FACEBOOK GROUP!**





Due to the need for Bishop Bradosky to provide pastoral care by conducting a memorial service in Washington for the wife of one of our NALC pastors, he will not be able to be with us as scheduled. We are grateful that Pastor Mark Chavez, General Secretary, is available to be with us for this wonderful day and that Bishop Bradosky and Dr. Buba have created a video presentation for us.

**Our day together
will include:**

VIDEO PRESENTATION

**Bishop John Bradosky &
Dr. Gemechis Buba**
will present on their recent
trip to China and the
connection between the work
there and the North American
Lutheran Church.

Festival Holy Communion

**Business – including
elections, reports, budget**

Luncheon and fellowship

COST:

**\$10 per person OR
\$25 per congregation**

**Registrations are due
Monday, Nov. 14th.**

ANNUAL CONVOCATION

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2016

“Building Relationships With God and One Another”

“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20

9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

(8:30 a.m. Registration and Continental Breakfast)

St. John's - 218 N. Jefferson St., Kittanning, PA 16201



**We encourage everyone to
participate in this annual
event in our life together
as a mission district!**

**REGISTRATIONS AND
PAYMENTS TO:**

**MID-NORTHEAST
MISSION DISTRICT**

**131 Starboard Villa Ln. #315
Greensburg, PA 15601
724-787-7780
randrae.midnemdnc@gmail.com**

+Welcome to Salem Church in Smicksburg, Pennsylvania. The Executive Council approved the congregation for admittance to the NALC on October 28, 2016. (Salem Lutheran Church, PO Box 87, Smicksburg, PA 16256-0087). Pastor Joyce Dix-Weiers will be serving as Vice-Pastor to the congregation.

+Welcome to Pastor Allen Griep who has been approved and joins the clergy roster of the NALC. Pastor Griep is a member of The Church of the Apostles in North Tonawanda, New York.

+Our prayers this month are with Pastor Craig Duffield and First Lutheran Church in Ridgway, Pennsylvania. Pastor Duffield was recently recognized by the NALC for consideration to serve as the pastor of First Lutheran.. Several weeks ago Pastor Duffield was diagnosed with a large cancerous brain tumor. Following an eight hour surgery to remove the tumor he will begin a series of chemo and radiation treatments. It is doubtful he will be able to return to parish ministry. The congregation continues to be in the search process.

+Pastor Arlyn Eisenbrandt has accepted the call to become the pastor of St. Andrew's by the Sea in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Pastor Eisenbrandt has served St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Adrian, Pennsylvania the past 16+ years and served the Church faithfully in our Mission District. Pastor Eisenbrandt has been a valued colleague and leader with our youth in the Mid-Northeast Mission District. His last Sunday at St. Mark's will be November 13th. Pastors Arlyn and Nola Eisenbrandt invite those visiting in the Atlantic City area to stop by – St. Andrews is located two blocks from the board walk and ocean. Summer services are held on the beach. Pastor Carl Johnson has been appointed Vice-Pastor of the Congregation as the study process begins.

+ Pastor Scott Baker is serving as fulltime intentional interim pastor at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Berlin, PA during the congregation's pastoral transition. Pastor Baker comes to our Mission District having most recently completed a two year interim ministry in Logan, Ohio.

+Pastor Jerome Klutz has accepted the call to St. Timothy Lutheran Church in Charleston, WV. Welcome to Pastor Klutz and his family.

+Congregations of the Mission District presently seeking pastors: Springdale Lutheran Church in West Sunbury, PA (part-time); First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Ridgway, PA (full-time or part-time – parsonage); Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Export, PA (full-time); Saint Paul/St. Mark Lutheran - New Stanton and Arona, PA (two church parish -Full-time). St Mark's Adrian – under study. Salem Lutheran Church, Smicksburg – under study.

+A Retirement Banquet and Services of Thanksgiving for the ministry of Pastor Greg Held and his wife Angela was held August 26-28th. Pastor Held served the congregation for the past 28 years and has been a leader in the greater Church. A Certificate of Thanksgiving and Invocation of the Holy Spirit's Blessing for faithful ministry in Word and Sacrament was presented by the Dean at the retirement banquet on behalf of Bishop Bradosky and our Mission District. "Well done good and faithful servant."

-Pastor Eric Riesen resigned his call at Zion Lutheran Church in Brentwood, PA this past September and accepted the call to become the Senior Pastor of Trinity Lutheran in Ashland, Ohio. God's blessing to Eric and his family as he continues to serve God and faithfully serve the Church.

+ Bishop James Hobby, Jr. was installed on September 10, 2016 at St. Paul's Cathedral in Pittsburgh. I represented the NALC at the Service of Installation. I also represented the NALC at the installation service for Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi, the new Bishop of the United Methodist Church in the Pittsburgh Episcopal Area, on October 19th. Please join me in praying for our brothers and sisters in the Anglican and United Methodist churches in southwest Pennsylvania. May God bless their ministry as we serve God's people.

+Congregations of our Mission District are reminded to have clearances for volunteers working with children/youth that need to be completed by December to be in compliance with Pennsylvania State Law.

+St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Sarver, PA under the leadership of Pastor Shawn Smith has voted to build a new sanctuary and offices. Former Pastor Emery Barnett started the capital building campaign in 2001 help making construction of the new church possible. The present sanctuary will be torn down to make room for the new church. Groundbreaking will take place on November 20th with NALC General Secretary, Pastor Mark Chavez officiating.

Dean's Notes (continued)

+The Conference of Deans met this summer and at the NALC Convocation to review and discuss new NALC Guidelines and procedures to strengthen ministry within the Church. New Guidelines and forms have been written for the congregational call process. Changes have been made to the vetting process of clergy seeking to be rostered in the NALC - including a new Vetting Panel that is being formed to provide input prior to certification decisions for approved of clergy on the NALC clergy roster. New congregational forms (to be effective this fall) have been developed for congregations seeking to call a pastor. "Congregation Workshops" administered by our Mission Districts will begin this fall when congregations enter the call process. Deans will also be forming "Pastoral Care and Transition Teams" (P-CAT Teams) in each of our Mission Districts to assist with intervention, transition, etc. within congregations when needed. From our Mission District I have appointed Assistants to the Dean, Pastor Nila Cogan and Pastor Carl Johnson to be those from our Mission District to meet with congregations in the call process and when counsel is needed during times of congregation conflict. They have equipped for this important work with our congregations and pastors by Rev. Dr David Wendell, Assistant to Bishop Bradosky.

+Seminarian Patricia Braunscheidel is serving at Christ Rupp Lutheran Church, near Elderton, for a year of internship. She graduated from our NALS Seminary with a Master of Divinity this spring and will serve her vicarship before entering the pastoral call process in the spring of 2017. Pastor Joyce Dix-Weiers serves as Vice-Pastor and intern supervisor.

+Congregations of our Mission District are urged to encourage our youth to consider pastoral ministry this fall and in the year ahead. To help support our seminarians the North American Lutheran provides for the \$17,000 annual cost of tuition at our Seminary in Ambridge, PA for those studying for and considering the call to pastoral ministry.

+\$10,000 was given by individuals and the congregations of our Mission District in a special appeal and love gift offering to help with the medical expenses of Pastor Emery Barnett. Thank You!

+The 2017 NALC National Convocation and related events will be held August 8-11, 2017 in Nashville, Tennessee.

+The Mission District Executive Council visited the pastors and congregations in the northeast part of our Mission District on June 22-23rd. The council met with Pastor Nestory and members of Nile Evangelical Church in Rochester, NY as they shared their vision for ministry and the work of their congregation with us. The Executive Council toured building renovation work that is underway and enjoyed dinner with Pastor Nestory and members of the congregation. On Thursday morning the Executive Council visited The Church of the Apostles Lutheran Church in Tonawanda, NY and met with Pastor Troy Mulvaine. Thursday afternoon we enjoyed lunch with Pastor Mack Smith, Mission Developer of our mission congregation, Christ Lutheran in East Amherst, NY. The Executive Council toured the congregation's service area, met with members about their plans for mission and outreach before heading home. ...Thank You members, congregations, and pastors for your warm hospitality and ministry in the northern part of our Mission District!

+All congregational leaders and members are asked to support and encourage their pastor's participation in the annual NALC Pastors Conference, February 14-16, 2017. The conference will be held at the Crowne Plaza Universal Studio Hotel in Orlando, Florida. The Rev. Dr. James Nestingen, noted Martin Luther scholar, will be the featured speaker. He will have two presentations on Luther's Doctrine of Vocation and two presentations on the lectionary preaching texts for Lent, Holy Week and Easter. Bishop Bradosky will lead a meeting of the NALC Ministerium and preside at a worship service for the renewal of clergy ordination vows and the blessing of anointing oils. Registration is \$100 per person until December 31 and \$125 beginning January 1, 2017. A discounted hotel rate of \$120 per night is available for rooms reserved by January 16th.

+Thank You for your stewardship congregation leaders as you consider your 2017 Mission District Benevolence and prepare your 2017 congregational budgets. Stewardship commitments for the ministry of the greater church should be sent to our Mid-Northeast Mission District Administrative Office: 131 Starboard Villa Lane #315 Greensburg, PA 15601 c/o Administrative Assistant, Rebecca Andrae.

services of Common Prayer led by Pope Francis and Bishop Munib Younan (President of the Lutheran World Federation) were held in two cities in southern Sweden at Lund Cathedral and at Malmo Arena. Offerings received at both worship services will support the joint ministry of both churches bodies to help provide for homeless Syrian refugees in the Middle East. Lutheran World Services and Catholic Charities, social service ministries of both churches, pledged to work together to minister to those in need and to proclaim the Gospel.

Perhaps most striking and most important were some of the words spoken by Pope Francis in his homily: "As Lutherans and Catholics we pray together in this Cathedral so that together we can bring His Word to the world that so needs His tender love and mercy. A part from God we can do nothing. ...With gratitude we acknowledge that the Reformation helped give greater centrality to sacred Scripture in the church's life." Then, speaking about himself and all those gathered for the commemoration he said, "We, too, must look with love and honesty at our past, recognizing error and seeking forgiveness."

As these historic services in Sweden began the first in a year of special events leading up to the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation on October 31, 2017, let us recognize that this is a new day. Who would have believed even several years ago that Lutherans and Roman Catholics could worship together commemorating the Reformation? The North American Lutheran Church is a part of the "new day" where the renewal of Christian believers and society, and the work of reconciliation with other Christians is central to our calling. Leaving the past behind us and focusing on the power of the Word of God, living by Grace, there are new opportunities before us. There is so much we can do and must do together working for the renewal of the Church and society. That being said, what we can never compromise is the Word of God.

Being centered in God's Word is one of the primary reasons we are Lutheran Christians and in particular, members of The North American Lutheran Church. True renewal (reformation) always finds its center in

that shapes our hearts and lives in harmony with the Will of God.

Luther himself once declared, he did not bring about the events of the Reformation. "The Word," he said, "did everything."

So dear congregations, pastors, and family of God, let The Word work!

In our Mission District I would like to see us plan events in 2017 in service to others and for the renewal of our congregations as part of the 500th commemoration of the Reformation. Your ideas and input will be appreciated.

May we strive together faithfully to preach, teach, live and proclaim God's Word and expect surprising results as God is at work among us this year in both new and in old ways to renew us and His Church.

Together With You, Following Christ Jesus,

Alden W. Towberman, Dean

MARCH FOR LIFE | 2017

BUS INFORMATION FOUND ON
THE INSERT OF THIS NEWSLETTER.



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OUR LEADERSHIP VISITED MISSION DISTRICT CONGREGATIONS WHILE OUR YOUTH CONDUCTED ITS FIRST MISSION TRIP

Pastor Alden Towberman, dean; members of the mission district council; and our administrative assistant visited our three congregations in western New York June 22-23. The leadership is grateful to Pastor Nestory and Nile Evangelical Church in Rochester, NY; Pastor Mulvaine and Church of the Apostles in North Tonawanda, NY; and Pastor Smith and Christ Lutheran Church in East Amherst, NY for their hospitality, fellowship, and sharing of vision and ministry.

Our mission district youth, under the leadership of Pastor Nila Cogan, visited Nile Evangelical Church July 8-10 for a time of Christian fellowship and learning. Nile's gracious hospitality and the VBS program presented by the youth combined for wonderful time. Our youth also enjoyed July 11 at Niagara Falls.



ABOVE: Pastor Nestory reviews the architectural plans with Pastor Towberman

RIGHT:
Pastor Mulvaine (back, far right) is pictured in the fellowship hall with the mission district council.



LEFT:
Pastor Nestory (back row, third from left) is pictured with Nile members and mission district council members in their newly-purchased building.



RIGHT:
The beautiful font at Church of the Apostles.



LEFT:
Pastor Smith (fourth from right) is pictured with the mission district council in Christ's worship space at the Buffalo Niagara Heritage Museum.



RIGHT:
Mission district youth traveled to Nile Evangelical Church for a time of learning and fellowship with fellow disciples.



LEFT:
Mission district youth and their pastors and leaders visited Niagara Falls on their trip.

Pastor Eric Riesen, our *dean emeritus*, bids us farewell

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Back in 1985 we arrived in Pittsburgh with a 2-year-old daughter and a six-week-old son. Pittsburgh was new territory for us. Both my wife, Terry, and I thought we'd stay four or five years and then move back closer to family. Thirty-one years later we were still here. During that time I've served three congregations, twenty-two of them at Zion, Brentwood.

In these two decades I've grown very fond of Pittsburgh and the people who call it home. I've worked with many of you in Lutheran CORE, and then to form the Mid-Northeast Mission District of the NALC. It was an honor for me to serve as your dean for four years. It was especially kind of you to name me dean emeritus. Thank you.

However, all good things come to an end. Now it's time to say good-bye to a place and people that I love. As many of you have heard, I accepted a call to be senior pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Ashland, OH. This will finally allow us to be much closer to our families. That will be a blessing, but leaving Zion and so many of you, is not without pain.

I want to thank all of you for your prayers and support over the years, and I covet your prayers as we begin a new chapter of ministry. However, you should also know that I will remain a Steelers' fan!

May God bless you all with His grace as we continue to do ministry together.

Yours Sincerely in Christ,

Pastor Eric Riesen

Dean emeritus



Contact information

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508 Center St.
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419-289-2126

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2291 Ridgewood Court
Ashland, OH 44805

412-613-2292 (cell)

IN"TENTS" YOUTH CAMP

On a ridge in south-western Pennsylvania a tent city appeared as youth from the Mid-Northeast Mission District and their leaders came for a three day camp (July 26-28, 2016) at the grove of St Thomas Lutheran Church in Hooversville, PA. This year's theme was "Rooted in Christ" as we looked at what it means to be part of God's family, how we grow from learning about the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. How one person's life or a group of people can affect the lives of many. Our three days together were filled devotions, singing, discussions, eating, and lot of volleyball. We spent one day traveling to the Johnstown Flood National Park and the Johnstown Flood Museum. That day was capped off with recreational time at the Quemahoning Dam for swimming and more volleyball.

The campers have named the camp for future years IN"TENTS" YOUTH CAMP

and by request next year's camp will be a four day camp. Please mark the dates of July 24, 25, 26, & 27 2017!

ZION, PITTSBURGH, PA
(Brentwood area)



We thank the ministry team at Zion submitted the following articles to help us learn about Zion.

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Pastor Garrett Siemsen was called to Zion as Assistant Pastor in July 2014. He oversees the ministries to young adults and young families, and also shares in preaching, teaching, and visitation with Senior Pastor Eric Riesen. One of Pastor Garrett's greatest joys in ministry is leading people more deeply into the Scriptures and into the Church's "Great Tradition" of scriptural interpretation. He and his wife Kristi moved to Pittsburgh from Scottsdale, Arizona to answer the Lord's call to Zion. They are continually astounded by the warmth and the support of Zion's people.

**Family Ministry**

The Family Ministry at Zion is overseen by Pastor Garrett Siemsen and led by a team of five families. The ministry aims to cultivate a sense of community, strengthen marriages, and equip parents to raise godly children. Monthly events for cultivating community include picnics, food-trucks after worship, and Pirates games. Meanwhile, classes for husbands and wives have studied Tim Keller's "The Meaning of Marriage" and Family Life's "The Art of Marriage." In the upcoming year, the Family Ministry is also taking a group to a "Weekend to Remember" marriage retreat.

**Young Adults Ministry**

The Young Adults Ministry is led by Pastor Garrett Siemsen and his wife Kristi. The goal of the ministry is to create a closely-knit community of young adults who are intentional about growing into the image of Christ and serving Him in their everyday vocations at home and at work. Toward that end, a group of 8-12 young adults meets biweekly for a meal, Bible-study, and prayer. The group ranges in age from 20 to 35 and has both singles and married couples. In addition to their biweekly meetings, the young adults also enjoy going out together on the weekends, including the annual tradition of Oktoberfest at the Pittsburgh Hofbrauhaus. In the upcoming year, the men and women will be completing separate studies and having separate retreats as well. There will be a fall fishing trip for the men and a Beth Moore conference in Youngstown for the women.

**The music ministry** at Zion includes three ensembles. The Liturgical Choir is a traditional choir of 18 voices which sings weekly at the 11:00 AM Sunday service from September through May. Our praise and worship team, Acoustic Praise, leads the Saturday service at least twice monthly. The Angelus Ringers are a 4-octave handbell choir which plays in worship monthly. We are also blessed with several fine soloists and instrumentalists who highlight our services throughout the year. Music Director Keith C. Kirchartz also serves as Zion's organist, playing for all services and occasional recitals on the church's 31-rank Wicks/Delaware/Ebert pipe organ, which is equipped with full MIDI implementation on all divisions. The church also has a Schulmerich Generation 4 digital carillon.

Keith C. Kirchartz has been Zion's Music Director since January, 1988. He holds a B.A. in Organ and Piano from Carlow College (now University), a Master of Music in Sacred Music from Duquesne University, and the Colleague Certificate of the American Guild of Organists. He also holds a Master of Divinity from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, and is ordained into the United Methodist Church, having served as pastor of First United Methodist Church in Duquesne, PA, before coming to Zion. A certified Stephen Leader, he also serves as Zion's Stephen Ministry Coordinator, as well as wearing several other "hats" around the church. A native Pittsburgher, he lives with his wife of over 25 years, Melanie (also an organist), in Brentwood, PA.

## **YOUTH MINISTRY**

Colin Neill came to Zion in 2011 after graduating from California University of Pennsylvania with a MBS in Sports Management. He began volunteering with the youth group after attending the 2012 Mission Trip to Nashville, Tennessee as an adult leader. It is on that trip that he discovered he had a deep passion for Youth ministry. The following year Colin was asked to serve as the Director of Youth Ministries at Zion and he immediately felt called to accept the position. To him, the work the Lord continues to do through the youth and congregation as a whole is simply amazing. Zion has helped bring true meaning to “I don’t go to church”, but rather “I am the church.” He is so grateful for his adoption into this family of faith and cannot thank everyone enough for their constant encouragement and support.

Beginning last year, Zion made a slight modification to its Confirmation curriculum. 9<sup>th</sup> grade students making their Confirmation that spring began meeting offsite at Colin’s home for their own Bible study. The meetings began to provide a natural sense of comfort; sparking meaningful discussions and helped aid in formation of close bonds amongst the teens. After making their Confirmation that year, several of those students expressed a desire to remain involved with the youth group. Those teens and some of our older high school students who have attended past mission trips came together to help develop a teen mentor sector of our youth group. With this development, we began to look closely at our youth ministry as a whole; specifically the teen mentor’s involvement within the group. As a result, high school teens at Zion can now begin serving as a teen mentor in the fall of their 10<sup>th</sup> grade year. They will come alongside the younger (7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade) teens; forming relationships with them and helping guide them through their years in Confirmation and beyond. Our goal is to pair these teen mentors with an adult youth leader for the high school teens own mentorship. Together teen mentors along with adults will help in the development and execution of Zion Youth’s service projects, fellowship events, fundraising developments, confirmation & small group leadership, and confirmation retreat & mission trip planning formation. This essentially creates a three-tiered approach to our youth group at Zion: Adult leaders, Teen mentors, and Youth teens.

The vision for Zion Youth has always centered on the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the formation of relationships. With a focus and initiative on discipleship from our congregation as a whole this past year, this newly developed three-tiered ministry model is a way to integrate discipleship formation into our youth group. Zion Youth continues to grow, with a class of sixteen 7<sup>th</sup> graders joining the group this past fall! As a result we are currently actively looking for more adult leaders to help solidify this new structure for youth ministry. Our hope and prayer is that through the combination of our youth confirmation curriculum & foundations, interactive Sunday school classes, and many youth events (listed above), the Holy Spirit of our Lord will continue to use these opportunities to work in and through the hearts of all participants; joining us together amongst the Body of Christ in the ongoing journey of discipleship.



Back row (left to right) – Pastor Eric Riesen (former pastor), Keith Kirchartz (Music Director), Harold Mittenzwey (Custodian)

Front row (left to right) – Colin Neill (Youth Director), Cara Wojton (Administrative Assistant) and Pastor Garrett Siemsen (Asst. Pastor)



## **ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES**

### **June**

**Brian Shirey. '79 (37 years).** *Pr. Shirey serves at Brighton Heights, Pittsburgh, PA.*  
**Gregory Held. '81 (35 years).** *Pr. Held recently retired from Emmanuel, Export, PA.*  
**Thomas Beam. '90 (26 years).** *Pr. Beam serves at Hope, East Smethport, PA.*  
**Mark Werner. '98 (18 years).** *Pr. Werner serves at St. Paul, Latrobe (Trauger), PA.*  
**Maurice Frontz, III. '02 (14 years).** *Pr. Frontz serves at St. Stephen, Pittsburgh, PA.*  
**Joyce Dix-Weiers. '05 (11 years).** *Pr. Dix-Weiers serves Elderton Lutheran Parish (Mt. Union and Christ), Elderton, PA.*  
**Nila Cogan. '09 (7 years).** *Pr. Cogan serves at St. Thomas, Hooversville, PA.*  
**Robert Grewe. '09 (7 years).** *Pr. Grewe serves at First, Washington, PA.*  
**Carl Hendrickson. '13 (3 years).** *Pr. Hendrickson is available for supply.*  
**Sandra Towberman. '13 (3 years).** *Pr. Towberman is available for supply.*

### **July**

**Alden Towberman. '70 (46 years).** *Pr. Towberman serves at St. Mark's, Butler, PA and serves as Dean of the Mid-Northeast Mission District.*  
**Arlyn Eisenbrandt. '89 (27 years).** *Pr. Eisenbrandt is finishing his call at St. Mark's, Adrian, PA and has taken a new call in Atlantic City, NJ.*  
**Ntahombaye Nestory. '05 (11 years).** *Pr. Nestory serves at Nile, Rochester, NY.*

### **August**

**Eric Riesen. '85 (31 years).** *Pr. Riesen was Sr. Pastor at Zion, Pittsburgh (Brentwood), PA and began a new call in Ashland, OH. He is Dean Emeritus of the Mid-Northeast Mission District.*

### **September**

**Sam Scheiderer. '86 (30 years).** *Pr. Scheiderer recently retired from St. Paul's, New Stanton, PA and St. Mark's, Arona, PA.*

### **October**

**Karl Schoch. '79 (37 years).** *Pr. Schoch serves at Zion, Chicora, PA.*

### **November**

**Troy Mulvaine. '03 (13 years).** *Pr. Mulvaine serves at Church of the Apostles, North Tonawanda, NY.*  
**Daniel Grimminger. '12 (4 years).** *Pr. Grimminger serves at Holy Trinity, Grove City, PA.*

*Dennis Hindman. Authorized Lay Minister serving in lieu of a pastor by authorization of bishop.  
Original commission '99; NALC commission '14. Serves at Pleasant Union, Kittanning, PA.*

### **December**

**John Harmon. '76 (40 years).** *Pr. Harmon is retired and serving as interim.*

# CALENDAR AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

| EVENT                                      | DATE             | TIME                                                   | LOCATION                                             | CONTACT(S)                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Mission District ANNUAL CONVOCATION</b> | Nov. 19, 2016    | 8:30 Registration & Breakfast<br>9:30-3:00 Convocation | St. John's<br>218 N. Jefferson St.<br>Kittanning, PA | Rebecka Andrae, Admin. Assistant<br><a href="mailto:randrae.midnemdnalc@gmail.com">randrae.midnemdnalc@gmail.com</a> |
| <b>Mission District Council Meeting</b>    | Dec. 8, 2016     | 10 – 2                                                 | St. Mark's<br>Butler, PA                             | Pastor Alden Towberman, Dean<br><a href="mailto:atowberman@zoominternet.net">atowberman@zoominternet.net</a>         |
| <b>March For Life 2017</b>                 | Jan. 27, 2017    | 12 p.m. Rally<br>1 p.m. March                          | Washington, D.C.                                     | <a href="http://www.marchforlife.org">www.marchforlife.org</a><br>(Bus list on insert of this newsletter)            |
| <b>Youth Quake</b>                         | Jan. 27-29, 2017 | TBA                                                    | TBA                                                  | TBA                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Mission District Council Meeting</b>    | Feb. 23, 2017    | 10-2                                                   | TBA                                                  | Pastor Alden Towberman, Dean<br><a href="mailto:atowberman@zoominternet.net">atowberman@zoominternet.net</a>         |

## DISASTER RELIEF UPDATE AND “THANK YOU” FOR LOCAL ASSISTANCE

On behalf of the residents and ministers of the Connellsville, PA community, I extend thanks to St. Paul Lutheran Church (Latrobe, Pa) and the congregations of the Mid-Northeast Mission District of the NALC for their very generous donations in the wake of severe flooding. On Sunday, August 28th over 5 inches of rain fell in an hour causing major flooding in the Bullskin and Connellsville areas (Fayette County, Pa) resulting in over 25 homes lost and numerous other homes significantly damaged. Through your generosity we were able to provide \$2,800 in gift cards to those impacted. Additionally, NALC Disaster response provided health kits, school kits, rakes, shovels, etc., much of which was recently donated from our Mission District. As the rebuilding efforts continue and further needs are identified, I will pass them along to you.

Again, thank you for your gracious assistance to our neighbors in need.

God bless,  
Pastor Mark A. Werner  
[revmaw@wpa.net](mailto:revmaw@wpa.net)



Visit [www.holyfamilies.co](http://www.holyfamilies.co) for a preview!



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**Greensburg, PA 15601**

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