

NALC Life-to-Life Discipleship Initiative

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Background

Background

- In 2015, a team was formed by Bishop Bradosky to address our Lord's Great Commission (Matt. 28) to *make disciples* in congregationally-focused mission.
- The team was tasked with developing an initiative to revitalize the confessional practice of lifelong teaching (catechesis) and ongoing faith formation in congregational life.
- Since that time, the team has met regularly to develop a strategy for the NALC to support a more effective response to our Lord's Great Commission.

Background

- The fifteen appointed members represent a cross-section of our church body.
- The team is comprised of pastors and leaders from congregations who have made commitments to intentionally develop a disciple-making culture within their congregations.

Background

- Much of the team was initially familiar with the work of the Navigators as a disciple-making ministry.
- While acknowledging that the Navigators' inter-denominational approach does not fully encapsulate the sacramental understanding of the Lutheran tradition, the team did recognize and appreciate their solid emphasis on "Life-to-Life" discipleship.
- As a result, the team chose to examine their tools and disciple-making process as a starting point in determining and developing practical tools and transferable processes that would be more applicable for our confessional Lutheran context.

Background

- In this regard, the goal of this initiative is not to develop a single approach or set of materials for use in all NALC congregations, but to identify the best resources and approaches available for use in a confessional framework.
- Individual congregations may determine for themselves which resources are most helpful as useful supplements to the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions for building Christian lives and developing disciple-making congregations.

Why a Discipleship Initiative?



Why a Discipleship Initiative?

(What is happening in our culture?)

- Our current situation echoes the cultural hostility the church faced in the first two centuries.
- Christians were in the minority, and only as they remained faithful to Christ were they enabled to withstand the spiritual attacks and cultural pressures of their day.
- An encroaching secularism in our culture has, slowly but surely, replaced doctrinal truth with blanket affirmation and personal gratification.
- Religious pluralism and moral relativism are celebrated in our culture as virtue, while authentic Christianity is labeled with ill-repute.

Why a Discipleship Initiative?

(What is happening in the Church?)

- Over the past few decades, mainline denominations, including the Lutheran Church, have been in rapid decline.
- Many churches today lift up the self-righteousness of an ambiguous “inclusive decency” instead of the “contrite heart” of repentance and the righteous call to obedience.
- “The justification of the sinner (has) degenerated (within the church) into the justification of sin and the world.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*

Why a Discipleship Initiative?

(What is happening in the Church?)

- Our parishioners are thus ill-prepared to share the Gospel and to engage in “the hand-to-hand conflict between the Christian and the world.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*

- Too many churches have broadly neglected our Lord’s command to “make disciples” through ongoing discipline and instruction and have opted instead to become “the chaplaincy of the world’s culture.”

Robert Jenson, *Catechesis for Our Time*

Why a Discipleship Initiative?

(What is happening in the Church?)

- With respect to biblical illiteracy and doctrinal ignorance, our situation resembles Luther's 1528 critique of the Saxon congregations (which prompted him to write the catechisms).
 - "Good God, what wretchedness I beheld...Although the people are supposed to be Christian, are baptized, and receive the holy sacrament, they do not know the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, or the Ten Commandments, they live as if they were pigs and irrational beasts, and now that the Gospel has been restored, they have mastered the fine art of abusing liberty." Preface to Luther's *Small Catechism*
- Far too many churches have become *consumerist* centers for satisfying "spiritual needs," instead of being faithful *producers* or followers of Christ.

The Vision

The Vision

- Our Vision for the North American Lutheran Church is that it will reclaim the confessional Lutheran emphasis on ongoing catechesis and intentional faith formation in the life of its congregations.
- An essential component of faith formation involves the personal investment of the Gospel from one Christian life to another (Life-to-Life discipleship).
- This disciple-making identity will permeate every NALC congregation, be adopted by every NALC pastor, and will become part of our church body DNA.

The Vision, cont.

- Along with having a solid Lutheran Confessional Theology, our Vision is to become known to the ecumenical community as a church body that takes seriously its calling to make disciples and intentionally cultivates a framework to do so in the life of its congregations.
- This disciple-making emphasis will begin with the training of pastors in seminary, be further developed during internship, and provide intentional support during the first three years of pastoral ministry. Our goal is to make the next generation of NALC pastors well-prepared for leading disciple-making congregations.
- The Vision includes providing the necessary resources and support for every congregation to more effectively carry out our Lord's Great Commission.

Disciples and Disciple-Making (Some basics)

Disciples and Disciple-Making

- The word “disciple” is used often in the Church.
 - In the Gospels, “disciple” can refer to the Twelve or to the greater number of those in the crowds following Jesus.
 - The original Greek for “disciple” is *mathétés*: learner, adherent, pupil.
- In the Gospels, a disciple is a person who *learns from* and who *follows* Jesus.
- A disciple-maker is a person who *helps another person* become and grow as a disciple of Jesus.
- We are called by Jesus to both *be* disciples and to *make* disciples.

Disciples and Disciple-Making

- Making disciples was *foundational* to Jesus' ministry.
 - All four of the gospel writers record the calling of the first disciples. (Matt. 4:18-22, 9:9-13; Mark 1:16-20, 2:14-17; Luke 5:2-11, 5:27-32; John 1:35-42)
 - *"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."*
(Matt. 4:19; Matt. 1:17; Luke 5:10; John 1:50)
 - *"I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."*
(Mt 9:12; Mark 2:17; Luke 5:31)

Disciples and Disciple-Making

- Making disciples was and remains the *primary calling and commission* our Lord has given his Church.
 - The four Gospels and the book of Acts record the same calling and commission. (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:21-23; Acts 1:7-8)
 - Jesus *called* the disciples and *commissioned* them to make disciples.

Disciples and Disciple-Making

- A disciple is one who...
 - Is *called* by Jesus...
 - *“Come, follow me,” Jesus said...*
 - Is *taught and transformed* by Jesus...
 - *...and I will make you...*
 - And is on *mission* with Jesus...
 - *...fishers of men.” Matt. 4:19*

The Call to
Discipleship is
the Love of God
in Christ Jesus

The Love of God in Christ Jesus

- Essential to our understanding of discipleship is a recognition that the Love of Christ is both the *source* and the *task* of discipleship:
 - *“As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love.”* (John 15:9)
 - *“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. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”* (John 13:34)

The Love of God in Christ Jesus

- Obedience to the Great Commission – indeed, to all of our Lord’s commands – flows from God’s love for sinners: *our salvation* by his cross and resurrection, *our forgiveness* by his promise, and *our justification* by his grace.
 - “See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.” (1 John 3:1)
- In the Christian love of the Holy Spirit, our relationship to each other as brothers and sisters is drawn ever closer. Fellowship together is always *in Christ* and *for the sake of Christ*.
 - “Human love is directed to the other person for his own sake; spiritual love loves him for Christ’s sake. It comes from Christ, it serves him alone.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*

The Making of a Disciple

The Making of a Disciple

- Tertullian (d. 220 AD): “Christians are made, not born.”
- The Great Commission outlines the essentials of disciple-making.
 - **Baptism in the Name of the Triune God**
 - *“Go into the world...baptizing... in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...”*
 - **The Apostolic Witness of the Word**
 - *“...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded.”*
 - **The Real Presence of Christ and the Transforming Power of the Holy Spirit with us**
 - *“And, lo, I am with you always to the ends of the earth.”*

The Making of a Disciple

- **Baptism in the Name of the Triune God**
 - On the Day of Pentecost, Peter said to them...
 - *“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38)*
 - In Baptism, the Spirit conveys Christ’s forgiveness and brings us into the life of the Holy Trinity, adopting and choosing us as his own.
 - *“You did not choose me, but I chose you.” (John 15:16)*

The Making of a Disciple

- **The Apostolic Witness of the Word**

- *Jesus calls his followers, both the Twelve and the crowds, to be in fellowship with them and to **teach** them.*
- *“If you **abide in my word**, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*
(John 8:31-32)
- In *The Freedom of the Christian* (1520), Martin Luther uses the Greek term *theodidactoi* to describe Christians (*Theo* = **God**, *-didactoi* = **taught**; those who are taught by God.)

The Making of a Disciple

- **The Real Presence of Christ and the Transforming Power of the Holy Spirit with us**
 - Our Lord's teaching always occurs in fellowship with him, in abiding in him and holding fast to his person.
 - *"Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me." (John 15:4)*
 - God's transforming work in our lives happens only by the power of the Holy Spirit
 - *"I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth." (John 16:12-13)*

The Making of a Disciple

The Way of the Cross

- The entire life of a disciple is “**cross-centered**” in its approach and ready to suffer for the sake of the Kingdom. (Matt. 16:24; Luke 14:33)
- A disciple is one who “**dies to self and lives to Christ**” and for his glory. (John 6:66; Colossians 3:3-4)
- Disciples are, at the same time, both “**sinners and saints.**” (Romans 3:22-24)
- The Christian life, led by the Spirit, is one that “**bears fruit**” for the Kingdom. (Matt. 7:15-20)

The Making of a Disciple

The Way of the Cross

- As Christians, we therefore speak of ourselves as “disciples” – *forgiven* sinners who are *taught* and *transformed* by the *Word* in the *presence* of our Lord himself, through the *power* of the Holy Spirit.
 - A disciple and a Christian are one and the same:
 - *A forgiven sinner called to a life of repentance in Baptism.*
 - *A new creation formed and informed by the Word and the transforming power of the Spirit.*
 - *A follower who remains in fellowship with Christ through Word and Sacrament, and in communion with his body, the Church.*

The Disciple-Making Process

The Disciple-Making Process

- Discipleship is not programmatic and it does not happen automatically. It is a life-long process of Gospel-formation in Christian fellowship (*koinonia*).
 - When we are called in Baptism, by **God's grace** we begin to follow Christ by holding fast to him in Word and Sacrament.
 - Through the **power of the Spirit**, we abide in Christ and grow as branches on his vine.
 - As we **learn from God's Word**, we live life by the Holy Spirit.
 - As we grow together in fellowship, we share the responsibility of **investing the Gospel** in the lives of others.

The Disciple-Making Process

- The transformation of discipleship *continues* throughout the Christian life.
 - Jesus does not leave us **where** we are or **as** we are.
 - *“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2)*
 - He calls us to **grow** in his righteousness.
 - *“But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 3:14)*

The Disciple-Making Process

- Our Lord desires that we become more and more like him.
 - *“Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ.” (Ephesians 4:15)*
- We are made holy – *sanctified and transformed* – through the work of the Holy Spirit.
 - *“But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” (1 Cor. 6:11)*

Confessional Foundation

Confessional Foundation

- Our understanding of Discipleship and Christian Life Formation is grounded in our Lutheran Confessions.
- In the Augsburg Confession (AC), we find the framework for our Christian Faith and Life.
 - Articles I-IV set the foundation for our teaching and belief.
 - There is One God (Article I) who deals with our sin (Article II) through his only Son (Article III) in order to make us right in his presence (Article IV).
 - Articles V-VIII declare how God has chosen to work for the sake of the Gospel.
 - Through the Office of the Ministry (Article V), to transform the lives of his people into Obedience (Article VI), brought together, fed, and grown in the Church through Word and Sacrament (Article VII), in spite of constant wickedness and deceit (Article VIII).

Confessional Foundation

- Article XX places our faith and good works in the proper order and light.
 - “It is also taught among us that good works should and must be done, not that we are to rely on them to earn grace but that we may do God’s will and glorify him. It is always faith alone that apprehends grace and forgiveness of sin. When through faith the Holy Spirit is given, the heart is moved to do good works.”

Confessional Foundation

- In Luther's *Preface to the Large Catechism*
 - "In such reading, conversation, and meditation [on the catechism] the Holy Spirit is present and bestows ever new and greater light and devotion....Nothing is so powerfully effective against the devil, the world, the flesh, and all evil thoughts as to **occupy one's self with God's Word**, to speak about it and meditate upon it, in the way Psalm 1:2 calls those blessed who 'meditate on God's law day and night.'"

Confessional Foundation

- In Martin Luther's Smalcald Articles, Part III, Article 4
 - "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 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.*"

Discipleship Commitments

“Life together under the Word.”

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer (*Life Together*)

Discipleship Commitments

The building of Christians (discipleship) does not happen by itself. It is congregationally focused and occurs in the fellowship of the Body of Christ.

Regular Worship

- Christian fellowship in the Church ***emerges out of*** and ***returns to*** the gathering of the congregation around the Word and the Sacraments.
 - *And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. (Acts 2:46-47)*

Discipleship Commitments

Regular Worship

- In Worship we hear the Gospel preached and receive the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion rightly administered (Augsburg Confession, Art. VII). These are the **means of grace**.
- In Worship we practice the **liturgy**, our public witness in praying together and confessing our faith in Christ before the world. Here the Body of Christ learns **orthodoxy** (“right praise”).
 - *“Be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.”* (Ephesians 5:20)

Discipleship Commitments

Daily Bible Reading and Prayer

- Through prayer and time spent with Scripture and the catechism, *God promises* to speak to us.
- The more consistently we *make time* for listening to God in Scripture, the greater opportunity there will be for our lives to be *shaped by him* and aligned with his will.
- “We Christians should make every day a holy day and give ourselves only to holy activities – that is, occupy ourselves daily with God’s Word and carry it in our hearts and on our lips.” Martin Luther, Large Catechism 1:90

Discipleship Commitments

Christian Vocation

The Lutheran understanding of **Christian Vocation** means holding to the universal lordship of Christ: in the God-given estates of marriage, government, and church, in our places of work, and within all walks and stations of life.

- This means living and confessing the truth of the “first table” of the Ten Commandments in accordance with the Creed: worshiping the Triune God alone and struggling against all false gods and contenders for our allegiance; knowing what it means to be citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven and to bear the name of Christ in Holy Baptism; and holding to our disciplined formation together in the Word as the *“one thing needful.”* (Luke 10:42)

Discipleship Commitments

Christian Vocation

- This also involves a measured and joyful obedience to the “second table” of our Lord’s Commandments, summed up in Jesus’ mandate at the Last Supper: “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35)
- The Christian thus holds the Great Commission to “Go into the world and make disciples” (Matt. 28:19) hand-in-hand with the Great Commandment to “love your neighbor as you love yourself.” (Mark 12:31)

Discipleship Commitments

Christian Vocation

- As we work together in the world to share the Gospel “bread of life” and the “daily bread” of human need, we model the self-emptying love of Christ in community with our unique talents and responsibilities, and we look for missionary opportunities in the tasks and relationships we have.
- “Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life.” (Philippians 2:14)

Discipleship Commitments

Life-to-Life Relationships: Sharing the External Word

- Disciple-making occurs in *koinonia*, Christian fellowship – in a true incarnational sense, it takes one to make one.
- In the mutual conversation and consolation centered upon the Word, one Christian life is invested in another: in the congregation, in the family, and in the community.
 - Holy conversation between two or more people sharing the Gospel is fellowship with Christ, himself.
 - *“I am there in the midst of them.”* (Matt. 18:20)

Discipleship Commitments

Life-to-Life Relationships: Sharing the External Word

- “A Christian needs another Christian who speaks God’s Word to him. He needs him again and again when he becomes uncertain and discouraged, for by himself he cannot help himself without belying the truth. He needs his brother man as a bearer and proclaimer of the divine word of salvation. He needs his brother solely because of Jesus Christ. The Christ in his own heart is weaker than the Christ in the word of his brother; his own heart is uncertain, his brother’s is sure.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*

- As we lift each other up in the Lord, we grow in confidence to share his fellowship with others.

Life-to-Life Discipleship

Reproducing and Nurturing Disciples

Life-to-Life Discipleship

- An essential part of *being* disciples is *making* disciples – investing the Gospel in the lives of others.
- Discipleship happens most effectively when it is encouraged, supported, and challenged by another.
- Generally speaking, the *smaller the group* (2-3, 4-6, no greater than 10), *the more intimate* the discussion can be and *the more formative* the conversation can become.
- As our own faith story and relationship with Christ is developed, we *grow in confidence* to share his fellowship with others.

Life-to-Life Discipleship

There are three basic components to the Life-to-Life approach

- **Personal Application** (finding ways to *apply what is learned* from God's Word)
- **Partnering Accountability** (being *admonished and encouraged* by a fellow believer)
- **Positive Affirmation** (*receiving support* from a brother or sister in Christ)

Life-to-Life Discipleship

Personal Application

- Jesus says, *“Everyone then who hears these of mine and **does them** will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock.”* (Matt. 7:24)
- The apostle tells us, *“Be **doers of the Word** and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”* (James 1:22)

Life-to-Life Discipleship

Personal Application

- It cultivates *responsible recognition* of the Lordship of Christ and underscores *joyful obedience* to him in all things.
 - “*What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.*” (Philippians 4:9)
 - “*And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ.*” (Philippians 1:9-10)

Life-to-Life Discipleship

Personal Application

- It builds *mutual regard* for baptism as the life of continuous repentance and the “daily garment” which Christians are to “wear all the time.”

Martin Luther, *Large Catechism* 4:84

- “Every day [we] should be found in faith and amid its fruits, every day [we] should be suppressing the old man and growing up in the new. **If we wish to be Christians, we must practice the work that makes us Christians.**”

Martin Luther, *Large Catechism* 4:84-85

- “*What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—**practice these things**, and the God of peace will be with you.*” (Philippians 4:9)

Life-to-Life Discipleship

Personal Application

- It relies on the power of the Holy Spirit to call us to repentance and point us to Christ through the Word – to transform our lives and teach us what we need to know and apply in life.
- Through the Holy Spirit...
 - We grow in knowledge of what it means to be children of our heavenly Father and citizens of the Kingdom of God.
 - We grow in skill: in prayer, in comforting the afflicted, in confessing the faith, and in sharing the joy of the Gospel.
 - We grow in wisdom in obedience to the will of God.

Life-to-Life Discipleship

Partnering Accountability in the Word

- As “iron sharpens iron” (Proverbs 27:17), so do we grow stronger together when we answer to each other spiritually.
- Accountability in *koinonia* under the Word is a gift through which the gospel sets us free to live as Christ calls us to live. (Romans 13:8)
- The mutual consolation of the brethren is what defines and gives direction to the transparency and trust we share as fellow believers in Christ. (Hebrews 10:24-25)

Life-to-Life Discipleship

Partnering Accountability in the Word

- Accountability under the Word encourages mutual up-building and spiritual growth. (Galatians 6:2)
- Accountability is an ongoing process of growth in the Spirit in shared faith.
- Here we receive the righteousness of Christ himself through another person, for He has promised to be present with those gathered in His name.
- As we “speak the truth in love,” God’s Word cultivates the desire for repentance.

Life-to-Life Discipleship

Partnering Accountability in the Word

- An essential part of the Church's accountability is **confession** and **absolution**.
 - Confession is a *return to baptism* – continually turning *away* from sinful disobedience, *to* the abundant life of Christ that is ours for His sake.
 - Confession in congregational life occurs both **corporately** and **individually**.
 - “I esteem private confession very highly, because here God's word of forgiveness and the absolution is spoken privately and individually to each one, and as often as he may desire it, each one can find in it such forgiveness, as well as consolation, counsel and guidance.”

Martin Luther, *Confession Concerning Christ's Supper*, 1542

Life-to-Life Discipleship

Partnering Accountability in the Word

- Absolution is the “power of the keys” – the Church’s responsibility for the forgiveness of sins.
 - “One believer goes to another, most appropriately an ordained keeper of ‘the keys,’ and confesses, ‘I have sinned in such and such ways.’ Then the confessor says, ‘In Christ’s name, I forgive you.’”

Robert Jenson, *A Large Catechism*
 - As with Holy Baptism, absolution is the concrete, personal **telling of the Gospel** from one life to another at the direct command of the Lord.
 - *“Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.”* (John 20:22-23)

Life-to-Life Discipleship

Positive Affirmation

- Affirmation is good news; it gives “refreshment, like a cold drink of water to a thirsty soul.” (Proverbs 25:25)
- As children of God, our calling as the Body of Christ is to encourage and support one another in love (Ephesians 4:15)
- Just as negative words can tear down, so words of affirmation can build up.
 - *“Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.”* (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

Our Core Values

Our Core Values

Disciple-making is...

- **Christ Centered**, focused upon the Word of God, a life of prayer, and the incarnational theology of Christian fellowship.
 - As the baptized are devoted to the apostles' teaching (Acts 2:42), they will grow in confidence in leading prayer, sharing the faith, and encouraging others in their faith-walk with Jesus.

Our Core Values

Disciple-making is...

- **Mission Driven**, as disciples of Jesus grow in knowledge, skill, and wisdom for building up others in the faith.
 - They will be prepared to make disciples through mission and evangelism by speaking the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), suffering for the sake of Christ's name (Acts 9:16), and modeling his commandment to love one another. (John 13:34).

Our Core Values

Disciple-making is...

- **Traditionally Grounded**, lifted up in the biblical and confessional witness.
 - Disciple-makers will give intentional focus to raising up long-term baptismal sponsors, spiritual mentors for both children and adult converts, and catechetical instructors for ongoing faith formation in the congregation, based upon our biblical and confessional heritage.

Our Core Values

Disciple-making is...

- **Congregationally Focused**, emerging from corporate worship and supported in the life of the parish.
 - Congregational members will be equipped and empowered to serve as leaders throughout the congregation and find ways to strengthen the disciple-making culture.

In Summary

In Summary

- Our ***Vision*** for the NALC is that we become a disciple-making church body by *reclaiming* the Lutheran emphasis on “the mutual consolation and conversation of the brethren.”
- Our Core ***Values*** are rooted in the authority of Scripture and the life-changing power of the Gospel.
- Our ***Vehicles*** for making disciples are varied, but they should all emphasize mutual conversation around the Word and the catechisms to enable growth in the Christian life.

In Summary

- Our **Victory** is “*the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus*” (Philippians 3:14):
 - ...To *know* our identity as children of God, loved eternally by the *Father*,
 - ...To *grow* in our faith as followers of *Jesus*,
 - ...To *go* into the world, through the power of God’s *Holy Spirit*, to share the Gospel of the Crucified and Risen Lord.

In Summary

- As the **North American Lutheran Church**, rooted in the love of Christ, we cannot define our *Victory*, our “upward call,” as anything less than...

a ***faithful, intentional, unwavering response*** to the *Great Commission* and the *Great Commandment* of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

To God Alone be the Glory!

Other Slides to be developed...

- **Current Plans and Next Steps**

- Development of an NALC Guideline for Disciple-making
- Development of a process for Congregations to intentionally develop a Disciple-making culture
- Disciple-making goals to be reached by the 2018 NALC Convocation
- Plans for a 2018 “Discipleship Guides” Retreat for all pastors and lay leaders
- Seminarian and First Call Pastoral training recommendations
- Training of Disciple Guides for the NALC

Other Slides to be developed...

- **Disciple-making Resources**

- List of recommended disciple-making resources and books
- List of contact persons to find out more about Disciple-making
- List of Discipleship Guides who can provide direction and support

Discussion...

Question & Answer