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| 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 Samuel Lutheran Church

Mailing address PO Box 393 Physical Address 201 North Lincoln

City Eagle Grove State/Province IA Zip/Postal Code 50533

Telephone 515-448-5038 Fax none

Email address hschurchsecretary@gmail.com

Congregation website samuellutheran.net Facebook@ Samuel Lutheran Church

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 Kerry Elston Title President

Mailing address 920 NW 1st

City Eagle Grove State/Province IA Zip/Postal Code 50533

Home phone none Cell phone 515-689-1194

Email address selston81@gmail.com

**Call Committee Chair**

Name Kerry Elston

Mailing address 920 NW 1st St

City Eagle Grove State/Province IA Zip/Postal Code 50533

Home phone Cell phone 515-689-1194

Email address selston81@gmail.com

**Congregational Demographics**

Number of **paid** staff (full- or part-time): Clergy vacant Lay professionals 0 Secretarial 1

Average worship attendance 30 Average Sunday school attendance 6 children 10 adults

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

Samuel Lutheran Church is located in the center of a small, rural town in central Iowa. Eagle Grove has a population of approx. 3,500 people.

Since Eagle Grove is a rural town surrounded by the agricultural community, we employ farm related industries such as Gold Eagle Co-op, AG Processing, Daybreak Foods, and a newly opened, 240-million dollar hog processing facility-Prestige. Other industries in town include Advanced Drainage Systems, and the city is centered around the Railroad.

Eagle Grove’s largest employer is the school system which has a high school, middle school, and an elementary which contains a 4 yr old preschool, a transitional kindergarten, and grades K-4. Our school district serves Eagle Grove and 3 other small communities, and employs 5 administrators, 77 teachers, and 100 support staff. Our high school students are very lucky to have a Career Academy which allows them to take dual-credit courses at no cost for college, and also classes focused on trade.

Eagle Grove is a small but energetic town taking action towards a sustainable future. We are proud to have a Fareway Grocery Store, a pharmacy, an optometrist, 2 dentists, a veterinarian, and 2 locally owned banks. We have 2 doctors that are part of the Iowa Specialty System that works in conjunction with the Iowa Specialty Hospital in the nearby town of Clarion.

Eagle Grove also maintains a Wellness Center which has a fitness Center, a heated pool, and employs several licensed Physical Therapists for anyone requiring physical therapy. We have a strong Park and Rec Department which is currently fundraising for a 3 million dollar Rec Center.

We are proud to be in the process of building a 50 bed hotel.

Eagle Grove also has an aquatic center and a golf course. We annually host the Wright County Fair.

Eagle Grove supports a Senior Center which provides the community with Meals-on-wheels, and a local food pantry.

Eagle has 12 eating establishments and 4 gas stations. Our town has 9 places of worship.

**Describe the congregation’s ethnic composition and age distribution.**

Samuel Lutheran is a congregation of approximately 250 members.

We are predominantly white/Caucasian.

60% of our members are retired

**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.**

Our mission statement: Know the Savior, Worship and Serve Him

As Christians, we desire to know and share the Grace of God through Jesus Christ our Savior,

to worship and serve Him through the Word and Sacraments, education, and fellowship.

We are just a little church with a great big GOD!

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

\*We want to maintain our strong Christian church family by continuing to proclaim

The Good News of Jesus Christ as his disciples through worship and fellowship,

and to serve our community as the Holy Spirit guides us

\*Re-engage members that have become disengaged during the past 10 years

\*We would like to attract new members to join our church family which would include

families with children. The future of any church depends on the youth staying active

\*We are looking for leadership to accomplish our goals

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

Samuel Lutheran offers one traditional worship service each week with seasonal parament and organ accompaniment. We are lucky to have a dedicated organist. We follow the Lutheran Book of Worship (LBW) using the liturgy and hymns. We occasionally sing hymns from “The Other Songbook” and “With One Voice”.

Holy Communion is celebrated on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month as well as festival holidays.

We participate in a Joint Thanksgiving Service and Ash Wednesday Service with our sister parish Holmes Lutheran. During Lent, we join in the Community Lenten Luncheons on Thursdays, and Community Good Friday Services.

**Describe your congregation’s Christian education ministry.**

Samuel has a small Sunday School group that meets every Sunday morning focusing on teaching the story of Jesus at an age appropriate level. The kids gather before class to sing their favorite songs.

We have an amazing group of youth called the ‘Little Disciples’. This energized group of kids’ main focus is on visitation at our local nursing home one Sunday a month.

Our ‘Little Disciples’ also help to conduct the morning service on Easter, Rally Day, and the Christmas Service.

Our youth have attended Riverside Bible Camp.

The Adult Sunday School meets weekly and has great fellowship while engaging in bible study.

Summer is always a time enjoyed by all (members and non-members) when 3 year olds thru 6th grade take part in VBS.

We currently have 6 confirmands – 3 from Samuel Lutheran, 3 from our joint parish.

Samuel offers a college scholarship to graduating seniors.

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

The members of Samuel are very generous in sponsoring our youth group called the ‘Little Disciples’. The outreach of this group is phenomenal. Some examples include sponsoring families at Christmas, tree planting, flower box building, and the purchase of a bench in remembrance of individual members, purchasing coats and boots for students in need, helping a family that suffered a fire that destroyed their home, helping young mothers through the Wright Co. HOPES program.

The list could go on and on….

Samuel has a very powerful group of Ladies that are the backbone of our congregation. They have monthly business meetings, a monthly bible study, and a group that meets weekly to quilt. These quilters have donated hundreds of quilts. These ladies love serving the Lord and enjoying their Christian fellowship. The Ladies also have their own missions outreach that are separate from the church.

Samuel’s outreach includes: The Beacon of Hope (men’s homeless shelter), Church of Damascus Road (Prison Ministry), The Lotus House (women’s shelter), and GoServ (disaster relief). These missions all are within 30 miles of Eagle Grove.

Samuel supports Riverside Bible Camp in Iowa. Globally we support Lutheran World Relief.

We are very proud to be able to locally support our food pantry, chamber of commerce,

and our local ministerial association.

Our church helps to financially support the local Senior Citizen Center which provides meals-on-wheels. Samuel is happy to assist one week of the month in delivering meals-on-wheels.

In years past we have sponsored a missionary, however, we do not have one at this time.

**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

x 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 Pastor**

1. Pulpit Ministry
2. Leadership
3. Visitation
4. Youth ministry
5. Bible Study

**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.**

1. Our church bell was purchased in 1908. We have been residing in our current building since 1960 and still use the bell to announce the beginning and end of each service.

2. One of the greatest milestones was in 1991 when we celebrated the Centennial of Samuel Lutheran Church. For 129 years this congregation has been proclaiming the Gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ through Word and Sacrament. Christ is Made the Sure Foundation.

3. Samuel has belonged to several different synods as they have evolved and merged through the years:

1917 – Norwegian Lutheran Church of America

1946 – Evangelical Lutheran Church

1960 – American Lutheran Church (ALC)

1988 – Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA)

2010 – North American Lutheran Church (NALC)

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

**x Yes No**

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

1. Our congregation needs to make a decision on whether to continue our relationship with our sister parish Holmes (AFLC), continue with a part time pastor, or to join with another local NALC congregation
2. We need to work on Samuel’s vision for ministry
3. What are the steps to prepare for a new pastor

**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?**

Samuel has been a 2-point parish for over 80 years. Our sister parish, Holmes Lutheran, is a small rural church with like numbers. We share a pastor and pastoral/secretary/office expenses. However, this relationship is no longer a strong relationship. We do not have a shared ministry as joint parishes.

Currently, our differences in affiliation have created an even bigger gap in our relationship. Holmes Lutheran is a member of the AFLC. At this point, we have stayed together primarily for a shared pastor and shared expenses.

Our current conflict is ongoing. We want to continue our ministry at Samuel Lutheran, be we are not sure what this looks like in our future: 1) do we continue to foster our relationship with our sister parish, Holmes, acknowledging the differences in affiliation and search for a pastor that will serve both our NALC congregation and Holmes AFLC congregation? 2) do we continue with a part-time pastor? 3) or do we merge with another local NALC congregation?

**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]**

x 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?**

Struggling. Our pastor was with us for 9 years. Somewhere along the way, we felt that Pastor had lost his passion to fulfill the needs of the members of the congregation.

Our membership was slowly declining. In order to maintain the members we had, our members requested a shorter sermon, to preach on the Gospel, and a more uplifting sermon. We also desired more member visitation. Our requests were met with defiance, he always fulfilled his own agenda despite our wishes.

For the health of our congregation, a change was needed as our members and Pastor were no longer working as a team.

**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

x 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)]**

x Voice Vote

**Congregational finances**

Total budget for last fiscal year: $ 74,000

Benevolence to the North American Lutheran Church: $ 1,000

Other benevolence: $ 7,000 missions 5,200 local

Total debt of the congregation: $ 0

Total savings, reserves, and endowments: $ 280,000

**Compensation of Last Pastor**

Salary: $ 32,000 total package for part time (our joint congregation paid the other half for pastor’s

full time total package)

Parsonage/housing allowance: $ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Social security offset: $ 1,000 Pension: $

Health Insurance: $ Vacation:

Continuing education (time/funding): paid as needed

Travel reimbursement: paid as needed

Other: no parsonage

**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.**

We seek a pastor who will serve our small congregation, nurturing our faith and partner with us in serving the Lord through worship, education, and fellowship.

Our biggest need at Samuel right now is pulpit ministry. Our members are in need of an uplifting sermon filled with the Good News of the Gospel. When our hearts are filled with the Good News, we are energized to go out into the world and be the Disciples our Lord wants us to be. We desire an energetic, engaging Pastor to lead our worship.

It is our hope that with renewed leadership, we can entice our non-active members to return to worship.

As a strengthened congregation, we can focus on the Great Commission movement of being disciples and making disciples.

\*We are looking for a full time pastor who will serve Samuel Lutheran and our sister parish Holmes Lutheran acknowledging that they are an AFLC congregation.

\*We are also open to a pastor serving Samuel Lutheran in a part time capacity.

\*It is also possible that our future holds partnering with another local NALC congregation.

In our current situation, we realize the dynamics might change, but our desire to love and serve the Lord, to stay strong in our church family will not change.

**Consider filming a video to be included with your Congregational Profile on the** [**NALC website Vacancy List**](http://thenalc.org/call-process)**. 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**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rcXBhDNftvg&feature=youtu.be)**,** [**Example Two**](https://vimeo.com/242282875)**. 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: [wikihow.com/Upload-a-Video-to-YouTube](https://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.

[enter text]

Completed by: Kerry Elston, Boone Morgan, Mark Ketchum, Richard Brown Date: 3-12-2020

**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?subject=Congregational%20profile)**.**

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.**