

# CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE



Enter information directly into this document.  
**SAVE the document on your computer with your congregation's name,  
city and date completed as part of the file name.**

**EMAIL COMPLETED PROFILE TO [dwendel@thenalc.org](mailto:dwendel@thenalc.org).  
Keep a copy for your records.**

## Congregation Name and Location

Name St. Luke Lutheran Church

Mailing address 9 St. Lukes Way

City Bloomsburg State/Province PA Zip/Postal Code 17815

Telephone 570-784-5035 Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email address stlukelc@ptd.net

Congregation website stlukesway.org

Seeking  Full-time pastor  Part-time pastor  Either full-time or part-time

Call will be for  Solo pastor  Senior pastor  Associate pastor

## Congregational President or Vice President

Name Nancy Lawton Kluck Title Council President

Mailing address 48 Duke of Gloucester

City Bloomsburg State/Province PA Zip/Postal Code 17815

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone 570-854-5743

Email address nancy2641@gmail.com

## Call Committee Co-Chairs

Name Jan Harris

Mailing address 30 Kashner Road  
City Millville State/Province PA Zip/Postal Code 17846  
Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone 570-204-3201  
Email address jdubbs3@verizon.net

Name Carla McCaleb  
Mailing address 6205 Main Street  
City Bloomsburg State/Province PA Zip/Postal Code 17815  
Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone 570-204-0620  
Email address carlamc2007@yahoo.com

## Congregational Demographics

Number of paid staff (full- or part-time): Clergy 1 F/T Lay professionals 1 P/T  
Teachers/Child Care 4 \_\_\_\_\_ Office/Facility Staff 3 \_\_\_\_\_

Average worship attendance 170 Average Sunday school attendance 62

### Indicate the type of community in which your congregation is located (is it small town, small city, suburban, large city, farming, industrial, etc.).

St. Luke Lutheran Church is located near the town of Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania (population 14,000) and is the county seat of Columbia County (population 65,000). Bloomsburg is home to Bloomsburg University, the Bloomsburg Fair, and is served by the Geisinger Health System.

Bloomsburg University is a NCAA Division II school located within walking distance to the church and serves almost 8,000 undergraduates. It also has quite a few strong graduate programs with an emphasis on Nursing, Education and Business degrees. It is one of the few Pennsylvania State Schools that has invested heavily in its on-campus facilities and grounds: and is served by Protestant Campus Ministry and Catholic Campus Ministry.

The Bloomsburg Fair is the state's largest fair and is attended by over 400,000 people annually. This year, unfortunately, it was cancelled due to COVID concerns.

Geisinger is a nationally recognized health care system that serves over 3 million people across 45 counties in Pennsylvania. Its main campus is located in Danville (only 8 miles from Bloomsburg) and it also has a local hospital campus located right in Bloomsburg. The main campus houses a children's hospital, a level IV (highest) Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and a level 1 (highest) trauma center.

Although St. Luke is located in a rural community, it is less than 2 miles from interstate 80 which allows for easy access to NYC (3.5 hours), Philadelphia (2.5 hours) and the New Jersey beaches (3.5 hours). It also boasts beautiful waterways, hiking trails and outdoor activities.

### Describe the congregation's ethnic composition and age distribution.

Our congregation is 99% Caucasian.

The town of Bloomsburg is 98% Caucasian when Bloomsburg University is not in session.

Our age distribution is as follows:

0-18 - 60

19-22 - 12

23-30 - 5

31-49 - 55

50-64 - 78

Over 65 - 79

**Does the congregation have a clear vision for mission — a clear and shared understanding of where God is leading you? If so, state it as succinctly as possible.**

We are committed to the greatest commandment found in Luke 10:27. “So He answered and said, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all of your soul, with all of your strength, and with all of your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.’”

Our love of Christ was tested in 2018 when a new ELCA pastor tried to shift our focus from Christ first towards a social justice agenda. This resulted in a vote and a split of the congregation. 70% voted to stay with St. Luke and seek a new affiliation and a portion of the remainder left to form a new ELCA church. The council worked with the congregation to identify alternative affiliations and chose to pursue one with the NALC. The current congregation at St. Luke has maintained positive individual relationships with many of those who left and, although it was a difficult transition, the congregation harbors no animosity.

We have always been dedicated to loving our neighbors. Currently we have 45 programs that are all led and managed by volunteers. Even in the midst of the changes, including the current pandemic, the ministries remained. They include outreach ministries such as the adoption of the local VA Manor, support for the local food bank, Blanket Ministry (which has provided almost 2,000 blankets to the homeless and those in shelters), Sawdust (which provides home and property repairs for those in need) and various appeals through the year. We also have ministries that support families (such as parent’s night out and special family events) and study, prayer and counseling ministries including a robust Stephen’s Ministry team.

Youth is an important part of our ministry work. We are currently running programs and events to keep the kids engaged (such as trunk or treat, Cardboard Village, special movie nights and other events).

In November of 2020, Rev. Dr. Brian Hughes joined St. Luke Lutheran Church as an interim lead pastor. Through his guidance, three working groups have been identified and launched to prepare us for our transition to the next called pastor. These groups are the Nehemiah Team, a Prayer Team and a David Workgroup.

**Nehemiah Group:**

In spring 2021, St. Luke launched a Nehemiah Team made up of individuals from the current council, call committee and the general population of the congregation. This group was tasked with researching the surrounding community, overlaying that with the history of the church, identifying who the Holy Spirit may be calling us to serve and reviewing various discipleship models to see which might fit our community and our congregation.

Some of the initial observations are that we serve a diverse population. There are many socio-economic levels represented over a relatively small geographic region. In addition, there are wide ranges of education, income, industries and interests. The church building is within walking distance of Bloomsburg University and there is a high percentage of 18-24 year-olds within our community. We are still discerning what this information means for our mission program.

We also asked the group what one word they thought best represented St. Luke and received the following list: Family, Welcoming, Joy, Giving, Serving, Love, Oasis, Healing, Adventurous, and Unique among others.

Under Pastor Brian’s leadership, we have reviewed four discipleship models: Life to life, Missional Discipleship, Alpha and Faith 5. The Faith 5 program was reviewed first, and some elements have already been adopted into our congregation and outreach activities.

The Nehemiah Team has chosen to be very diligent and methodical in its approach to discerning a discipleship model, recognizing the major impact this will have on the future of ministry and strategic

direction for St. Luke's Lutheran Church.

**Prayer Team**

Beginning July 2021, St. Luke is launching a 6-month exploratory conversation into how prayer can be more intentionally woven into the fabric of our congregation and missional work. Within the last few weeks candle stations have been placed within the sanctuary and are used before and during service as a time of prayer and contemplation. In addition, the congregation celebrated Pentecost Sunday with a laying of hands during the worship service. This team will be exploring additional opportunities to build stronger personal and missional relationships with Christ through prayer.

**David Workgroup**

Starting July 2021, St. Luke will be gathering a team to research various worship styles that are successful in other congregations and overlay that with what has been successful for St. Luke in the past. This workgroup will also continue to listen to the call of the Holy Spirit and seek ways to connect with those we are being called to serve.

**What are the primary goals of your congregation?**

Our intention is to reach others for Christ. A great example of this was in our response to the COVID virus. Until March of 2020, St Luke was only able to offer in-person services. Rather than shutting down during this crisis, volunteers came together and developed multiple opportunities for individuals to participate in worship. This included parking lot services, Facebook live events and a CDC-compliant in-sanctuary worship option. We also have the benefit of an outdoor pavilion which was used to house church and community events when the building was not able to be opened.

Now, rather than looking at this as short-term solution, we are developing opportunities to use this technology to further reach others. For example, we purchased an FM transmitter to host the Parking Lot services and have already used this equipment to host community events (such as a Christian-based movie night).

**Describe your congregation's worship practice (liturgy, hymns, vestments, music, hymnals, and frequency of Holy Communion).**

The congregation of St. Luke is committed to the holiness of the sacraments. We believe strongly that there must be repentance and a continual renewing of the Holy Spirit and a remembrance of Christ's death and resurrection through the weekly sharing of communion. We are also committed to a worship practice that is theologically sound and provides opportunities for corporate worship, reflection, and celebration.

We follow the liturgical calendar as well as the weekly readings.

The music is tied to the message of the week and we alternate traditional hymns and contemporary music. Due to COVID we no longer have hymnals in the pews and rely on words being projected on screens.

### **Describe your congregation's Christian education ministry.**

We are fortunate to have an engaged education ministry leader and volunteer committee. In September of 2020 we launched the area's first CDC-compliant Sunday School program. Sunday School is offered from Pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade and we ensure that all students have their own Bible. All confirmation students receive a study Bible with an excellent concordance and all high school students receive an Apologetics Bible.

We are gradually opening back up the church to additional children's education programs. In June 2021, we hosted a 3-day weekend Family Vacation Bible School rather than our traditional week-long program. This was attended by 15 children and their families and included elements of Faith 5. (Previous years had over 80 children participating.)

The students are also actively involved in ministry work including focused appeals (such as "Souper" Bowl Sunday) and volunteer hours at the local food pantry.

Additionally, there is an Adult Learning Hour after worship each Sunday and is taught by various volunteer leaders from the congregation. Currently we are doing an in-depth study of the Gospel of Mark.

### **Describe the congregation's current activities for mission and outreach.**

Our ministries are categorized in four sections:

1. Outreach – ministries that are focused on meeting needs in the community. Sawdust, Blanket, VA Manor, Angel Tree, Food Bank and DUO (a financial assistance fund) are examples of these efforts. Additionally, the church is open to many local organizations for meeting space. The Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Bloomsburg Quilters, Columbia County Family Center, and the Herb Guild are a few. Additionally, the church operates a private non-denominational Christian preschool directed to the community. Enrollment is full and currently has a waiting list.
2. Family – programs focused on building the family. Parents Night Out provides babysitting at the church to give parents the opportunity to spend quality time with each other. Family Events are hosted to bring the families together in worship and praise – these events include Campfires for Christ, picnics, and other celebrations.
3. Study, Prayer and Counseling – St. Luke offers a Men's breakfast group, a Sister's prayer group, Caster's on Fishing Creek (opportunities to study Christ while fishing), a Vietnamese Bible Study, and a Stephen's Ministry Team among others.
4. Sunday Morning – Opportunities for the congregation to be part of the worship service and activities. Acolytes, Greeters/Lectors, Teachers, Servers, Special Music and Choir are a few examples. We also have a Café ministry where coffee and snacks are served to encourage people to connect with each other before and after the service.

A detailed PDF is attached for additional information.

During 2019, almost \$13,000 was provided for local mission and outreach support. This included donations for Blanket Sunday, support for the local food pantry, requested items for the veterans living at the Orangeville Manor, materials for Sawdust activities and contributions to the DUO fund.

Additionally, the church is used by many congregation members and community organizations. During the COVID shutdown, St. Luke leadership used this opportunity to repaint the church, fully clean and set up rooms in a CDC-complaint way and assess structural and security needs. There are funds in the checking account set aside to replace the furnace and boiler and the outside lighting has been upgraded.

Due to COVID, St. Luke Lutheran Church has had to be innovative in our ministries to the community. We are blessed with a large outdoor space which can accommodate hundreds of people while still maintaining social distancing. We hosted an outdoor Trunk or Treat which safely accommodated over 200 children and their families. We had an outdoor spring carnival "Spring Fling" with family centered games and activities to welcome the community to St. Luke. We have had two Craft fairs to help vendors who have been

negatively impacted by the shut down and loss of shows to sell their wares. Vender spaces were free, but we requested donations to the local food bank. We raised over \$1200 for the local food bank through these efforts.

Finally, St. Luke is building a relationship with the NALC leadership. One of our congregation members is a liaison to the Regional Mission District Office and the church hosted the recent Mission District Regional Meeting in June of this year.

**The NALC is committed to moving away from an institutional understanding of the Church, to the biblical commission to be a community of followers of Jesus who focus on being disciples and making disciples. Which best describes your congregation's understanding of this movement? [Type an X by the appropriate response]**

- Totally unaware
- Have heard about it
- Have been involved personally
- Some in the congregation are involved, some aren't
- Congregation understands, is on-board and involved

**List the *Top Five Things* your congregations hope for in its next Pastor**

1. Biblical knowledge/theologically sound.
2. Preaching/Worship
3. Spiritual Leadership
4. Builds a sense of community for all generations.
5. Welcoming and nurturing

**What were the three most significant events in your congregation's history? Provide the years in which these events happened and why they are important to your congregation.**

1986 – Going from a two parish to a one parish church.

St. Luke/Canby Lutheran churches existed as a two-parish congregation. In 1986, as the pastor accepted a call elsewhere and finances were evaluated, a vote was taken by both churches and St. Luke became a one parish church. In faith, St. Luke called a new pastor and grew in parishioners, services and programs until additional space was needed.

1998 – Building a new church.

To build a church, St. Luke had to arrive at a plan to reduce cost and did so through volunteer engagement. There was a lot of talent within the church including a member who offered to act as project manager/contractor. Throughout the project 99 people worked at least half a day during construction. It was truly a project that built the St. Luke family.

2019 – Leaving the ELCA

Theology put forth by our most recent ELCA pastor did not reflect the Lutheran theology of majority of the congregation. St. Luke leadership worked with the Synod Bishop and differences in theology could not be resolved. This led to a vote by 70% of St. Luke's congregation to leave the ELCA. The overwhelming majority of those who remained with St. Luke voted to affiliate with the NALC. This split resulted in two churches moving forward. St. Luke under the NALC and The Table under the ELCA. We arrived at an agreeable financial settlement and, although it was difficult amid the transition, many of the members of both churches have stayed connected with each other and support each other.

**Has your congregation participated in the Congregational Workshop Preparatory to the Call Process? [Type an X by the appropriate response]**

Yes                       No

Due to the current pandemic, we were unable to hold a workshop. However, we conducted a congregational survey in its place.

**What were the three most significant results of the workshop?**

N/A

**Describe the nature and extent of any significant current or recent conflict in the congregation. Is this conflict resolved, or ongoing? If resolved, how was it resolved?**



In January of 2018, St. Luke called a new ELCA Pastor to lead the church. Within a few short months, it became obvious that the theology being taught by this pastor was not the faithful Word of Christ which had been the cornerstone of this congregation for multiple generations. This created much tension within the congregation and the Council approached the Pastor with a request to return to the Word as the basis for his teaching and preaching. This was met with resistance and the Council began the process of researching the ELCA and found that St. Luke no longer aligned with core elements of the ELCA and decided to pursue a new affiliation.

Unlike most transitions from the ELCA to other affiliations, this one was Council and congregation-driven.

As part of the process, the local Bishop was invited to speak to the congregation and two votes were taken – with the 70% of the congregation wishing to leave the ELCA.

Once that decision was made, the Council appointed a congregational leadership team to research options for affiliation, and the NALC most closely aligned with our desire to be Christ-centered and Word-driven.

The Council worked with the Bishop's office and the newly formed ELCA-affiliated church (The Table) on financial and other considerations of the separation. The result was an amicable split with all parties in agreement.

The conflict has since been resolved and the result was two churches rather than one.

St Luke's previous pastor, Pastor Kerry Maurer, came back to lead the church spiritually on an interim basis during this time and fully retired as of September 30 (due to health concerns). Chris Davis, who has served as lay leader for many years for St. Luke and other churches, has agreed to serve as our Interim Lay Leader as we seek a full-time Pastor.

In November of 2020 we recruited Rev. Dr. Brian Hughes as our Interim Lead Pastor. The congregation has appreciated his guidance and leadership and is grateful for his help in preparing us for the next called pastor.

There are no conflicts.

**How does your congregation handle conflict/tension? Which of the following do you think best describes your congregation? [Type an X by the appropriate response]**

- As a church, we respect and listen to each other and work things through without generating divisiveness.
- As a church, we try to respect and listen to each other, but it is not uncommon for differences of opinion to be a problem and for some people to choose sides. Some have left our church because of conflict.
- Conflict hurts our sense of unity, but we tend not to talk about it.
- Painful experience with conflict has been present, but it has been worked through, and we have learned from the experience.
- We have had some painful experiences with conflict, and they linger in the background.
- Open conflict is present, and we need a minister who can help us deal with it.
- Other (describe).....

**What was the nature of the relationship between your last pastor and the congregation? Positive? Struggling? Cooperative? Tense?**

St. Luke has always enjoyed a strong relationship with its previous pastors. The congregation has always embraced the Pastor as the spiritual leader, and the Council has included the Pastor in all decisions. The relationship has been cooperative and positive.

When the congregation moved into its current location in 1998, there were three services weekly with over 350 members in attendance. This stayed constant until 2018 when the church called a new pastor. The reason for the difficult relationship was that there was no longer a faithful approach to the Word and no interest of the pastor to return to the Word. That pastor created a divisive and contentious environment which ended when he left.

The church now has 170 members worshipping weekly through various ways and is once again engaged and committed to finding the next pastor to spiritually lead the congregation.

**How did your council/congregational leaders work together with your last pastor? [Type an X by the appropriate response]**

- Leadership is shared, with shared decision-making
- Pastor makes important decisions
- Council makes decisions with pastoral input
- Council makes decisions without pastoral input

**Is your pastor a member of council with: [Type an X by the appropriate response(s)]**

Voice     Vote

**Congregational finances**

Total budget for last fiscal year: \$ 466,637  
Benevolence to the North American Lutheran Church: \$ 4,000  
Other benevolence: \$ 55,672- (\$42,477 was donated by congregation for benevolence)  
Total debt of the congregation: \$ 890,220 (we maintain one year of mortgage payments in savings.)  
Total savings, reserves, and endowments: \$ 188,524

**Compensation of Last Pastor**

Salary: \$ <u>68,500</u>	Parsonage/housing allowance: \$ <u>had parsonage</u>
Social security offset: \$ <u>5220.80</u>	Pension: \$ <u>11,678.52</u>
Health Insurance: \$ <u>27,563.64</u>	Vacation: <u>4 weeks</u>
Continuing education (time/funding): <u>Two weeks, \$1000</u>	
Travel reimbursement: <u>Federal reimbursement rate</u>	
Other: <u>Travel for NALC conferences</u>	



**When the Congregational Vacancy List is updated, a short paragraph (3-4 sentences) is included announcing each congregation's ministry. If you wish, your call committee may compose that summary, realizing it may be edited/formatted as needed.**

Our core mission is in reaching others for Christ and we are committed to sharing the Word of God in all areas of our ministry. The congregation is ready to embrace a new Pastor and is willing to immediately begin the process of reviewing ideas for additional outreach ministries in order to increase the spiritual impact within our communities.

**Consider filming a video to be included with your Congregational Profile on the [NALC website Vacancy List](#). We invite your call committee to make a 3-5 minute video introducing prospective pastoral candidates to your context and congregation. The video can be informal, explaining what your congregation is seeking in a pastor and showing images of the members of your congregation and your worship environment. Here are some sample videos: [Example One](#), [Example Two](#). These samples were not produced by the NALC. They are both simply examples of the type of content you could include in a video.**

**Video Submission Instructions:**

Upload your video to YouTube or Vimeo. (Here are instructions on how to upload to YouTube: [www.wikihow.com/Upload-a-Video-to-YouTube](http://www.wikihow.com/Upload-a-Video-to-YouTube).) Include a link to the video below. Make sure the link allows for public access to the video.

[video link]

Provide any other information about your congregation that may be helpful in the call process.

During COVID-19, we have been offering three worship opportunities. Parking Lot services, Facebook Livestream, and CDC-compliant sanctuary worship.

Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:

**SAVE A COPY OF THIS PROFILE TO YOUR COMPUTER.** Use "Save As" and specify document file name as:  
Congregation name, City, Date

**\*\*Email** a copy of the completed profile to the Assistant to the Bishop for Ministry, [dwendel@thenalc.org](mailto:dwendel@thenalc.org).

Alternative submission method ONLY if you do not have email: Print and mail the complete profile to:

North American Lutheran Church  
Attn: Pr. David Wendel  
2299 Palmer Dr., Suite 220  
New Brighton, MN 55112-2202

In addition, mail or email a copy of the completed profile to your mission district dean (can be found at [thenalc.org/mission-districts/](http://thenalc.org/mission-districts/)).

Should you have questions, call Pr. David Wendel, assistant to the bishop for ministry, at 719-650-8171 (cell).

**PLEASE KEEP A COPY OF THIS DOCUMENT FOR YOUR RECORDS.**