

CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE



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Congregation Name and Location

Name Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

Mailing address 1801 St. Paris Pike

City Springfield State/Province OH Zip/Postal Code 45504

Telephone 937-399-6257 Fax 937-399-7962

Email address grace.lutheran@grace-nalc.org

Congregation website www.grace-nalc.org

Seeking Full-time senior pastor Part-time pastor Full-time associate pastor

Tom Brodbeck, our Senior Pastor since July 2019, moved into that role after serving as the congregation's Associate Pastor for the previous four years and as a staff member (in discipleship and outreach) for four years prior to that. We are now ready to enter the call process to discern God's will as we seek a candidate who will faithfully serve as Grace's Associate Pastor.

Senior Pastor (as of June 16, 2019)

Name Thomas M. Brodbeck
Mailing address 1649 Winding Trail
City Springfield State/Province OH Zip/Postal Code 45503
Church phone 937-399-6257 Home phone 937-390-6338
Email address tom.brodbeck@grace-nalc.org

Congregational President

Name Steve Garrett Title President, Grace Council
Mailing address 542 Sparta Drive
City Springfield State/Province OH Zip/Postal Code 45503
Home phone 937-399-2420 Cell phone 937-238-7000
Email address sgarrett@rgsellers.com

Call Committee Co-Chair

Name Eric Leeth
Mailing address 823 Torrence Drive
City Springfield State/Province OH Zip/Postal Code 45503
Home phone 937-399-5960 Cell phone 937-925-0468
Email address eleeth15@gmail.com

Call Committee Co-Chair

Name Su-Ann Newport
Mailing address 103 Englewood Road
City Springfield State/Province OH Zip/Postal Code 45504
Home phone none Cell phone 937-206-4506
Email address suann.newport@gmail.com

Congregational Demographics

Number of **paid** staff (full- or part-time): Clergy 1 Lay professionals 6 Secretarial 2

Average worship attendance 208 Average Sunday school attendance 50

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

Small City

Describe the congregation's ethnic composition and age distribution.

99% Caucasian; 1% Mixed Race

0-19: 138; 20-39: 106; 40-59: 106; 60-79: 212; 80-99: 67

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.

Yes. Our mission is to be a caring community of believers, committed to the development of a culture of disciple-making (disciples who make disciples). Our discipleship pathway seeks to equip people who are "Growing in G.R.A.C.E.": **G**rowing in God's Word, **R**e-telling His story, **A**pplying their spiritual gifts, **C**ultivating accountable relationships and **E**xalting God through worship. In all things we seek to be a church where we are "Receiving the Lord and Revealing His Love."

In particular, the leadership of the congregation (which includes the Congregation Council, staff members, Ministry Area Coordinators, Ministry Team Leaders and other long-range planning teams and appointed/elected committees) has a clear vision for mission. Grace's ever-increasing emphasis on discipleship is a perfect example of that. The ongoing goal, of course, is to extend this clear vision to the rest of our membership.

What are the primary goals of your congregation?

Our seven-point vision statement will serve to guide us through the remainder of this decade.

We are a community of faith that is

1. Wholeheartedly centered on the Word of God
2. Pursuing vibrant expressions of worship and prayer
3. Passionately engaged in making disciples and disciple-makers
4. Lovingly provided a network of care and support
5. Intentionally proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ beyond the walls of the facility
6. Consistently developing new generations of quality Christian leaders
7. Purposefully impacting our community and region through
 - a. Strategic partnerships with existing faith-based ministries
 - b. Co-ministry with smaller and struggling congregations who seek renewal

- c. Planting new congregations
- d. Targeting ministry to younger families in our neighbors through practical engagement in our schools and other community organizations

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

We are a liturgical church, guided by the Christian Church year ... its seasons, themes, lectionary, and parament/vestment colors. The *Lutheran Book of Worship, With One Voice* and *The Hymnal Supplement* are our primary worship books. Our Senior Pastor writes special worship orders for some of our festival days. Our worship style is musically blended, involving our pipe organ, grand piano, hand bells/chimes, and a variety of other music instruments, along with the Sanctuary Choir and numerous vocal soloists. We celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion at every worship service. Sunday services at 8:00 and 10:45 AM are traditional, and the 10:45 AM service is live streamed through YouTube. Our contemporary worship service is offered at 10:45 a.m. on the first Sunday of each month. We also offer midweek worship services during the Advent and Lenten seasons.

Describe your congregation's Christian education ministry.

Children/Youth Discipleship: We have the goal of maintaining broad and purposeful, God-inspired programs for our young families (with pre-kindergarten children through 12th grade youth), as well as for the unchurched. Our program is called "Faith Journey" and combines an in-house curriculum built on Lutheran foundations, with supplemental curriculum emphasizing a relationship with Jesus and our call to discipleship.

Catechism at Grace is part of the Faith Journey curriculum, taught through yearly Sunday school classes (cumulative teachings freshman and sophomore years), with an expectation of regular attendance in both Sunday school and worship, and documentation to prove such. Additional expected activities in order to qualify for the "Affirmation of Baptism" rite at the end of the sophomore year include "Super Sundays" (entire Sunday morning sessions led by one of the Pastors and the Youth Director, twice a year), 24- to 48-hour retreats each quarter that include 4-part curriculums and relationship building, and an annual out-of-state Work Camp Mission Trip. After the sophomore year, the juniors and seniors follow a similar track to qualify for the "Commissioning to Discipleship" rite at the end of their senior year of high school.

Adult education is a subset of our overall discipleship effort. Whereas the entire discipleship ministry emphasizes life transformation through relationship (life to life), the teaching portion of our adult education ministry focuses on increased Bible knowledge and practical application of its teachings. Classes/courses are offering in four formats:

1. Adult Sunday School occurs at 9:15 a.m. each week (in between our two worship services).
Examples of offerings in the past year include: such topics as "knowing God's will for your life," "developing a Christian worldview," "Lutheran worship," and "the book of James."

2. Three weekly Adult Bible studies, each currently studying the lectionary texts for the upcoming Sunday.
3. Wednesday Night FUEL courses meet in the fall and winter, concluding prior to the start of Advent and Lent. These are designed to be in-depth studies of books of the Bible. In the past year we completed a course in Revelation. We will study Romans in the fall of 2022.
4. Other focused studies, such as large group Women's Bible studies.

Grace pastors take the lead in choosing, designing, and facilitating these courses, with the capable assistance of lay facilitators as well. The goal is to offer multiple courses each week. The recent pandemic necessitated the scaling back of that goal, but plans are to be back on track by the fall of 2022. Grace also uses the resources of Right Now Media for these courses.

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

Our Ministry Plan directly supports twelve Community Outreach programs (Celebrating Recovery House, Springfield Soup Kitchen, Children's Rescue Center, Choosing Hope Adoptions, Baskets of Grace Food Ministry, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Dayton, Kairos Prison Ministry, Oesterlen Services for Youth, Pregnancy Resource Clinic of Clark County, Safe Harbor House, Springfield City Youth Mission, Encompass Connection Center) and two International Ministries (Naomi's Heart Mission in the Philippines and Malawi Orphan Care in Africa). Our Ministry Plan also supports our members participating in mission trips either locally or internationally. Grace also provides funding to a variety of causes through Sunday school offerings and special events, Bible study and worship for Springfield Manor Assisted Living, Grace Garden Harvest Table (with proceeds to local food banks), St. John's Food Pantry, Coat Collections, Lutheran World Relief (Quilts and World Hunger), hosting of annual Summer or Fall Fest for our community, NALC Disaster Relief Ministry, Hospice Pillows, Faith Works, Jefferson Street Oasis Garden, Kids Hope, and Operation Christmas Child. We are part of a team to bring LifeWise daytime Bible education for school aged children to our community. We are also newly participating in the Care Portal ministry which connects needs of local children and families with community and faith-based resources.

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 hopes for in its next Associate Pastor

- 1) Dedicated to Personal Spiritual Growth – diligent in personal Bible Study, devotions, prayer, and private time with God.
- 2) Experienced with and passion for growing the Discipleship culture within our church.
- 3) Genuine, personable, approachable for all age groups – from being able to engage and build relationships with our children and youth to possessing a Shepherd’s heart (comforter, friend and confidant to those visited in homes, hospitals and care facilities) to being a community liaison, successfully interacting with those outside the church.
- 4) A Visionary – able to effectively partner with the Senior Pastor, Congregation Council and other church leaders to cast a vision and inspire disciples.
- 5) An Educator – able to teach and inspire from the pulpit, in classes and one on one; able to fruitfully mentor, develop, and teach lay leaders.

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.

Besides the historic move/transition from the ELCA to the NALC:

- In 1999, Grace moved from its location at 21 East Harding Road to a newly built facility at 1801 St. Paris Pike. Our new facility (which is all on one floor) is much more accessible to our older members and those with disabilities, as the old church had a challenging flight of stairs up to the sanctuary as well as downstairs to the fellowship hall. The St. Paris Pike facility also has a much larger worship space, significant areas for Christian education, and a wonderful Community Center that allows us to support Outreach ministries in the community.
- In the early 1970’s, there was a shift from the majority of ministry being performed by the pastor (only 1 pastor at the time) to the majority of ministry being performed by lay members. We remember when only the pastor offered communion, served as lector, visited members in hospitals and care facilities, etc. Things have changed dramatically since then. The creation of the Director of Volunteer Ministries/Director of Lay Ministry/Director of Discipleship position in the early 1990’s considerably expanded lay involvement in nearly all areas of ministry.
- Within the last decade, Grace expanded its new facility by creating a Community Center, and this has had a major impact on dozens of Outreach ministries in our city. We consistently host events (fundraisers, recognition banquets, informational dinners) led by a variety of locally funded Christian outreach organizations. We offer the use of our space for free, and our Tables of Grace Team (somewhat of a catering ministry) regularly provides meals for these gatherings of 150 – 250 people.

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

Yes

No

Note: The workshop was held in August of 2018.

What were the three most significant results of the workshop?

1. Reinforcing the critical nature of the church being the “Body of Christ.” When the 75 people present were asked, “What body part are you?,” it was obvious that no part was more important than another and that each part relies on all the others. Each part must keep working even if one part leaves – e.g. the retirement of our Senior Pastor. We must all continue to use our gifts to move the church forward.
2. The “Where We Are” activities, identifying the things we’ve yet to learn/incorporate into our church, including:
 - Increasing cross-generational relationships
 - Fully impacting our immediate community through Bible Study, Life to Life and more
 - Adapting, without compromising, to the needs of families and young adults (the years immediately after high school/college)
3. Recognition that we are richly blessed (beautiful and extensive facility, grounded in scripture, transparent and grounded Council, numerous ministries, abundance of outreach, welcoming congregation, etc.).

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?

The decision to move from the ELCA to the NALC was quite the conflict because of a large contingency of lifelong ELCA Lutherans and the result of the hot button changes involved (e.g. no gay or lesbian ministers). Our church leadership’s strategy for handling the conflict – with some thinking we should “stay” and others thinking we should “go” based purely on their initial reaction to wording of the new denominational constitution– was extremely thorough! It was about education (Sunday school classes, special congregational meetings, Bible studies, newsletter articles, etc.) and taking our time moving through the process.

We believe this approach is used regularly and successfully within our church when it comes to disagreements/misunderstandings. We’ve always tried to respect one another’s opinions, with the understanding that we eventually will be making a decision either based on majority (if a congregational vote is required) or the final say by our Congregation Council. Grace’s Council is a consistently diverse and well-rounded group, voted in by the congregation and very capable of making difficult decisions after

prayerful discernment of what is in the best interest of the church.

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.

What was the nature of the relationship between your pastors and the congregation? Positive? Struggling? Cooperative? Tense?

Our pastors have been like Shepherds leading and caring for God's flock.

How did your council/congregational leaders work together with your last pastors? [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

Are your pastors members of council with: [Type an X by the appropriate response(s)]

Voice Vote

Congregational finances

Total budget for last fiscal year: \$ 730,206

Benevolence to the North American Lutheran Church: \$ 25,000

Other benevolence: \$ 54,113

Total debt of the congregation: \$ 0

Note: There is no remaining debt from a \$2.4 million building expansion project.

Total savings, reserves, and endowments: \$ 604,187

Compensation of Last Associate Pastor

Salary: \$ 75,500 Parsonage/housing allowance: Included in package

Social security offset: Included in package Pension: Included in package

Health Insurance: Included in package Vacation: 4 weeks paid vacation

Continuing education (time/funding): Line item in the Ministry Plan for Continuing Education includes both "Pastors and staff" - \$5000

Travel reimbursement: Included in package

Other: All expenses paid for annual Convocation and Pastor's Conference

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.

Grace Church is in Springfield, Ohio, conveniently located between Dayton and Columbus. We are a large and growing congregation with an average two-service Sunday attendance in our sanctuary of 208 (plus 20 online worshippers), and Sunday school attendance of around 50. Although our pre-pandemic Sunday numbers reflected up to 100 more individuals worshipping in person, our congregation has remained faithful in its giving, with no reduction in budgets or programming. We are a traditional Lutheran congregation with one contemporary service per month. Grace is debt free with many ongoing ministries and outreach activities. We are actively growing a culture of discipleship and are committed to being a church family that loves and serves the Lord!

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

Male and female candidates are encouraged to apply.

Completed by: Eric Leeth & Su-Ann Newport, Call Comm. Co-Chairs Date: March 22, 2022

