

2016 NALC Convocation focuses on “Holy God, Holy Lives”

More than 400 NALC members gathered August 10-12 for the 2016 NALC Convocation in Anaheim, Calif., around the theme, “Holy God, Holy Lives.”

Major presentations were provided by the Rev. Dr. Malcolm Guite of the University of Cambridge, England, and musician Steve Bell from Winnipeg, Manitoba. They combined to lead devotions during the Convocation and led a poetic and musical reflection on the theme. Prof. Guite also gave an address entitled, “C.S. Lewis: ‘Friendship and Holiness.’”

The Rev. Dr. James Nestingen, a noted Lutheran historian, led a Bible study and was preacher for the Communion service.

“Holy Families” will be a special NALC emphasis as a part of the 2017 celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. A variety of resources will be available for congregations and families.

The NALC Mission Festival began the Convocation under the theme, “Faith is Made Whole in Community.” Time on Wednesday and Thursday was spent focusing on what it means for the NALC to be a Mission-Driven church. Speakers included Bishop John Bradosky, Pastor Gemechis Buba, Assistant to the Bishop for Missions, and Gary Pecuch of faithwebbing.com. Delegates also focused on developing mission plans for their congregations and Mission Districts.

Elected to the NALC Executive Council to four-year terms were Lynn Kickingbird of Edmond, Okla., and Pastor Kenneth Kimball of Waterville, Iowa. Pastor David Schafer of Waukon, Iowa, was elected to the Court of Adjudication. The Convocation also ratified the election of four people to the NALC-Canada Section Governing Board.

North American Lutheran Seminary Board of Regents members were elected. Pastor Cathi Braasch of Elwood, Neb.; Donna Evans of Pittsburgh, Pa.; and Pastor Jeffray Greene of Brooks, Ga., were elected to six-year terms. Bishop Paull Spring of State College, Pa., was elected to a four-year term to fill a vacancy on the board.

2017 budgets were approved. The Convocation approved a \$2 million operating budget for the NALC. Budgets were also approved for the NALC’s two designated funds: \$140,500 for the Great Commission Fund and \$525,160 for the Fund for Theological Education (which includes the North American Lutheran Seminary). Treasurer Ryan Schwarz reported that NALC “income is very substantially below budget.” Many delegates expressed concerns about the shortfall and committed to addressing support for the NALC in their congregations or encouraging gifts by individuals.

The Braaten and Benne Lectures in Theology, the annual theological conference which precedes the Convocation, focused on theological perspectives on the Person of Christ. Five speakers explored the theme from different theological perspectives. The speakers were Dr. Carl Braaten, Dr. Phillip Cary, Dr. Wesley Hill, Dr. Mickey L. Mattox, and Dr. Michael Pasquarello III.

Video recordings of the NALC Convocation and the Braaten-Benne Lectures on Theology will be available for viewing online at www.thenalc.org. Documents from the Convocation and daily summaries are also available online.