

## NALC LIFE CONFERENCE — THURSDAY, JANUARY 17, 2019

BY THE REV. DR. DENNIS DI MAURO

The third annual NALC Life Conference was held on Thursday, January 17th, 2019 at Trinity Lutheran Church, in Warrenton, VA. The event began with a free fellowship lunch followed by a talk by Rev. Dr. Dennis Di Mauro, entitled *A Love for Life*, which showed how Christianity has been, and is now, a pro-life faith. The talk included quotes from great Christian thinkers like Basil, Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Bonhoeffer and many others who spoke out in defense of life in the womb.

The second speaker was Mona Fuerstenau, a disability advocate for over 30 years. As a retired speech pathologist, parent of two very diverse young adults, and director of ministry partnerships for Bethesda Lutheran Communities, she views life through an asset based community development lens and firmly believes that all people have unique and necessary gifts and talents to share. She provided free resources for equipping us to be life affirming with those with disabilities.

The keynote speaker, Melissa Ohden, was a survivor of a failed saline infusion abortion. Believing she was less than five months pregnant with Melissa in 1977, her birthmother attempted to abort her. Miraculously, the abortion did not succeed in ending Melissa's life. Melissa's perspective as an abortion survivor who has had contact with numerous members of her biological family, and as a mother herself, highlighted the intergenerational impact of abortion on families and communities.

The conference concluded with worship led by our chaplain, Rev. Christopher Porter, and a powerful sermon delivered by Bishop John Bradosky.



The next day, NALC Lutherans headed to Washington DC to participate in the National Prayer Service at DAR Constitution Hall. The service was led by Fr. Mitch Pacwa of EWTN, who spoke on how diligent efforts overcame the laws that allowed slavery in the 19th Century, and the same could take place today in protecting vulnerable human life if we work diligently. Another powerful speaker was Sandra Merritt, who was instrumental in uncovering Planned Parenthood's widespread trafficking of baby body parts in 2015 with the Center for Medical Progress.

NALC Lutherans then joined those from the LCMS and the ELCA for the March for Life which began at 12<sup>th</sup> Street, proceeded down

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Constitution Avenue, then up Capitol Hill with the walk ending in front of the Supreme Court. It was a great day of honoring our Lord's love of His creation and warm Christian fellowship as we, the NALC, marched for life!

**Additional notes from Ray Kneisley, Lay Leader  
Reformation Lutheran Church, Lancaster, PA.**

Ray commented that Pr. Di Mauro holds a PhD in Church History from Catholic University of America. In addition to his pastoral duties at Trinity Lutheran Church, Warrenton, VA, he also teaches at St. Paul Lutheran Seminary. His talk on "A Love for Life" was an extremely informative Biblical view of life, especially life in the womb in addition to referencing the great fathers of the church (as noted above).

Ray added that other speakers included Ben Shapiro, vice-president Pence, and President Trump who addressed the crowd from the White House. How many attended? The main stream media, if they mentioned the march at all, said there were "thousands" or "tens of thousands" attending. [Note: The online *Catholic Business*

*Journal Daily* in its time-lapse video tells a very different story.] They state "The truth is closer to 400,000—*hundreds* of thousands—attended the 2019 March for Life in DC." Additionally *Students for Life* have a time lapse video affirming the number that really attended.

Ray shared that there were many "student attendees and others from Florida, Louisiana, New England, North Dakota, and on and on. Christians from all denominations were present as well."

Ray's closing comments: "It is exciting and uplifting to participate with so many others to try to send a message to end this scourge of brutal murder. The participation of youth was most encouraging."

"It was such a fabulous experience, we hope many more from Reformation, as well as others from our region and the NALC will join us next year."

**Save the date  
March for Life 2020  
Friday January 24, 2020.**



*Note the younger  
generation  
marching in this  
photo.*

## **“WIELDING OMNIPOTENCE”**

*By The Rev. David McGettigan  
Dean, NALC Atlantic Mission Region*

It turned out to be a rather bright and beautiful afternoon in Washington, DC on January 18 as our small but hearty contingent from the NALC led by our Bishop, John, began to make its way toward the Capitol building and the Supreme Court in the company of what I perceived to be an even much larger crowd over last year. The 46<sup>th</sup> March for Life was moving with joy, hope, prayer, hymns, and cheers thanks to the large number of young participants who love to cheer!

The day before I was thrilled at our NALC Life Conference at Trinity, our congregation in Warrenton, VA. There was history and Scripture about the movement for life from our own NALC Pastor Dennis DiMauro, author of *“A Love for Life: Christianity’s Consistent Protection of the Unborn,”* a deeply moving testimony from Melissa Ohden who survived her own abortion and has lived to hear Christ speak to her as she sought her birth mother and chronicles it all in *“You Carried Me – a Daughter’s Memoir.”* There were words of hope from Pr. Scott Licht of Lutherans for Life, and finally powerful preaching for life and our lives from the Bishop.

Walking down the “corridors of power” that day I truly felt filled with life and hope and I thought “how have we come so far since the 1973 Supreme Court decision?” For speakers at our Life Conference, the March, and at the early morning ecumenical Prayer Service in which we participated at Constitution Hall agreed that life is on the march in our country – a hopeful change of attitude especially among the young is afoot regarding life.

For 46 years facing the seemingly immovable political influence and dollars invested in the

“corridors of power” by so called “choice” advocates, against a medical establishment some of whom had forgotten their oaths to never do harm as they identified healthcare with death, standing before what has become virtually an industry of death in the case of large corporate abortion providers – here we were hearing words of hope for the cause of life in our nation among the likes of us who were once considered mere puny voices crying out in the wilderness as the “choice” movement grew even among our own believers.

In the Prayer Service that morning the words of Father Frank Pavone from *Priests for Life* answered my musings about this transformation for he reminded us of the foundations of our message to the nation – *“Jesus is risen and He is the Lord of life.”* We were talking and praying, standing and marching, trusting and hoping because we have received the gift of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It was and is the life-giving power of the resurrection in which we find the means and grace of seemingly impossible transformation from our own personal as well as our corporate sins and sinfulness. This is our only hope and strength as we witness to the world.

I was blessed to recently receive and read the Winter Newsletter of the Center for Catholic and Evangelical Theology – a ministry with deep Lutheran roots – where the lead article was the talk at the CCET annual conference dinner given by Dr. David Yeago, a theologian and teacher at our own NALS. He was honoring the work of the Rev. Dr. Robert Jenson, a renowned Lutheran Theologian whom we had lost in the past year. Dr. Jenson’s theological center was Christ for sure but specifically the reality of Jesus’



resurrection and what that means for us, sons and daughters living in the resurrected life of Jesus.

Dr. Jenson posited that when we, the Baptized gathered in the Body of Christ which is the Church, if we proclaim a gospel other than Jesus' gospel in any manner or fashion, we and the world are not hearing the true gospel, we are just hearing "*each other*" and that is all the world hears. But if we confess that Jesus lives, "*there is no 'mission of the church' besides the announcement and celebration of his victory – and no other is needed.*" We are the receivers of and the carriers of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and it is all we have to give each other and the world. But I found one of Jenson's challenges most striking, "*When we proclaim Jesus' resurrection, we wield omnipotence.*" You know what "*omnipotence*" is? It is the very power of God.

How have we come so far in the life movement? How can we so small and humble before the powers of the world whether we are gathered in masses like the March for Life or just an individual congregation or baptized member, how can we hope to deliver the transformation needed as we face these dark, difficult, and yes even dangerous days for Christ bearers out there in this world? Go forward "*wielding omnipotence*" – not our own puny words and power but Jesus' Spirit filled almighty resurrected power that transforms even where change seems impossible to human vision and understanding.

In all you do, whether it be the large Christian movements of which we are a part or just whispering quiet words of hope and healing to an individual adrift, forget that the world thinks we are fodder for late-night or stand-up comedy in our apparent weakness and folly or, that they have successfully unmasked and revealed our flaws and sins while on a mission to destroy the Church and its influence, stand up and bring Jesus' resurrection in which each of us has been

transformed to their ears and hearts. Stand boldly "*wielding the omnipotence*" that is the grace you have received when God affirmed you in baptism and said, "*You are my beloved sons and daughters, in you I am well pleased*".

Fear not the schemes of the world to silence your proclamation and even their plots to do you in with bad publicity or even legal challenges to your every effort. In Jesus words, "*Do not be afraid*" and trust Jesus' promise "*And I will be with you always even to the end of the age.*" Remember, that as He looked at His Church, His gathering of beloved around the truth of the gospel, Jesus promised "*the gates of hell shall NOT prevail against it.*" Stand and speak the word of Jesus' resurrection under His "*omnipotent*" power which is our only power.

Something else struck me at the Prayer Service and Washington March. How such a variety of Christian denominations and expressions managed to surrender their "turf," their particular agendas and approach to the faith and theology to come together for the most basic gospel proclamation, the gift of life from God. Indeed, let us too shed all desire for individual or group power for purposes of personal agenda or comfort with how things are even in our own small communities and congregations.

Jesus left the baptismal waters offered by John affirmed by the Father to do what was the work he was sent to do. And Jesus always sought the Father's will for him in prayer that the Spirit would open the Father's will to Him. This "church thing" is NOT anyone's, any group's, even any one Pastor's enterprise. You have been transformed from selfishness to the possibility of selflessness thanks to baptism. Live among each other and live your common life in that transformation. Put aside personal yearning for your own way or the comfort of a "clubby" or just "family" feel in your congregations, and give yourself to the mission sacrificing personal

preferences for each other's sake and, especially, for those who do not yet know this gift.

Back to Dr. Jenson — it is said he once critiqued a church document coming out of a denominational office with words like these, “*the document failed to consider that a community whose life anticipates the very Kingdom of God might be differently related to its sociological setting – the world – than say, the Elks Club.*” We, the Church, are not a social club nor even a service club. We are the carriers of the resurrection of Jesus through baptism in which **“we have died with Christ...and therefore are raised with him as well”** and thanks to that grace we have divine power flowing through us and it alone is our offering to the world.

I commend to you Paul's beautiful teaching on the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15 in which he

notes the foolishness and folly of what we do save for the resurrection of Jesus. Paul closes his discourse on the hope of eternity simply with daily missional words, **“Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain”**.

Thank you, gracious Lord, living Jesus, for the resurrection hope and power so strong in the Right to Life movement and for your assurance that we carry that same transforming power against the forces of sin and death each day as we wander into the mission fields you provide and labor for the gospel, not in vain but in the fruitfulness gained by your cross and witnessed in your resurrection. Amen.

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## UNEXPECTED TRANSFORMATION SERIES

In this *Atlantic Vine* we continue with aspects of *Unexpected Transformation*. Below you will hear from one of our veteran discipleship leaders in

this area as he shares an unexpected outcome after experiencing frustration at an event. Ultimately reward comes from efforts of sharing Christ.

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### “A STORY OF DOING IT NOW”

*By William Oehlschlager*

*Executive Director, Lutheran Lay Renewal of America*

I was leading the teen program on a renewal weekend in New Mexico somewhere around 2000. I had led this program so many times before and it was always very successful. This weekend, however, nothing worked the way it always had in the past. Every session went badly; the teens were not interested in anything having to do with Christian spirituality or the church, and the pastor's 15-year-old daughter was the ringleader of the rebellion against everything I tried to do. I felt like a failure.

In our last session on Saturday night, I gave it one last try and led an exercise that I always lead on Saturday night, after a weekend of Christian community building with the teens. This exercise had always been successful in the past but I was not optimistic this night.

First, I talked to them about the importance of being a Christian community, of people who love each other, support each other, minister to each other and pray for each other. There are a lot of

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teens out there who are hurting, who need help, who need people to talk to, who need a place to go where people will care about them, people who will pray for them, I told them. Are you willing to be that kind of Christian community, that kind of place where you not only care for and minister to each other but also are a Christian community where other teens can go to find Christian love and acceptance and be cared for, I asked them? We are, they responded.

“Well then, I’m going to give you the opportunity to start doing that right now.” I pulled a chair out into the middle of the floor and invited them to sit in the chair one at a time and tell us what their prayer needs were.

“Well then, I’m going to give you the opportunity to start doing that right now.” I pulled a chair out into the middle of the floor and invited them to sit in the chair one at a time and tell us what their prayer needs were, so the rest of the group could lay hands on each one and pray for his or her needs – and they did. We prayed for each other; we ministered to each other, and of course I also asked them to pray for me, something that teens probably don’t expect, to have an adult ask them to pray for him. The next morning the mother of one of the teen boys walked up to me and said, “I don’t know what you did last night but my son said it was really powerful.”

By the way, I saw the pastor of that church a couple years later and he told me his daughter wanted to be a youth minister!

In the Schmalkald Articles, (Part III, Article IV. Of the Gospel.) Luther lists four means by which God’s grace is given to us:

“We will now return to the Gospel, which not merely in one way gives us counsel and aid against sin; for God is superabundantly rich [and

liberal] in His grace [and goodness]. First, through the spoken Word by which the forgiveness of sins is preached [He commands it to be preached] in the whole world; which is the peculiar office of the Gospel. Secondly, through Baptism. Thirdly, through the holy Sacrament of the Altar. Fourthly, through the power of the keys, and also through the mutual conversation and consolation of brethren, Matt. 18:20: *Where two or three are gathered together, etc.*”

It seems to me that the last of these means of grace (through the mutual conversation and consolation of brethren) is often overlooked. God’s grace can be received when we pray for other people, when we minister the love of God to other people, when we *disciple* other people. “*For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.*”

I’ve thought for many years that it’s important to build a Christian community of people who love and care for each other in order for the Word of God to take root. Just two days ago (January 22), I returned from a 12-day mission trip to the Lutheran Church of Uganda. For three of those days I was leading a renewal conference for about 80 lay leaders, pastors, evangelists and seminarians at the Lutheran Theological College in Magamaga. The first two days, we spent a lot of time in small group ministry and also had separate sessions for men and women.

We ask some tough discussion questions that are designed to get people thinking and talking about their spiritual lives, and their relationship with God, to get them sharing their faith with each other, to get them praying for each other and ministering to each other; perhaps I should say to get them to practice *discipleship*. On the third day, we had a day long teaching on *Seven Lessons for Living the Spiritual Life*, or we might call it a day of *discipling*.

The renewal conference was over on Friday and on Saturday I attended a wedding, where I saw many people who had attended our conference. One young woman, who I had not previously met, came over to talk to me after the wedding. She talked to me about how much she had enjoyed the conference and added that when she left on Friday afternoon, she was so happy that her heart was bursting. I couldn't help but think of these words of Jesus: "Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'"

In Uganda people still have a deep sense of being part of a community, which is something we have gradually been losing here in the U.S. We live in a culture where more and more people are living in loneliness and isolation, a culture that more and more is dying of spiritual thirst, a culture that needs the living water that the church has to offer, a culture made up of people who desperately need to be *discipled*.

We were created to be in relationship, we need to be in relationship, with God and with other people and if we, the church, are going to continue to thrive we must constantly be looking to bring people into Christian community and work on *discipling* them. Jesus did not just give his disciples a handbook and then send them off on their own. He was with them most of the time. There's no substitute for the community building that comes from spending face to face time with people teaching and *discipling* them.

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## BEGINNING A NEW SERIES TITLED "Q & A OF DISCIPLESHIP"

A new section is beginning in this issue of *The Atlantic Vine* designed to address some of the most frequently asked questions or concerns related to discipleship and discipling. Q & A's will usually be addressed by the Atlantic Mission Region's *Renewal and Discipleship Team* (RDT) though some may be answered by other Lutheran leaders.

Current RDT members include: Pastors Mark Chavez, Brett Jenkins, John Kulczycki, Brian Triller, Luke Seamon; Lay members Judy Mills, and RDT chair Lee Mills.

Regarding questions, the RDT is open to addressing discipleship and discipling questions and concerns. They are also willing to talk with, or visit with, both pastors and lay leaders to discuss how you might approach the start of a discipling ministry. Questions may come from pastors or laity.

Contact one of the RDT members (contact information is on page 14, or email your questions or comments to [newsletter@atlantic-nalc.org](mailto:newsletter@atlantic-nalc.org)).

This first question is the view of Lee Mills.

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## QUESTION: CAN YOU BE A CHRISTIAN WITHOUT ALSO BEING A DISCIPLE?

Submitted by Lee Mills, Lay Leader, Reformation Lutheran Church, Lancaster, PA,  
Chair, AMR Renewal & Discipleship Team

After challenging his parishioners to become disciples, someone responded to the pastor following the service, “I just want to be a Christian. I don’t want to be a disciple. I like my life the way it is. I believe that Jesus died for my sins, and I will be with him when I die. Why do I have to be a disciple?”

How did we end up with this unfortunate yet too common distinction that you can be a Christian without also being a disciple of Christ?

This question reminds me of a comment I heard a pastor make during a sermon when he said, “Christianity is not a spectator sport.” The point he was making was that it is not sufficient to simply confess your faith, regularly attend worship, and expect to be a beneficiary of all Jesus promised and all He secured for us at such a great cost by giving His life on the cross.

This position is what Greg Ogden refers to in *Discipleship Essentials*<sup>1</sup> as the *transactional gospel*. He calls it a transaction because many see the message of salvation in simple accounting terms: our sin is entered as an eternal debit on our account; Jesus death on the cross is full payment for our sin; by faith His credit is transferred to our account, which cancels our debt resulting in being handed a receipt stamped “Paid in Full.” Forgiveness of all our sins and the assurance of eternal life is the gospel. All we have to do is just accept His gift. Isn’t it just that simple? The answer: no, it’s not.

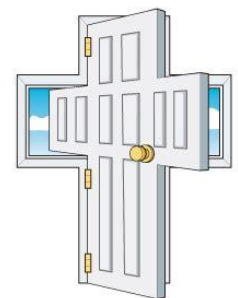
Throughout scripture, we are urged to put our faith into action. Two examples that come to mind are found in the book of Matthew. First,

when Jesus was asked what is the greatest commandment He said, “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*” (Matt 22:37-38) The second example comes at the end of chapter 28 where just before Jesus ascended into heaven He told his disciples, “*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.*” (Matt 28:19-20).

So, can you be a Christian without being a disciple? The answer is that while being a Christian is about what Christ has done for me; being a disciple is about what I am doing for Christ. For Jesus and the gospel writers, there is no difference between being a Christian and being a disciple. As a follower of Christ, there is no middle ground.

Since God took the initiative to reconcile us by paying our debt, He calls us to take the initiative to become His agents that the Holy Spirit can reconcile those who are alienated from Him.

Note: For additional insights on this same question, I’m encouraging you to read chapter two of Greg Ogden’s excellent book, *1 Essential Guide to Becoming a Disciple*.





## CENTRAL MISSION DISTRICT HOLDS RENEWAL AND DISCIPLESHIP EVENT

Submitted by Robin Harris, Zoar Lutheran Church, Lebanon, PA

*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.*

*Jeremiah 29:11-13 ESV*

On December 1, 2018 the Central Mission District held its first District-wide event, a Renewal and Discipleship workshop. Mr. Bill Oehlschlager, Executive Director of Lutheran Lay Renewal of America led the workshop at Zoar Lutheran Church in Lebanon, PA. Participants attended from Christ (Annville), Messiah (Lebanon), Reformation (Lancaster), St. John (Fredericksburg) and Zoar (Lebanon).

Bill opened the day with *Seven Lessons for Living the Spiritual Life*. In this session he led us through seven scripturally based points to ponder as we thought about our own personal relationship with Christ. Bill went into some depth with each lesson, presented in such a way that brought about much discussion and personal testimony.

The second workshop was entitled *Ten Stops on the Road to Spiritual Transformation*. Bill began by reiterating the goal of a truly Christ-like life is encapsulated in Mark 12:30-31: [Jesus said] ‘And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” (ESV)

Bill then went through ten spiritual plateaus or peaks that Christians achieve in their spiritual life

– from ignorance (lack of a spiritual life) to enjoying a profound intimacy with and love for God and experiencing a profound compassion and love for humanity. There were many stops in between! He spoke about lukewarm Christians and those who serve in the church to the point of burn out. He spoke about spiritual brokenness. Each participant heard his or herself described in one of those stops. Again, there was great discussion and more personal stories were shared.



After a lovely lunch

(compliments of a grant through a Thrivent Action Team) and lively fellowship, we finished up our day with *Sharing Your Faith with Others*. As Bill said, everyone is searching for God, whether they know it or not. During this workshop Bill showed us five obstacles that keep people from God and he paired them with five practical and do-able strategies for us to use to overcome these obstacles as we strive to share Christ with others. This event was a wonderful learning experience for all participants as well as great fellowship.

If you or your congregation is interested in having a Renewal and Discipleship event of your own please contact Bill Oehlschlager at [wao3rd@aol.com](mailto:wao3rd@aol.com) to schedule a workshop.



## PASTOR KEITH ESLINGER RETIRES

Pastor Keith H. Eslinger, STS, retired from St. Timothy Evangelical Lutheran Church, Camp Hill, PA, on December 31, 2018, following 21 years of ministry to the congregation. He was St. Timothy's third pastor. Pr. Keith graduated from Gettysburg Theological Seminary in 1981, ordained shortly after, and has served over 38 years in Christ's ministry. He served a dual parish in northeastern Pa. - St. Paul, Numidia and St. Peter, Aristes; Second Lutheran Church in Chambersburg; and, Mount Eden Lutheran in Quarryville in Lancaster County. Saint Timothy was his fourth call, which began August 16th, 1998, nearly twenty-one years ago. He is a member of the Society of the Holy Trinity.

He was married to Deb Taylor on August 6, 1975. They have two daughters, both married, Stephanie and Rick Stehman and Lara and John Reinhart, and two grandchildren, Caroline and Joey.

A retirement party was held on November 10 at St. Timothy's Multi Purpose Room where he was presented with a "money tree" from the congregation.



*Pr. Keith we pray you and Deb will enjoy this time in your lives while you continue to love and serve Him.*



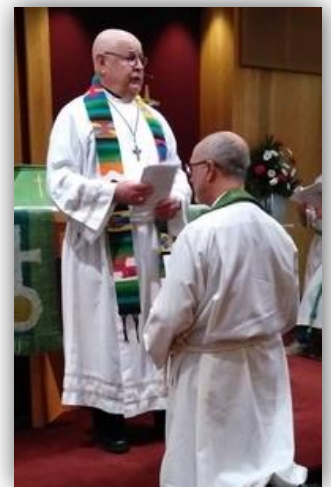
## ST TIMOTHY'S LC, CAMP HILL, PA REV. STEVE SHIPMAN, INTERIM PASTOR

St. Timothy Lutheran Church has contracted with Pr. W. Stevens "Steve" Shipman, STS, to serve as their interim pastor following the retirement of Pr. Keith Eslinger, STS.

Pastor Shipman was installed on January 20, 2019 by Dean David McGettigan; the Rev. Dr. David Wendel preached and presided at the Eucharist.

Pastor Shipman is a graduate of Susquehanna University and the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. He was the last student receiving a Master of Sacred Theology under Dr. Robert Jenson at the former Gettysburg Seminary. He served a number of congregations in central Pennsylvania, and after serving as the secretary of the Steering Committee he became the Director of the Lutheran Coalition for Renewal (CORE) in 2012. He retired in 2015 and has been doing supply preaching at many locations. He is a member of the Society of the Holy Trinity and serves on the board of the American Lutheran Publicity Bureau. He was honored this past summer for 45 years of ordained service.

He and his wife Linda are the parents of two adult children. Pastor Shipman was a friend of the founding pastor of St. Timothy, and also attended Pr. Eslinger's installation more than 20 years ago. His wife Linda has served as the secretary for six years at St. Timothy's, and is retiring at the end of January (it might be something about her new boss).



## EMMANUEL OF STONEY CREEK INSTALLS A NEW PASTOR

The Rev. Benjamin Umberger, surrounded by members of the clergy of the Atlantic Mission Region, the Call Committee and members of the Congregation Council, was installed on Saturday, January 26, as pastor at Emmanuel Lutheran Church of Stoney Creek, Pasadena, MD. The Rev. Mark Chavez preached and Dean David McGettigan led the service of installation. Ten fellow clergy from MD, NJ, PA and VA were in attendance.

There was a joyful celebration after the liturgy where all enjoyed a delicious lunch and great fellowship with one another. It was wonderful to see the love of Christ among so many people from our region who came to celebrate this new pastorate.

Congratulations to Pastor Ben and his family and to Emmanuel of Stoney Creek LC! May God bless this congregation and their new pastor!



## CALEB DOUGLAS CALLED AS ASSISTANT PASTOR IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH, NYC

Happy news from Immanuel Lutheran Church, NYC, who voted unanimously to call their Vicar, Caleb Douglas, to serve as Assistant Pastor until he heads off for graduate school. God willing, Caleb will begin doctoral study in theology this coming fall. Till then, he and his wife, Lynnae, and their three little sons are set to be with us here at Immanuel.

An invitation is extended to attend his ordination on Sunday, February 10, 4pm. RSVP to Pr. Fryer at [gpfryer@gmail.com](mailto:gpfryer@gmail.com). Clergy are invited to vest (color is red) and process, alb and stole or cassock and surplice. Meet in the undercroft at 3:40 pm.

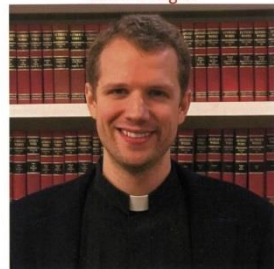
Pastor Gregory Fryer and the whole of Immanuel LC is happy for Christ's church on earth about this ordination.

Announcing a Service of

**Ordination to the Holy Ministry of Word and Sacrament**

For

**Caleb Douglas**



4 PM Sunday, February 10, 2019  
at  
**Immanuel Lutheran Church**  
122 East 88 Street, New York, NY 10128  
[www.immanuelnyc.org](http://www.immanuelnyc.org)  
Reception afterwards

Ordaining: Rev. John F. Bradosky, Bishop of the North American Lutheran Church (NALC)

Preaching: Theologian David S. Yeago, Professor of Systematic Theology and Ethics, North American Lutheran Seminary, Ambridge, PA

All clergy are invited to vest and process. Alb and stole or cassock and surplice.  
The color is red.  
Let's gather in Immanuel's undercroft by 3:40 PM if possible.

RSVP to Pastor Gregory P. Fryer: [gpfryer@gmail.com](mailto:gpfryer@gmail.com)

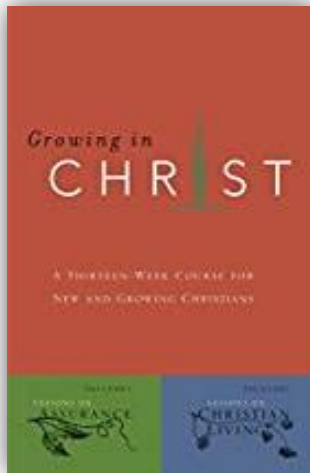


## RESOURCES TO GROW IN CHRIST

### **GROWING IN CHRIST...**

#### **A thirteen Week Course for New and Growing Christians**

This book was one of the 5 recommended resources at the August 2018 Lutheran Week by the NALC's Discipleship Team. It is a good initial study guide to bring focus on discipleship growth, when "You know Christ, but you're not sure how to grow in Christ."



This is an excellent guide with lessons on assurance, the key promises God gives to us as a Christian, and lessons of Christian living. All focus on major scriptural principles for spiritual growth. Great for new believers, a resource as a precursor to discipleship training as it adds strength to one's spiritual relationship with Christ. (72 pages)

### **TWO WORKBOOKS BY AUTHOR GREG OGDEN**

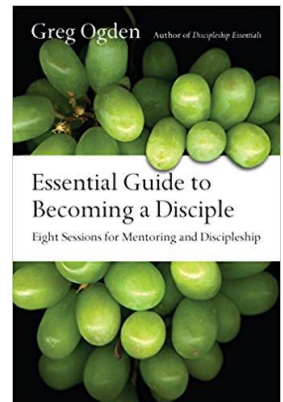
The following two books are a follow-up to "Transforming Discipleship...Making Disciples a few at a time" noted in the last *Atlantic Vine* issue. These two workbooks have been developed by Ogden over time to guide the process of growing as a disciple to discipling others. *Transforming Discipleship...Making Disciples a few at a time* provides a foundation and better understanding of who we are as a disciple, what we are commanded to do, and suggestions with starting the process.

### **ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO BECOMING A DISCIPLE: Eight Sessions for Mentoring and Discipleship**

An Eight Session Focus: "What am I committing to when I say I want to follow Jesus?" Using the Great Commission to explore the mission to make disciples, as well as the core characteristics that identify us as Jesus' followers, this guide lays the foundation for a life in Christ. Following the popular and effective design of his curriculum

*Discipleship Essentials* that sold over 250,000 copies, Greg Ogden has included the following elements in each of the eight sessions:

- A core truth
- A Bible study
- A reading
- life application

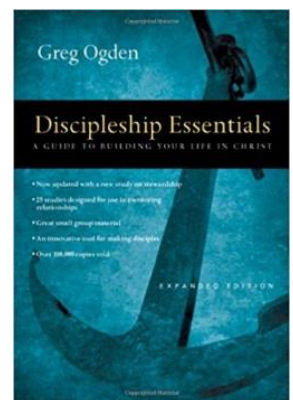


Whether you are mentoring one-on-one or in a small group, this essential guide will serve as an ideal on-ramp into the discipleship journey.

### **DISCIPLESHIP ESSENTIALS: A GUIDE TO BUILDING YOUR LIFE IN CHRIST**

This is a 25 chapter workbook that takes us on a journey deeper than the 8 session workbook described above. Which book to choose? It depends on the individuals as well as other desires or needed group specifics.

We grow in Christ as we seek him together. Jesus' own pattern of disciple-making was to be intimately involved with others





and allow life to rub against life. By gathering in twos or threes to study the Bible and encourage one another, we most closely follow Jesus' example with the twelve disciples. This workbook is a tool designed to help follow the pattern Jesus drew for us. Working through it will deepen your knowledge of essential Christian teaching and strengthen your faith. Each week contains the following elements:

- A core truth presented in a question-answer format
- A memory verse and accompanying study
- A field-tested inductive Bible study
- A reading on the theme for the week
- Questions to draw out key principles in the reading

Best used in groups of three, this book is also designed and successfully used as an individual study program, a one-on-one discipling tool and small group curriculum. Jesus had a big enough vision to think small. Focusing on a few did not limit his influence. Rather, it expanded it. *Discipleship Essentials* is designed to help us influence others as Jesus did--by investing in a few at a time.

*Using a resource in your congregation that is working well for you? Please share that information so others might use it too!*  
 Email: [newsletter@atlantic-nalc.org](mailto:newsletter@atlantic-nalc.org)

## PLAN AHEAD

### SERVE HIM IN YOUR COMMUNITY...NOTE EVENTS & LINKS BELOW

Looking into 2019 . . . Serve our Lord by planning for congregational and/or personal involvement. Check the listings below and mark your calendars.

#### May 2, 2019 — National Day of Prayer

Expand the 2019 theme of “**Love One Another**” throughout all of 2019.

<sup>34</sup> *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.* <sup>35</sup> *By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”*  
 —John 13:34-35

Find more information at  
<http://www.nationaldayofprayer.org/>

#### The March for Life 2020

Friday January 24, 2020

## REMINDER...

### NALC POSITION NOMINATIONS

Nominations are being received for positions to be elected at the 2019 NALC Convocation, August 8-9, in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The NALC Nominating Committee is seeking nominations for the positions of Bishop, Executive Council, and Court of Adjudication. Nominations are invited and welcomed from congregations.

**All nominations should be submitted by May 3, 2019.** Please go to [thenalc.org/nominate2019](http://thenalc.org/nominate2019) for more information and to find appropriate forms.

## PEOPLE IN OUR DISTRICT

We cannot let this issue go without a note of welcome as the NALC's Atlantic Region is taking place and coming together. Below are a few names of those in current positions to help with getting acquainted. As the region, districts and leadership evolve updates will be noted.

### CURRENT ATLANTIC REGION COUNCIL

Dean David McGettigan  
 The Rev. James DeLong  
 The Rev. Dennis Di Mauro  
 The Rev. Keith Eslinger  
 The Rev John Kulczycki  
 Scott Miller  
 Lee Mills  
 Sarah Raley  
 Jerrie Rosenfeld

### OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL STAFF

Robin Harris, AMR Admin. Assistant  
 Kathaleen Lilly, AMR Treasurer  
 Judy Mills, Editor, The Atlantic Vine

### NALC STAFF WITHIN OUR REGION

The Rev. Mark Chavez, General Secretary  
 The Rev. Brad Hales, Director of Domestic Mission

### AMR RENEWAL & DISCIPLESHIP TEAM

Lee Mills, Chair  
 lmills.email@comcast.net  
 The Rev. Mark Chavez  
 mchavez@thenalc.org  
 The Rev. Brett Jenkins  
 pastorjenkinssts@gmail.com  
 The Rev. John Kulczycki  
 john.kulczycki@verizon.net  
 The Rev. Brian Triller  
 briantriller@protonmail.com  
 The Rev. Luke Seamon  
 pastor@reformation-nalc.org  
 Judy Mills, Ex Officio & Admin  
 newsletter@atlantic-nalc.org

### THE ATLANTIC VINE — NOTE PUBLICATION DEADLINE DATES

<b>Next Issue</b>	<b>Spring 2019</b>	<b>- Deadline 5/7 - Tuesday</b>
	Summer 2019	- Deadline 7/30 - Tuesday
	Fall 2019	- Deadline 10/29 - Tuesday



*Submit your questions, publicize past or upcoming congregational events or ministry programs by*  
**Tuesday May 7, 2019.**

to: [newsletter@Atlantic-nalc.org](mailto:newsletter@Atlantic-nalc.org)

### CHRIST'S FOLLOWERS ARE "FISHERS OF MEN"

*And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men."* — Mark 1:17

When Jesus gathered His disciples He expected them to draw others into the kingdom.

