



# INALS

North American Lutheran Seminary



# Network News

December 2021

## *Dear Friends of the NALS,*

This issue of the NALS Newsletter highlights our relationships with cooperating seminaries in our network. In 2013 the NALC Convocation approved the start of our own seminary. It would be a real seminary, but with a difference. Rather than immediately investing in “bricks and mortar” we would partner with existing seminaries in a “hub and spokes” model. Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pennsylvania, graciously welcomed to the “hub” of theological education in the NALC. Eventually, other “spokes” would be added. Today, that vision is a reality.



We have five recommended seminaries in the network. They are: Trinity School for Ministry (the seminary center), Besson Divinity School, Fuller Theological Seminary, Sioux Falls Seminary, and Concordia Seminary in Edmonton, Canada. These seminaries are all fully accredited and offer Lutheran specific degrees for those seeking ordination. The network provides a means for theological education and pastoral formation which is flexible, affordable, confessional and biblical. All students attending one of our network seminaries will also attend short, residentially required courses at the seminary center. The NALS is also working “hand to glove” with the Candidacy Committee. Together we will work to make certain that there is academic excellence and solid formation for every person who is called to the ministry of Word and Sacrament.

I’m pleased that leaders from all the network seminaries contributed articles to this newsletter. I thank them for their willingness to partner with us.

Finally, I thank you. I thank you for your prayers and for your financial support. We have challenges to face. There are difficulties to overcome. But, if God blesses our labor, then we will meet the challenges and overcome the difficulties. We’re in this together. Therefore, I’m asking every pastor, congregation and mission district to make the discernment of vocations a priority.

*Thank you!*

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric M. Riesen". The signature is written in a cursive style.

The Rev. Dr. Eric M. Riesen  
President, NALS



# The NALS Network of Diverse Campuses and Educational Opportunities

**Join our team!**

The NALS is calling an ordained pastor to be the Director of Vocational Discernment (Recruitment Manager) to lead all candidate identification activities, from advertising opportunities, developing individual and third-party (undergraduate) relationships, and participating in interviewing candidates. Recruitment Manager duties include connecting with potential candidates online and offline, screening applications and supporting Deans and other clergy in their efforts while maintaining a positive candidate experience. Are you interested in this position, or know someone who is? Please visit [thenals.org](http://thenals.org) for more details.



Ben McCrimmon, Student

It is always intimidating to begin a new school year at a brand new place. You don't know the staff, the students or exactly what the academics will look like. You don't know the community expectations or the general tenor of campus. And you don't know what campus will bring out in you, for good or for ill.

“ I am excited to report that, despite these initial anxieties, I feel at home with the North American Lutheran Seminary. ”

When I was looking for a place to call home for this last year of my academic studies, NALS was on the top of my list. My mentor and friend had highly recommended the program to me for its openness to theological reflection and its mission-focused direction. And so far, the reality has lived up to the expectation.

From my first two weeks on campus, I am happier and more thrilled about seminary than I've ever been before. I'm excited to be a part of a school that not only desires to form me, but also wants to engage with me in the theological task. I'm excited to be a part of a place that not only teaches well, but also is committed to excellent practice. And I'm excited to learn from a faculty that is committed to the Lutheran Confessions in their distinctiveness and dynamism, and are therefore just as committed to loving God's people for the sake of the world. All of these things go together at the North American Lutheran Seminary.

I am humble and grateful to be able to call the NALS my home for the completion of my Master of Divinity degree. And above all, I'm looking forward to the opportunities for service my time at seminary will open up in the North American Lutheran Church congregations.

- Ben McCrimmon



CONCORDIA  
LUTHERAN  
SEMINARY



## *Greetings*

from Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, Alberta (Canada), farthest north of ATS seminaries. We are a very small school, with class size averaging 3-5 students. Like Jesus mentoring the small core of disciples, the campus is personal, friendly, and deeply meaningful for pastoral formation. Our mission is simple: CLS forms servants for Jesus' sake. This year's theme, based on Jeremiah 3:15, reminds us of God's promise to raise up "shepherds after my own heart" to serve His people. Students are immersed in God's word, wrestle with solid biblical and theological concepts, and prepare for a ministry where they think theologically and act pastorally, proclaiming God's message to the hearts and lives of His people in our age. The program is four years: two in academic foundations, one on internship, and one in final formation. During the first two years, students are involved in a contextual congregational setting. We are very glad to have NALC students from Canada attend here: they have served and thrived in our context and setting. One of the richest blessings is the deep relationships that are forged: with faculty, but also studying, learning, eating, and playing foosball with other students along the journey. CLS Edmonton extends a warm hello, praying you have a blessed academic journey!

*The Rev. James R. Gimbel, Ph.D.*  
*President and Professor*  
*Concordia Lutheran Seminary*



## *Greetings*

from Sioux Falls Seminary and the Luther House of Study (LHOS)! We're excited to partner with NALS/NALC as we continue to engage with Lutheran leaders and educators around the world. We have a shared mission to train the next generation of pastors with an affordable, accessible and relevant theological education. Using an innovative outcome and competency based approach, our LHOS faculty work with students to craft a customized and traditional Lutheran education. Throughout your education, you will work with a team of three people: an ordained NALC pastor, a personal mentor and a faculty mentor. As the team shepherds you through the curriculum they will help you integrate NALC candidacy requirements and your relationship with NALS.

From start to finish, you'll participate in the program from your current context, using our customized online educational platform. And last but not least, you'll be able to access all the classes and resources you'll need for \$300/month. Currently, there are around 80 Lutheran students from every mainline American Lutheran denomination as well as a number of Lutheran students from around the globe. For more information feel free to contact our President, Greg Henson, at [ghenson@sfseminary.edu](mailto:ghenson@sfseminary.edu), or one of the LHOS co-directors, Chris Croghan ([croghan@augie.edu](mailto:croghan@augie.edu)) or Sarah Stenson ([ssenson@augie.edu](mailto:ssenson@augie.edu)) or the LHOS chair of Lutheran Theology, Steve Paulson ([spaulson@sfseminary.edu](mailto:spaulson@sfseminary.edu)).

**Greg Henson**  
*President*





## *Greetings*

NALS ordination prospects and candidates, I am so excited about this partnership that we here at Fuller Seminary have with the NALS. As you may know, Fuller is a multid denominational seminary. Yet even as such, there are some deep roots in the Reformed tradition (American Presbyterianism, more specifically) and also, some might say ironically, in the charismatic renewal and pentecostal movements especially since the 1970s. Yet even further and more recently, our multi-campus location, robust online platform, and the fact that we have through our missiology and other programs alumni located in over 120 countries around the world means that we serve students across all four time zones in the USA and even many more outside of the North American hemisphere.

Last but not least we not only deliver programs in Korean and Spanish languages also, but these students, along with others served in our Center for Asian American Theology and Ministry, our William Pannell Center for Black Church Studies, and our Chinese Studies Center combine to ensure that what we do is fully attentive to and engaging of the realities of global church that is constituted by people from every nation, people, culture, and language. Into this mix we are excited to welcome those in the Lutheran tradition since iron-sharpens-iron and we need your voices in the mix of our in-person, hybrid, and online classroom conversations. May the Lord bless your journey, not least as it intersects with Fuller Seminary.

**Amos Yong**

*Dean, School of Mission & Theology  
Fuller Theological Seminary*





*Dear Lutheran students,*

Welcome from all of us at Beeson Divinity School on the beautiful campus of Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. We are thrilled that God is leading you into ministry service and to seminary. Beeson Divinity School's mission is to prepare God-called persons to serve as ministers in the Church of Jesus Christ within a Protestant, interdenominational community. We believe the best way to prepare for ministry is in person in a loving community of faith and learning.

With three Lutheran faculty members, Beeson stands ready to help prepare Lutherans for ordained ministry. Lutheran students can trust that they will be formed in the characteristic strengths of the Lutheran tradition while at the same time learning within a school that is intentionally ecumenical and reformational. We'd love to hear from you and answer any of your questions. One day, we hope to welcome you to our life together at Beeson!

**Douglas A. Sweeney**  
*Dean of Beeson Divinity School*



A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a dark suit, light blue shirt, and red patterned tie, is speaking into a microphone at a podium. He has a name tag that says "David". The background is a large mural of a tree. The foreground shows the backs of several audience members' heads.

## Congregationally Focused for Congregational Renewal

The June Interterm residential class will focus on “best practices” for congregational renewal. Particularly, we’ll learn together about worship, Catechesis, and discipleship in the Lutheran Tradition\*. Our teaching theologians include the Rev. Dr. Andrew Weisner and the Rev. Dr. Nathan Yoder. Together we’ll discuss the centrality of worship and discipleship as God-given means of renewal. There will be evening and afternoon opportunities for breakout sessions led by a team of pastors and theologians. Mark your calendars now!

**June 13-17, 2022**

The NALS Center at Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, PA

(The all seminarian retreat will take place after the class on June 17-18.)

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\*This is an ATS accredited course. Pastors and lay leaders are encouraged to attend and audit the course.

## *Formation Beyond the Classroom*

As a seminarian at the Lutheran House of Studies at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary in Charlotte, North Carolina, one of my frequent laments is the general lack of Lutheran community. While I value the relationships I have formed with brothers and sisters from various Protestant traditions, and while I am tremendously blessed to be able to receive an orthodox and affordable seminary education practically in my own backyard, I confess that I do envy NALS seminarians studying at Trinity precisely because they are learning in community with fellow Lutherans.



Thus, I was excited to attend the June Term and Seminarian Retreat at Trinity this past summer, and the experience was everything I had hoped it would be. The course *Confessing Christ Today* provided challenging readings, stimulating discussion, and a solid grasp of post-Chalcedonian Christology, but more than that, I found the community formation for which I had been longing. Our days were framed by the Daily Office – the week centered around the Eucharist. Within this context of prayer, we came together, forming friendships almost overnight. We shared meals (and, perhaps, beverages) connected over mutual joys and burdens, talked through struggles that we had been experiencing, and provided thoughtful support and feedback for one another.

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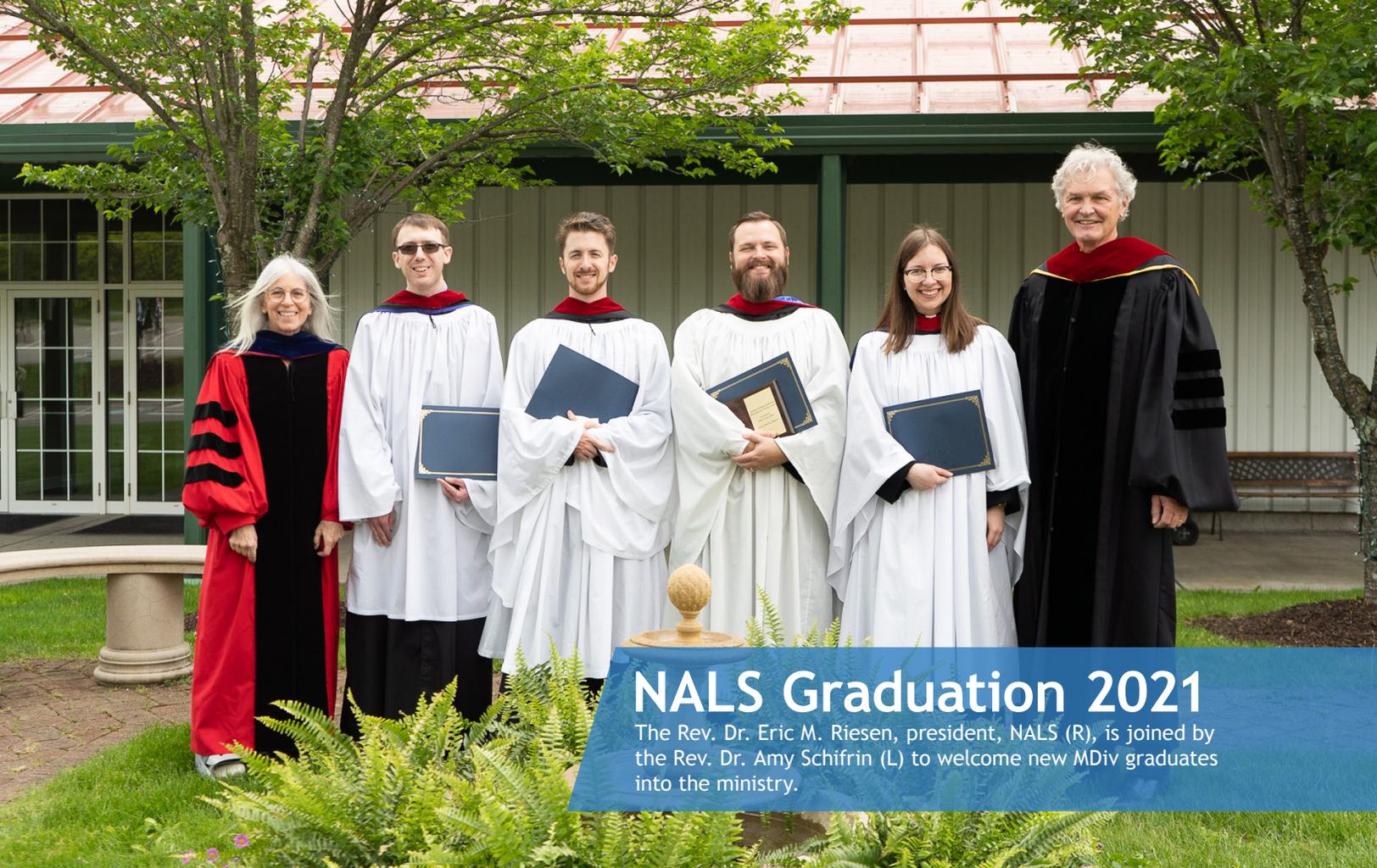
The friendships I made in June have carried on. We still hold one another in prayer. We frequently reach out for mutual consolation and support

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Though we are spread across the United States, we are a community, and I thank God for giving me that for which I longed.

I encourage all seminarians to attend the June term and Seminarian Retreat next summer. You will find a community and make lifelong friends. You will support and be supported. And in all this, you will be blessed.

*- Cody Carpenter*



## NALS Graduation 2021

The Rev. Dr. Eric M. Riesen, president, NALS (R), is joined by the Rev. Dr. Amy Schiffrin (L) to welcome new MDiv graduates into the ministry.

## Lutheran Week 2021

Some of our NALS Network alumni, students, faculty and regents reunited in Corpus Christi, Texas, for the 2021 NALC Mission Convocation!



We want to thank the Atlantic Mission Region for a very generous gift of \$10,000 for the seminary. President Riesen attended the Atlantic Mission Region Convocation at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Nazareth, Pennsylvania, where he lectured on the theology of worship and preached. Thank you, Atlantic Mission Region!



## A Light Shines in the Darkness

In these dark days, the light and life of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is needed more than ever. At the North American Lutheran Seminary, we form men and women to proclaim this sacred Gospel. Your prayerful support is greatly appreciated, particularly at this time of year as we celebrate the birth of God's Son.

On behalf of the president, regents, faculty, staff and students of the NALS, have a blessed Advent and a Merry Christmas.

Enjoy Advent blessings and messages at [thenalc.org](http://thenalc.org) (click on devotions).



# NALS Graduates Win Preaching Awards

The North American Lutheran Seminary (NALs) is pleased to announce that two graduating seminarians have received preaching awards during the 2021 commencement of the NALS' partner seminary, Trinity School for Ministry (TSM) in Ambridge, Pennsylvania.

## Alliyah C. Greaver received the Rev. William D. Henning Award for Expository Preaching.

The Rev. William D. Henning was a much-loved professor of pastoral theology at Trinity School for Ministry during the 1970s. His passion was expository preaching and he sought to enable others to take the Scriptures and make them come alive to God's people. In the early 1980s, he left Trinity to work at St. Stephen's Church, eventually becoming their rector. During this time, he was diagnosed with cancer and died at the age of 45. As a fitting tribute to Henning, friends and family endowed a preaching award to be given to middler or senior students for distinction in preaching. Greaver, from Yankton, South Dakota, received her Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree from the NALS. After her graduation, Greaver was ordained to ministry of Word and Sacrament in the North American Lutheran Church and was installed on September 12, 2021 as the pastor of St. John Lutheran Church in Greenville, Ohio.



## The Rev. Andrew S. Ames Fuller received the Episcopal Preaching Foundation Award.

The annual Episcopal Preaching Foundation (EPF) Award is bestowed upon a student, who, in the estimation of the dean and faculty, has demonstrated the most improvement and aptitude in preaching. The award is sponsored annually by the foundation. The award consists of a cash prize of \$1,000, a commemorative plaque and an invitation to attend the 2022 annual Preaching Excellence Program (PEP) conference. Ames Fuller is an ordained Anglican deacon from St. Petersburg, Florida. He also serves the bishop of the North American Lutheran Church as the denomination's director of communications, and received his Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree alongside his wife, Shannon. After his graduation, Ames Fuller moved to State College, Pennsylvania where he serves as assisting clergy at Incarnation Anglican Church. He is also pursuing his Master of Sacred Theology (S.T.M.) degree from Trinity School for Ministry.



The North American Lutheran Seminary is a seminary network across the United States and Canada forming pastors and church leaders for the North American Lutheran Church who will faithfully preach, teach, and live God's eternal truth, through Word and Sacrament, proclaiming Christ's cross and resurrection, making disciples who will renew and grow the church in Christ's name.

Formed in the Great Tradition and  
deeply rooted in orthodox teaching,  
the NALC already unites more than  
**142,000 LUTHERANS**  
in nearly 500 congregations across North America.

The good news is spreading. The NALC is growing fast.

That means the North American Lutheran Seminary network of campuses will need to raise up more than 300 additional pastors over the next decade to meet the needs of NALC congregations and communities like yours.

You can help. Your year-end gift to the North American Lutheran Seminary will help meet the critical need for future pastors. And, thanks to an anonymous \$50,000 Matching Gift Challenge, whatever you give by December 31 will be matched dollar-for-dollar.

Join us today to support the NALS – only seminary singularly devoted to forming Lutheran pastors who are Christ Centered, Mission Driven, Traditionally Grounded and Congregationally Focused.

To make your gift, scan the QR code at the bottom of this letter or visit [thenals.org/ways-to-give](https://thenals.org/ways-to-give) to make your online contribution, using code: **Matching Gift Challenge**.



Scan the QR code to donate online.



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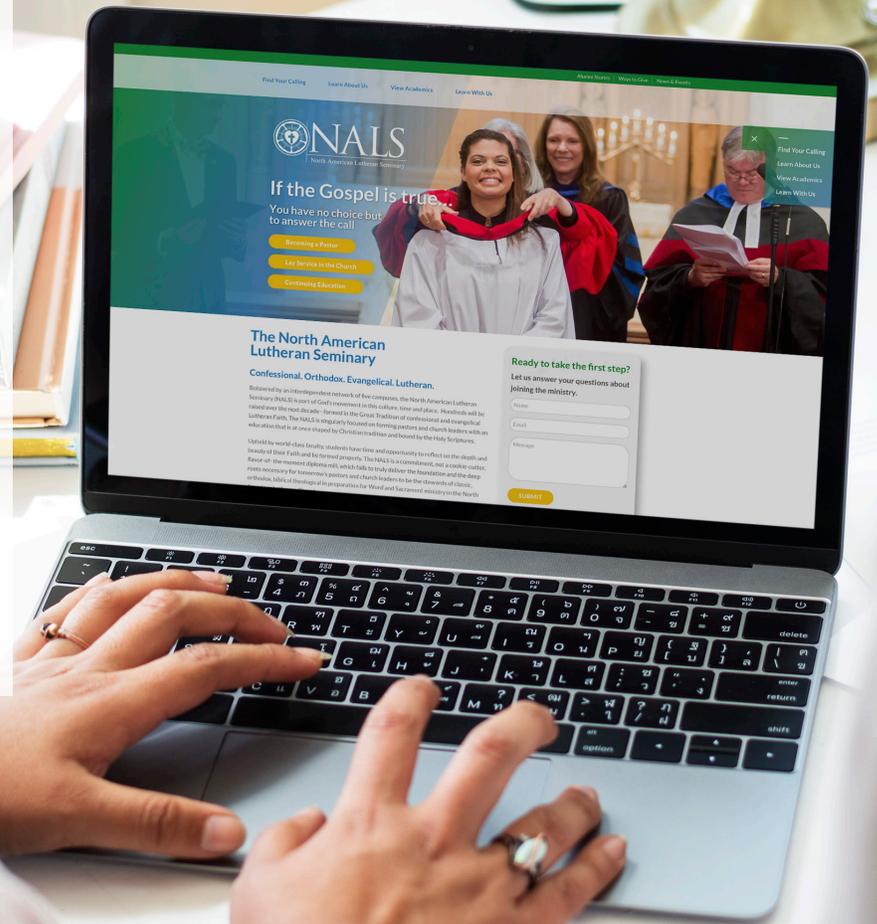
[facebook.com/theNALS/](https://www.facebook.com/theNALS/)

## Have you heard?

The North American Lutheran Seminary recently launched its new website.

[www.thenals.org](http://www.thenals.org)

Visit the site today to learn more about the NALS and its effort to form more than 300 additional pastors over the next decade to meet the growing number of NALC congregations and communities.



# PASTORS' CONFERENCE 2022

*Always Be Ready: Apologetics in Real Life*

**FEBRUARY 15-17, 2021  
CROWNE PLAZA ORLANDO – UNIVERSAL BLVD  
ORLANDO, FLORIDA**

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