It’s Official!

Pastor Dave Andrus was installed as Pastor of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, St. Louis, Missouri, and Pastor for the Blind on January 10, 2016. The members of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church appreciate Andrus’s leadership and care but also saw his pastoral heart for people who were blind. Therefore, they made it official and called him to their church and this ministry to help the blind.

The installation worship service noted some interesting historical items. The work with people who are blind in the Lutheran Church started in 1923, with Braille being produced one dot at a time.

* **1923** Blind ministry begun in the Lutheran Church (later called Lutheran Blind Mission).
* **1939** The *Lutheran Library for the Blind* was established. It still exists today.
* **1943** *Lutheran Braille Workers* (LBW) established. LBW’s main work is Braille Bibles.
* **1952** *“Talking Books”* is added to the ministry, audio recordings of books on vinyl long-playing disks.
* **1980s** *Large-Type Materials* began production.
* **1985** Audio work switched to C*assette Tapes*.
* **1998** Rev. David Andrus (blind since childhood) called to direct *Lutheran Blind Mission (LBM)*.
* **1999** LBM organized the first *Blind Outreach Center.*
* **1999** *Christian Blind Institute* established to train people who are blind to be missionaries in their community.
* **2003** Lutheran Blind Mission because a stand-alone Recognized Service Organization.
* **2012** Andrus helped unify LBM and LBW into one ministry.
* **2014** Andrus began serving as *Vacancy Pastor* of St. Paul’s Lutheran, College Hill.
* **2014** Andrus began a new ministry to people who are blind and have other disabilities via the internet with audio podcasts as ***Not Alone Internet Ministry (NAIM)*** aka Blind Ministry. Aspects of this ministry:

1. A weekly podcast message called “Week in Reflection”
2. A Bible Study podcast called “Room 4216”
3. Pastoral care and counseling that comes about from the podcasts.
4. Serving the 50+ Outreach Centers with a newsletter and leadership
5. Raising funds and awareness for Blind Ministry.

* **2016** St. Paul’s extends a call to Andrus to be pastor to people who are blind so this ministry might go on.

The **Not Alone Internet Ministry** has launched its own hosting page for the podcasts. They are also syndicated with Apple iTunes. Go to the iTunes store, select Podcasts, and search for “You're Not Alone” or “Room 4216.” Or, here’s where you can find the direct website for each:

“Week in Reflection” podcast is [**http://www.not-alone.net/podcasts.html**](http://www.not-alone.net/podcasts.html)

“Room 4216” Bible Study podcast is [**http://www.not-alone.net/biblestudy.html**](http://www.not-alone.net/biblestudy.html)

Pastor Dave receives calls from listeners that the podcasts are wonderful! After hearing the Bible Study podcast about Christmas, one listener said “It felt like Pastor Dave was right in the room with me!”

**Not Alone Internet Ministry** keeps count of the use of its programs. Here are those stats as of mid-January:

1. Week in Reflection—38 users
2. Bible Study Room 4216—32 users

And as of February 1:

1. Week in Reflection—54 users
2. Bible Study Room 4216—27 users

In addition to the two podcasts for people who are blind or visually impaired, this ministry also supports the 50+ Outreach Centers around the country through its “Outreach Center Leaders Newsletter” sent out via e-mail. The newsletter provides a monthly devotion, mission training, and center updates and news, as well as connecting the centers to people in the community. To date, the Outreach Center Leaders Newsletter has highlighted activities from the following Outreach Center locations:

* Andalusia, Alabama
* Little Rock, Arkansas
* Bay City, Michigan
* Lawrence, Kansas
* Birmingham, Alabama
* Montreal, Canada
* Anderson, Indiana

Has this networking helped? Absolutely! With eight Outreach Centers in Missouri alone, David in Kansas City posted the following:

*“Many of us know people living in the counties of Missouri who are blind and visually impaired . . . and who may have suffered some hardship with the inclement weather we had in December and January. One of our monthly meal outreach attendees passed on this information for anyone having disabilities and needing FEMA assistance. I hope this helps anyone suffering financial and or material loss.”* (The email went on with names and contact phone numbers for help.)

Please consider partnering with this audio podcast and outreach center networking ministry to provide hope and restore comfort to those who are blind. If you would like to support this ministry, please donate via PayPal at the website link below or send a check to

**Blind Ministry**

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

2137 E. John Avenue

St. Louis, Missouri 63107

<http://not-alone.net>

Thank you for being part of this important ministry!

Your servant in Christ,

Rev. David Andrus