

OASIS Church: Meeting Needs

By Rebecca Heber

Ideas From Churches, June 2024

[Editor's Note: All too often small churches, new congregations and mission starts put off support for local and global mission “until later” or “when we can afford it”. A blessed and Christ honoring exception to that flawed reasoning is OASIS Church in Lake Mary, FL, a member congregation of the NALC. Founded and served by Pastor Bill & Pastor Rebecca Heber, I have been blessed to preach and teach there many times over the years while vacationing in Florida, long before my wife and I moved to Tampa, about two hours away from Lake Mary. They have become good friends, gracious hosts, and partners in the Gospel over the years. OASIS worships at the Westin Hotel in Lake Mary, with an ebb and flow of older local residents and winter visitors. Pastor Bill & Pastor Rebecca and the leaders of OASIS made global mission and local outreach a priority from day one! This is their story.]

Oasis Church



OASIS Church, Lake Mary, Florida, was the first NALC Mission Congregation in Florida.

**Christ-Centered
Mission-Driven
Traditionally-Grounded
Congregationally-Focused**



OASIS Church meets at the Westin Lake Mary, Orlando North

Beginnings

Many years ago, when NALC held its annual Convocation at The Citadel in South Carolina, I was honored to meet Pastor Valery Hryhoryk of the Belarus Lutheran Missionary Fellowship (BLMF). Pastor Valery was one of the featured speakers at the Convocation. The reason he and other presenters were invited to attend was because, from its inception,

a deep and on-going concern for the persecuted church has been integral to the mission and ministry of the NALC, and rightly so. Concern for our brethren who are enduring hardship — and even death — for the sake of Christ is the particular responsibility and duty of every Christian, individually and collectively. It has, therefore, been the high honor and privilege of OASIS Church, Lake Mary, FL, the congregation my husband, Pastor Bill, and I planted in September 2010, to support Pastor Valery and the Belarus Lutheran Missionary Fellowship over the years.



Antony, Tanya & Valery Hryhoryk, BLMF



Pastors Rebecca and Bill Heber

Blessed to Be a Blessing

OASIS was one of four mission churches among the 17 Charter congregations of the NALC. Since its founding in 2010, OASIS has been committed to tithing on all offerings and donations received by the church, both from within the congregation, as well as outside gifts. This has enabled us to support local, national, and international ministries like BLMF, and other NALC partner agencies, recognized ministries, and global workers, such as World Mission Prayer League ([WMPL](#)), SONetwork ([SON](#)), China Service Ventures ([CSV](#)), [India Transformed](#), Friends of Madagascar Mission ([FOMM](#)), [Water Mission](#), [SMI Haiti](#), Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries ([LMVFM](#)), [Lutheran CORE](#), [Lutherans for Life](#), and, of course, Awakening Lives to World Missions ([ALWM](#)).



China Service Ventures



LMVFM

In their own unique and Spirit-empowered ways, these ministries strive to meet the needs of persecuted or marginalized Christians around the world.

Since OASIS does not have a building of its own, but worships at a local hotel, the opportunity for Gospel-outreach is largely through our financial support of these various ministries.

In addition, occasional collections of requested items such as clothing, baby supplies, disaster response items and food stuffs are gathered, sent, and distributed with prayers that God would multiply the resources He has first given us and which we, in turn, have been able to provide to ALWM, BLMF, and other such ministries.



Pastor Rebecca holding *Saints I Have Known and Buried*, written by her brother, Pastor Christopher Miller (ELCA, ret.).

To be able to support their work done so joyfully and sacrificially in Jesus' Name has given our congregation of mostly senior adults a way to live out our faith in Him, knowing that, even though we are a smaller church family, we have been greatly "Blessed to be a blessing."

And so have you. May everything you do in and through your congregation, even as we pray that we do through our OASIS family, redound to Christ's glory and for the encouragement and extension of God's Kingdom on earth through the work of His servants like Pastor Valery, Pastor Bill and Sally, and the rest of the ALWM and NALC ministry teams.

Soli Deo Gloria!

— Pastor Rebecca M.M. Heber, OASIS Church NALC, Lake Mary, Florida



Pastor Rebecca Heber, ordained in 1987, served as an early member of the Lutheran CORE Steering Committee, Provisional Dean of the Sonshine Mission District, and on the NALC Executive Council. She and her husband, Pastor Bill Heber, planted OASIS Church, the first NALC church in Florida, in September 2010. Contact Rebecca at: w.c.heber@att.net

Links:

OASIS Church: <https://oasischurchnalc.org/>

NALC: <https://thenalc.org/>

The Citadel: <https://www.citadel.edu/>

Westin Hotel: <https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/mcowl-the-westin-lake-mary-orlando-north/overview/>

Valery Hryhoryk: <https://missions.nalcnetwork.com/introducing-pastor-valery-hryhoryk/>

BLMF video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ncDYjObx9Qs>

WMPL: <https://wmpl.org/>

SONnetwork: <https://sonetwork.org/>

CSV: <https://www.chinaserviceventures.org/>

India Transformed: <https://indiatransformed.org/>

FOMM: <https://madagascarmission.org/>

Water Mission: <https://watermission.org/>

SMI Haiti: <https://www.smihaiti.org/>

LMVFM: <https://lmvfm.org/>

Lutheran CORE: <https://www.lutherancore.website/>

Lutherans for Life: <https://lutheransforlife.org/>

ALWM: <https://www.alwm.org/>