



NOMINATING COMMITTEE PRESENTS BOARD OF REGENTS NOMINEES



The Nominating Committee has announced its nominees for election to the North American Lutheran Seminary Board of Regents at the 2026 NALC Online Convocation, taking place August 7, from 7–10 p.m. ET on Zoom.

The Board of Regents provides governance and oversight for the North American Lutheran Seminary, helping guide its mission of preparing faithful leaders for service in Christ's Church. Members bring a variety of experiences in ministry, leadership, education, and

congregational life as they support the seminary's work and future direction.

The candidates are as follows (name, congregational membership and nominating congregation/nominating delegates):

The Rev. Dr. Paul Krueger, First Lutheran Church—Washburn, North Dakota; nominated by Grace Lutheran Church—Erskine, Minnesota

The Rev. Philip K. Lee, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church—Everett, Washington; nominated by

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church—Everett, Washington

The Rev. James Lehmann, Immanuel Lutheran Church—Thomasboro, Illinois; nominated by New Beginnings Lutheran Church—Mahomet, Illinois

The Rev. Dr. Eric Waters, St. John Lutheran Church—Boerne, Texas; nominated by St. John Lutheran Church—Boerne, Texas

The Rev. Roland Weisbrot, Victory Lutheran—Medicine Hat, Alberta; nominated by St. Peter Lutheran Church—Medicine Hat, Alberta

Additional information about all nominees, including biographical information, is in the Report of the Nominating Committee available at thenalc.org/2026bios.



JOIN US FOR ONLINE CONVOCATION:
AUGUST 7, AT 7 P.M. ET

The North American Lutheran Church will hold its 2026 Online Convocation on Friday, Aug. 7, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. ET.

The meeting will be held via Zoom, allowing voting delegates from across the NALC to participate in the business of the church from wherever they are located. Delegates will be able to vote and participate in discussion using a computer, tablet, or phone.

The Online Convocation provides an opportunity for the church body to conduct necessary business between in-person convocations.

The primary business of the 2026 Online Convocation will be the election of members to the Board of Regents of the North American Lutheran Seminary. The Board of Regents provides governance and oversight for the NALC News

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seminary and supports its mission of preparing faithful leaders for service in Christ's Church.

Additional information regarding registration, voting procedures, meeting materials, and the agenda will be provided to delegates in advance of the meeting.

Congregations are encouraged to ensure their voting delegates are registered and prepared to participate in this important gathering of the North American Lutheran Church.

To register, visit thenalc.org/onlineconvocation.



NALS CELEBRATES CLASS OF 2026 AT SPRING COMMENCEMENT

Emily Clark

*Communications Specialist & Seminary Liaison
North American Lutheran Church*

On May 16, 2026, the North American Lutheran Seminary (NALS) joined in celebrating its class of 2026 at the spring commencement ceremony held at the NALS Seminary Center, Trinity Anglican Seminary, in Ambridge, Pennsylvania. It was a day marked by gratitude for years of study, for faithful formation, and for the communities that supported each student along the way.

Among this year's NALS graduates completing the Master of Divinity degree are Cody Cooper, David N. Corrado, Jonathan Gowin, Luke Ratke, Jackson Watts, and Quinn Silco. Ramiel Shamwel completed a Master of Arts in Religion, and Candice Carter and William (Bill) Morris each received a Diploma in Ordained Ministry in the Ordination Under Special Circumstances (OUSC). Of those graduates, Cooper, Corrado, Ratke, and Watts walked in person at the May 16 ceremony.

Families, friends, faculty, and fellow students filled the Trophimus Center to mark the occasion—an image captured well in the photos from the day, where robed graduates processed in worship, received diplomas, and gathered on the steps outside for the kind of joy that only comes at the end of a long road.

Theological formation at the NALS is carried out through a network of partner seminaries across

North America. Students pursue their degrees at institutions including Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Beeson Divinity School, and Fuller Theological Seminary, as well as through the NALS Seminary Center in Ambridge. These graduates have spent years preparing to preach, teach, and care for congregations—and now that work begins in earnest.

The NALS congratulates all members of the class of 2026 and gives thanks to God for the work He has done and continues to do in each of them. The church looks forward to seeing them serve in congregations, communities, and ministry contexts across the continent.



CONNECTING WEALTH AND POSSESSIONS WITH OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE

The Rev. Dona Johnson

*Living & Giving Stewardship
North American Lutheran Church*

During the seminary process, clinical pastoral education (CPE), or during spiritual retreats, seminarians and Christ-followers alike are often asked to write a spiritual autobiography tracing how their lives have been intentionally shaped by God's love, grace, and sovereign care.

Now imagine taking this same spiritual practice and writing an autobiography about your personal relationship with God, money, and material possessions. Some of you may relate to this and some of you may think this is a waste of time, but wherever you land, those who desire to

develop a character of Christlikeness, the ways in which you and I relate to our wealth and possessions are a direct reflection of our faith, our ability to trust, and our willingness to place everything in our lives under the Lordship and authority of Jesus Christ—who is our Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer.

So, what does a spiritual autobiography reveal about your relationship with money and material possessions? Simply stated, it tells a story about you and money. It gives you a snapshot of your Christian character. It brings to light the authenticity of your discipleship and how through the passing years you were and are still being formed spiritually in regard to what you value most in this life, what you prioritize in this life to secure a future for yourself, and it also discloses the abundance or lack of generosity and gratitude you express towards God and others.

In addition to a personal money autobiography, a congregation can collectively write a faith and giving autobiography which traces their history with money—generational attitudes, emotional transference that is passed on from pastor to pastor, congregation to congregation and it can uncover how congregations relate to money in times of financial crisis, and in times of joyful gratitude for what God has provided. Many times, the conflicts surrounding financial issues are not about money at all but are only symptoms of some deeper spiritual, emotional and relational issue whether in a marriage, a family system, or a congregation.

We so often go through life not connecting the material with the spiritual. And for many Christians there is a terminal deception regarding wealth and possessions—what we decide to keep for ourselves and what we choose to give away is entirely at our discretion. Much of the time, this deception remains undisclosed, remains strictly a private matter and hidden.

However, writing a spiritual autobiography about how we relate to money and possessions can be the start of genuine spiritual formation—breaking free of the strong attachments we have with money to secure a current lifestyle or future—one that at its very best is superficial. Reflecting on

how you acquire, spend, save, borrow, accumulate, and give away money and possessions will give you a good idea on where you stand in your own discipleship.

Here are only a few of many probing questions that you can use to begin your money autobiography: When you think about your faith and giving, who and what life events had the greatest impact on how you relate to money—spending, saving, earning and borrowing habits? Beginning in childhood, what are some of your earliest memories of money? How did your family's faith play a role in spending, saving and earning wealth? Or did it? Did your family worry a lot about money or experience financial hardships? A true story—my friend Bob, an elderly man, was a very serious and frugal man. He counted every penny and controlled the money his wife could spend. This created much dissonance in their marriage. During an in-depth conversation with him, he divulged that during the Great Depression, he came home from school one day to find his mother sitting next to a foreclosure sign with all their belongings spread out on their front lawn. That image, the shock of being homeless shaped Bob's heart, and he managed his wealth and possessions through the lens of scarcity for the rest of his life. Now Bob is not the only one who carries these lived out life events, attitudes and traumatic experiences—we all do to some degree. Naming and being transparent about them can bring healing and release the power they have over us.

A few other questions that are also good to explore are: Where was generosity and gratitude routinely expressed to you during childhood? Was the topic of money a source of joy or anxiety? How is your current use of money influenced by what you value? Where is there secrecy regarding money in your life? How do the teachings of Jesus regarding money and possessions shape your behavior? Can you distinguish the biblical truths from the myths of faithful stewardship? For instance, money and possessions are not bad things in themselves, but making money a god, lusting, overspending, debt, worrying and fretting that there is never enough is an indicator that money has a crippling hold on you. Do you

experience being asked to give financially to support your congregation as a joy, an irritation, strictly an obligation or both a duty and delight? If there was a critical financial need in your congregation, would you forego your current lifestyle, renounce a much-desired purchase to contribute to the needs of the Body of Christ of which you are a member? Are you more generous now than you were ten, five, and one year(s) ago? Do you wake up every morning looking for opportunities to give?

Would your story with money and possessions describe you as a natural giver or keeper, or describe you as greedy, frugal, or a recklessly generous person? The story of your relationship with money and material possessions is a network of intersecting stories—the story of your family's response to money and possessions—hardship, scarcity, abundance and joy, the story of your life with God and how God's Word profoundly shaped your attitude through His divine love and grace—His character—it's the story of your vocational path and how you responded financially to your wants, needs and longings. All of these threads are organically woven together and influence one's reaction and relationship with money and possessions either consciously or subconsciously.

Dallas Willard said, "The general human failing is to want what is right and important, but at the same time not commit to the kind of life that will produce the action we know to be right." Paul said it another way, "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do, I do not do. But what I hate I do" (Rom. 7:15). What do you do with your money and possessions that you hate doing? Or what do you do that you don't want to do? Deep down, I believe each of us know what God wants us to do with our money and possessions, but the desire for immediate security, the constant lure for gratification and impulsive indulgence is so great that it is extremely difficult for some of us to commit to the kind of life that will produce the behaviors toward wealth and possessions that bring honor and glory to God.

The good news is God's love and divine nature is woven into every nook and cranny of the universe.

Everything has its origin and source in Jesus Christ. As we grasp more tightly to Jesus, God's love penetrates the deep recesses of our hearts and minds producing an insatiable desire to be radically generous with our wealth and possessions. Then and only then are we free to let go of our tight grasp on worldly attachments for we see their attraction for what it really is—a false self, a false sense of security. Freed from attachments, we then attach every aspect of our lives to Jesus. Then God who is the source of all our spiritual longings and our need for unconditional love and acceptance fills our souls with His perfect love, peace, and contentment. Thus, our need to acquire more money and more possessions is supernaturally transformed and tempered into a need to seek first God's will, to hunger, and find our true identity not in things but in God's indescribable and inexhaustible love for us, the entire human family, and all of creation!

May each of us explore our autobiographies with wealth and possessions and allow God to speak through it, transform us, and make us even more generous and gracious than we are at the present moment.

You can explore more in RESET at, thenalc.org/stewardship.



FOUR MOVEMENTS OF A HEALTHY CHURCH: INVITE, RETAIN, DISCIPLE, SEND

The Rev. Tom Brashears

*Director of Leadership Development
North American Lutheran Church*

Many congregations work hard and care deeply yet still struggle to explain how all their ministries fit together. Worship, education, outreach, care, service, youth, fellowship—each area matters, but without a shared framework, leaders can feel like they're managing a collection of unrelated activities rather than stewarding a coherent mission. When that happens, energy scatters and decisions become harder than they need to be.

One helpful way to regain clarity is to step back and look at the life of the church through four simple movements: Invite, Retain, Disciple, and Send. These movements are not programs or departments; they are ways of describing how people encounter the church, grow in faith, and are sent into the world. Healthy churches tend to be attentive to all four—not perfectly, but intentionally. When one movement is neglected, imbalance shows up elsewhere.

The RENEW process uses this framework to help leaders see the whole picture with fresh eyes. By mapping what the church is already doing into these four movements, congregations gain a shared language for discernment. Gaps become visible without blame. Strengths become clearer. Conversations shift from defending individual ministries to asking: How is God forming us as a

whole? When leaders can see how Invite, Retain, Disciple, and Send work together, clarity increases—and faithful focus becomes possible.

To learn more about Renew, [click here](https://thenalc.org/aboutrenew) or visit thenalc.org/aboutrenew.



ALL PRAISE AND THANKS TO GOD: THE OFFERTORY AND OFFERING

The Rev. Dr. Amy Schiffrin

*President Emeritus
North American Lutheran Seminary*

"I urge you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship" Romans 12:1.

What does it mean to offer our thanks and praise at the altar? What does it mean to offer gifts of bread and wine for use at Holy Communion? What does it mean for us to offer our gifts of currency for the service of the feeding and housing of the poor, for the upkeep of the church's material needs, and for the wider mission of the global communion? ("He who contributes, in liberality...Rom. 12:8b)

The word, "offer," itself, has many meanings, sacred and secular. Yet, in the midst of the gathering of the community to receive the life-giving gifts of the one who was crucified for our sake and raised from the dead, in this offering we come to understand that all of life, every bit of it, is a gift from God. Our offerings are an act of thanksgiving for God's self-offering. They are a faithful expression rooted in praise and

acclamation (“He who gives aid, with zeal.” Rom. 12:8c). With heart and hands and voices, we acknowledge God’s work in our lives and in His whole creation.

Between the simple act of offering bread and wine as described by Justin Martyr, to the offerings for the hungry poor described in the next few centuries, to even more elaborate inclusions of the first fruits of the field, such practices grew in such a way that the gifts of bread and wine were hard to distinguish from the other gifts that had been brought forth. One of Luther’s great concerns was the Mass being more about our acts of sacrifice than God’s beneficent gifts to humankind, so his *Formulae Missae* of 1523 sought to remove all that obscured the giftedness of Christ’s acts on our behalf. Lutheran Church orders in the ensuing centuries then simply included the singing of a few verses of psalm as the gifts of bread and wine were brought up and table prepared.

The sung Offertory in the *Lutheran Book of Worship*, followed by a congregationally voiced prayer that is led by an assisting minister, both clarifies and helps the assembly to experience what it means to offer all that has been graciously given to us in service of God. The Lord’s table is prepared as our hearts continue to be prepared through these ritual acts of corporate singing and spoken prayer.

“Let the Vineyards be Fruitful Lord,” not only includes a reflection on Psalm 23:5, but echoes verses from Isaiah, Hosea, Ezekiel, Revelation, and John. Remembrance and hope sound in our voices as we are given a vision of the feast to come. The second option presented in the *LBW*, “What Shall I Render to the Lord,” of Psalm 116: 12–19. Psalm 116, as part of the *Hallel* (Psalms 113–118) was sung at Jewish festivals, including the Passover, may well have been sung before Jesus was arrested on Maundy Thursday. This psalm was also used in the *Service Book and Hymnal*. In this musical setting we sing of how God’s benefits elicit thanksgiving offered in his name. Might Psalm 116:15, “I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call upon the name of the Lord,” been part of the inspiration of Romans 12:1?

We are also given an option between two offertory prayers that were composed for the *LBW*. In the first prayers we once again confess that everything we have and everything we are comes through God’s gracious love. We ask God to receive these gifts, not for our sake, but for the sake of Jesus Christ who offered himself for us. The second prayer, which begins, “Blessed are you...” is reminiscent of Jewish prayers of thanksgiving. When Jesus blessed the bread and wine at the Last Supper, He would have begun with these same words, “Blessed are you...” In this prayer we hear echoes of the first article of the Creeds, which itself echoes Old Testament passages from Genesis to the Psalter. And then Old and New Testament (especially Romans 12:1) are given to assembly in doxological form, so that we who gather in Christ’s name will continually dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that God has made. As we voice this prayer in faith, God is opening our hearts to again receive His life in ours and thus strengthened to live out His goodness in caring for all whom He loves.



ONLINE CONFIRMATION: WELCOMING NEW STUDENTS AND INSTRUCTORS FOR 2026-2027

The Rev. Teresa Peters

*Director of Youth & Family Ministry
North American Lutheran Church*

One of the joyful and fruitful youth ministry efforts the NALC has developed in recent years is our Online Confirmation Program. What began as

a practical response to a real need has become a meaningful way to help congregations form young people in the Christian faith.

Across the NALC, we have many small congregations, congregations without pastors, and congregations with only one or two confirmation-age students. In many of these settings, offering a full confirmation program can be difficult. Yet the need remains the same: young people need to be grounded in God's Word, taught the faith faithfully, and encouraged to live as disciples, baptized children of God within the life of the Church.

That is where the Online Confirmation Program has proven to be such a gift.

Four years ago, we launched this ministry with just seven students. Last year, that number grew to thirty-five. This growth reflects both the need for the program and the value it has already shown in the lives of students and congregations.

The NALC Online Confirmation Program is a two-year course of study that meets weekly during the school year. Classes are held on Zoom, allowing students from many different places and time zones to learn together regularly. The 2026–2027 confirmation year will begin the week of September 14. First-year students will meet on Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m. Central Time. Second-year students will meet on Monday evenings, also at 7:00 p.m. Central Time.

The first year begins with three introductory classes, followed by sixteen weeks focused specifically on the Bible. The remaining weeks of the first year focus on Lutheran topics. The second year focuses on Luther's Small Catechism and other Lutheran teachings. Even during the Catechism portion of the program, each class includes time for ongoing Bible reading and study.

Additional topics include Lutheran worship, Lutheran doctrine, the church year, church history, prayer, and other areas of Christian life and discipleship. The schedule also includes some open nights, giving instructors flexibility to respond pastorally to questions, needs, or circumstances that arise in the lives of students.

As most of you know, from a Lutheran perspective, confirmation is not simply a graduation from Sunday School or a cultural rite of passage. It is part of the Church's work of catechesis—teaching the faith into which young people have already been baptized. In Holy Baptism, God places His name on us, forgives our sins, unites us to Christ, and gives us the Holy Spirit. Confirmation instruction helps students grow in the knowledge of those gifts so that they may trust God's promises, confess the faith, and live as disciples of Jesus.

One of the strengths of our Online Confirmation Program is that it connects teaching, mentoring, and congregational life. Each student chooses a mentor from their congregation. Discussion questions are provided, but as the relationship grows, we hope those conversations will also grow naturally.

Students are also expected to serve in their congregation at least twice a month. This may include serving as an acolyte, usher, reader, helping with congregational ministry, or another form of service that fits the student and congregation. This is deeply important. The Christian faith is not learned only in a classroom; it is lived in the Church.

In this way, the online program supports the work of the local congregation rather than replacing it. Even though the teaching happens online, students remain connected to their own congregation through worship, service, and mentoring.

Another strength of the program is the team-teaching approach. Each class is led by NALC pastors and qualified lay leaders, giving students the opportunity to hear from different voices while receiving instruction rooted in the same Lutheran confession of faith. It also reminds students that they are part of something larger than their own congregation. They belong to the wider Body of Christ.

As we prepare for the 2026–2027 school year, we are now accepting new student registrations. Congregations with confirmation-age students are encouraged to consider whether this program

would be a helpful support, especially if they have only one or two students, limited local teaching support, or are currently without a pastor.

Registration is available online at:

thenalc.org/youthfamily

We would like registrations to be completed as soon as possible, and preferably by the end of August, so that we can plan well and ensure that enough instructors are in place.

We are also seeking additional instructors for the coming year. As the program continues to grow, so does our need for faithful pastors and qualified lay leaders who are willing to help teach, encourage, and form young people in the faith.

In a time when many young people are surrounded by confusion, competing ideas, and shallow understandings of faith, clear catechesis matters. Students need more than vague spirituality. They need the Scriptures. They need the Catechism. They need to know what God has done for them in Christ and how that shapes their lives.

And that is exactly what this program seeks to do: to help young people grow in God's Word, confess the faith of the Church, remain connected to their congregations, and live as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Questions? Contact the Rev. Teresa Peters at tpeters@thenalc.org.



PRAYERS FOR CYG

The Rev. Teresa Peters

*Director of Youth & Family Ministry
North American Lutheran Church*

Please keep the 2026 NALC Continental Youth Gathering in your prayers as youth, pastors, youth leaders, and volunteers prepare to gather in Roanoke, Virginia, July 7–10.

This year, more than 300 people from across the NALC will come together for worship, teaching, fellowship, service, and encouragement in the faith. The theme for this gathering is “REJOICE,” rooted in 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18: “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances.”

We ask congregations across the NALC to pray for the youth who will attend, that they would be strengthened in their faith, reminded of the joy we have in Christ, and encouraged to live as disciples in their homes, congregations, and communities. Please also pray for the pastors, speakers, musicians, small group leaders, youth leaders, volunteers, and planning team who are preparing to serve during these days.

Pray for safe travel, meaningful conversations, deepened relationships, and hearts open to God's Word. Pray that the Holy Spirit would work through their time together to point all who gather to the hope and joy we have in Jesus.

We are grateful for the many ways the wider church supports and encourages our young people. As the gathering approaches, we invite

every congregation to join us in prayer, offering a special petition on Sunday, July 5, asking the Lord to bless this time together and to use it for His good purposes in the lives of our youth and in the life of the NALC.



GLOBAL WORKER UPDATE: A TEAM BECOMING DISCIPLES

Kathleen Lutz

Prayer League & Theovision, Kenya

One day I saw several children melting pieces of plastic to form a ball. I was told that the ball was made for a soccer game that afternoon. My friend Gladys invited me to watch the children play. We arrived at a large field where many children gathered. They brought long sticks for the goal and began to choose teams. Then, let the game begin!

In the heat of the day, the teams kicked the ball back and forth, back and forth. After some time, Gladys called the children to come. They gathered under a shade tree as she gave them some refreshments. While the children rested, I talked with Gladys about the audio Bible she had received in a training by Theovision. Could this be shared with the children as a teaching tool? Since that day, Gladys plays a Bible story using the audio Bible and the children talk about what they heard and what it says to them.

I have gotten real soccer balls and uniforms for the team and Gladys arranges for the team to play in tournaments. Yes, they are that good! And with the audio Bible they are becoming disciples of Jesus as they learn about the God of all creation. It brings much joy. It all began that day of melting plastic to make a ball. Now listening to the audio

Bible, they are learning about God, Jesus and people in the Bible. I am grateful that God has opened a way for His Word to be made known among the children. We pray for the children to grow and be blessed as they play and learn from the audio Bible stories.



SAVE THE DATE: CLERGY RETREAT 2027

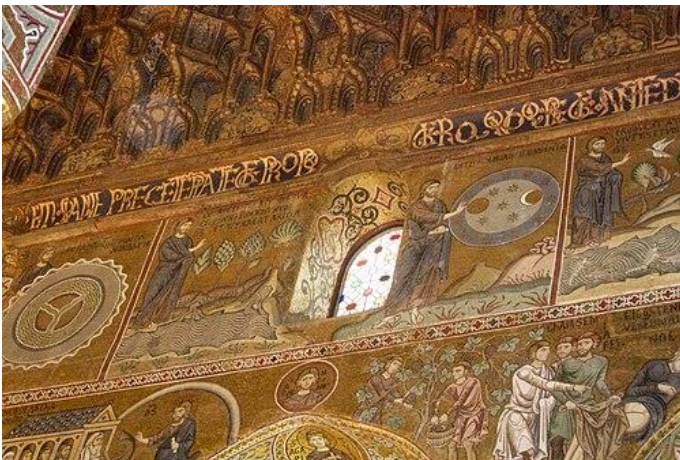
Please mark your calendars for the 2027 Clergy Retreat, which will feature a refreshed schedule designed to better serve pastors, deans, and their spouses while bringing key gatherings together in one week.

As part of this new format, the Deans' Meeting will be incorporated into the retreat schedule as a pre-retreat gathering. This change replaces the separate November Deans' Meeting, helping reduce costs and creating greater opportunity for deans to participate fully in the annual retreat.

2027 Schedule

- **Pastoral Development Days:** January 18–19, 2027
- **New Deans' Bootcamp:** January 18, 2027
- **Deans' Meeting:** January 19, 2027
- **Clergy Spouse & Couples Gathering:** January 19, 2027
- **Clergy Retreat:** January 20–22, 2027

More details and registration information will be shared in the months ahead.



FEAST OF CREATION: A NEW ADDITION TO THE FESTIVALS OF THE CHURCH YEAR

A REPORT FROM THE CONSULTATION ON COMMON TEXTS (CCT)

The Rev. Dr. Amy Schiffrin
*President Emeritus
 North American Lutheran Seminary*

The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof,
 the world and those who dwell therein;
 for he has founded it upon the seas,
 and established it upon the rivers. — Psalm 24:1-2

When the Consultation on Common Texts (CCT) held its annual meeting in Decatur, Georgia in April 2026, it adopted a report from a subcommittee that had been serving on an ecumenical working group seeking to create a new festival in the church calendar celebrating God's role in creation. September 1, or the Sunday following September 1 was designated as the

date for the festival, the adoption of the name Festival of Creation in Christ (or the Feast of Creation), and a proposed three-year rotation of lessons. The CCT commended these three proposals to member churches for a three-year period of trial use (2026-2028). Trial use is typically followed by feedback from member churches, alterations as needed, and a CCT recommendation for permanent adoption by member churches. Member churches act upon and make alterations on proposal as meet their own timetables and liturgical sensibilities.

An ecumenical and international group anchored its work in a set of guiding discernment questions developed in consultation with Tomás Insua (an ecclesial affiliate at the Laudato Si' Research Institute) and the broader theological working document. These questions were applied to every proposed reading:

- Do the texts, alone or in juxtaposition, explicitly reveal Christ's role in creation?
- Do the texts, alone or in juxtaposition, explore the Trinitarian breadth of creative activity?
- Do the texts, alone or in juxtaposition, elaborate on creation as sacramental, covenanted, and beloved by God?
- Do the texts, alone or in juxtaposition, evoke thanksgiving, praise, awe, and wonder at God's creative act?
- Do the texts, alone or in juxtaposition, point to the reality of creation's groaning and hope for the new creation as the fulfillment of God's covenantal plan?

The working group developed a three-year lectionary cycle, with readings for each year following the A/B/C rotation of the Revised Common Lectionary. Below is a summary of the finalized proposals for each year, including the rationale for key decisions and the role of alternatives.

	First Reading	Psalm Reading	Second Reading	Gospel Reading
Year A	Genesis 1:1-2:3 or Genesis 2:4-25	Psalm 148:1-14	Acts 17:22a, 24-28	John 1:1-5

Year B	Proverbs 8:22-31 [32-35]	Psalms 104 (select verses to be determined)	Colossians 1:15-20	Matthew 6:25-33 or John 1:1-5
Year C	Job 38:1, 4-11 (12-18) or Sirach 42:15-25	Psalms 29:3-11 or Psalm 65:5-13	Romans 8:18-25	Luke 8:22-25 or John 1:1-5

Year A

Genesis 1:1—2:3 and Genesis 2:4–25 were chosen as options for the First Reading in order to 1) include the foundational creation narratives in Year A and 2) not privilege one creation narrative over the other. Psalm 148 was favored for its strong thematic resonance with Genesis. John 1:1–5 was retained as a consistent Gospel alternative available across all three years (see below). Acts 17: 22a, 24–28 was chosen for its resonances with the Genesis creation narratives, drawing in the Trinitarian themes of the Feast to sit alongside the Christological themes found in John 1:1–5.

Year B

Proverbs 8 was chosen over Genesis 2 for Year B after considerable discussion. While Genesis 2 offers a complementary creation narrative to Genesis 1, the group was concerned about the risk of confusion between the two accounts and preferred Proverbs 8's Wisdom theology, which offers a distinctly different—and homiletically rich—angle on creation. Its Trinitarian resonances and suitability for preaching were noted as strengths. Colossians 1:15–20 was selected to provide a strong Christological second reading, explicitly linking creation to Christ's role as the one in whom all things hold together. This complemented Proverbs 8's wisdom theme and Matthew 6's providential focus. Psalm 104 was selected for its panoramic vision of God's creative sustaining work; the group debated which verses to use, favoring contiguous sections over scattered couplets. Final verse selection was pending as of the most recent meetings.

Year C

Luke 8:22–25 (the calming of the storm) was selected as the Year C Gospel for its alignment with the Year C lectionary cycle and its powerful Christological statement about Christ's dominion over creation. The group confirmed Luke over Matthew's parallel account to maintain proper lectionary rotation and avoid user confusion. Job 38 was chosen as the first reading for its poetic and dramatic presentation of God's creative

power—specifically, God's voice interrogating Job from the storm. The excerpt was kept focused (verses 4–11) with an optional extension to verse 18 to balance depth with practical reading length. Romans 8:18–25 was affirmed by strong consensus for its theological address of creation's groaning and hope for renewal—directly engaging discernment question five, which the group had agreed should appear explicitly in at least one year. Two Psalm options were offered for Year C: Psalm 29, which emphasizes God's voice over the waters (linking to both Job and Luke), and Psalm 65:5–13, which addresses God's calming of the seas and praise for divine providence. The group acknowledged the value of providing both as equal options to serve different worship contexts.

John 1:1–5 as a Consistent Gospel Alternative

John 1:1–5 was proposed as a consistent Gospel alternative available across all three years, particularly for communities that wish to use the same text annually for this feast (consistent with Roman Catholic practice for major feasts). Its explicit focus on Christ's role in creation aligns closely with the feast's theological heart. This alternative was introduced following feedback from the December 2024 Roman Catholic seminar and received broad support as a way to accommodate both those who prefer variety and those who prefer consistency.

On a personal note, as one who was a member of the CCT's sub-committee for the past few years, it has been exciting to experience the ecumenical convergence from church bodies around the world, Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox. Scholars from many, many traditions met in Assisi, Italy for multiple conferences where papers were presented and discussed. September 1 is understood as the beginning of the church year in the Eastern Orthodox Churches, and this is a day

to praise God as Creator and ponder the great mystery that everything was created through Christ. This convergence on a date between the East and West is a joyous event as such an ecumenical convergence unites Christians and strengthens our collective witness around the world. There is no mandate that churches must celebrate this feast day, but this resource is offered for those who seek to enrich the witness of their congregations, not only in caring for the earth, as in Earth Day celebrations, but even more so in thanksgiving for this world that is made by God's hands. It is the hope of those who are part of the CCT that it will be a blessing to all who celebrate together. Resources are available online at feastofcreation.com.

PRAY FOR SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

Please keep the members of Salem Lutheran Church in Cheyenne County, Kansas, in your prayers after their church building was destroyed by a lightning-caused fire on June 8.

The congregation's 100-year-old church, home to generations of baptisms, weddings, funerals, and worship, was struck by lightning during severe storms and later burned to the ground. No one was injured.

As Salem Lutheran begins discerning the path forward, we join in praying that the Lord would comfort this congregation, strengthen its members, and remind them that while buildings may be lost, the Church of Jesus Christ endures.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." — Psalm 46:1



INTRODUCING A NEW RECOGNIZED MINISTRY: DESIGN OUTREACH

A Christian nonprofit is putting professional engineering expertise to work for the world's most vulnerable communities—and the results are measured in lives.

What happens when a team of engineers decides to put their skills to work for the world's most vulnerable communities? For Design Outreach, the answer has been transformational—for the communities they serve and for the organization itself.

Design Outreach (DO) is a Christian nonprofit founded in 2012 and headquartered in Columbus, Ohio. Its mission is straightforward but ambitious: alleviate global poverty by creating innovative, life-sustaining solutions that transform marginalized and low-income communities physically, economically, and spiritually. Motivated by their faith in Jesus Christ and a desire to share His love in practical ways, the DO team brings professional engineering expertise to some of the most overlooked corners of the world.

We live in an era of remarkable technological progress, yet the benefits of that innovation rarely reach the people who need it most. Nearly 2.2 billion people around the world lack access to safe drinking water. Another 2.4 billion go without basic sanitation services. Close to 300,000 children under the age of five die each year from waterborne disease. These aren't abstract statistics—they represent communities where reliable engineering solutions could save and

transform lives. Design Outreach is working to change that.

At the heart of DO's work is the LifePump, a hand-operated water pump engineered for durability, reliability, and minimal maintenance in remote and resource-limited settings. Unlike conventional pumps that frequently break down and go unrepaired, LifePump is purpose-built for longevity in the field. The technology is now deployed in 12 countries, and communities in Malawi, Zambia, and across sub-Saharan Africa have seen measurable improvements in public health, hygiene, and economic stability since installations were completed. Beyond LifePump, DO continues to develop new technologies to address the interconnected challenges of water, sanitation, and hygiene—recognizing that no single solution is enough to fully break the cycle of poverty.

DO's work is powered by a global team that includes full-time staff, professional volunteers, and student interns—many of them licensed engineers and patent holders who bring decades of real-world expertise to humanitarian challenges. The organization's internship and early-career programs have become a destination for young engineers who want to use their skills for kingdom purposes, offering hands-on field experience in places like Malawi alongside seasoned mentors committed to the same calling. Field offices in Malawi and Zambia keep DO rooted in the communities they serve, ensuring that solutions are tested, adapted, and implemented with local context in mind.

Giving directly funds life-sustaining technologies with generational impact. Whether through a one-time gift, monthly support, or a dedicated LifePump campaign to bring clean water to an entire community, every dollar helps DO's team of problem solvers reach more people in more places. To donate or learn more, visit doutreach.org/donate.

LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH

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