

# CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE



Enter information directly into this document.  
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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 Grace Lutheran Church

Mailing address P.O. Box 204

City Erskine State/Province MN Zip/Postal Code 56535

Telephone 218-687-4035 Fax 218-687-4088

Email address GraceLC@gvtel.com

Congregation website Gracechurcherskine.org

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

## Congregational President or Vice President

Name Jason Carlson Title President

Mailing address 38244 240<sup>th</sup> Ave SE

City McIntosh State/Province MN Zip/Postal Code 56556

Home phone 218-563-2490 Cell phone 218-280-2287

Email address jscarlson@outlook.com

## Call Committee Chair

Name Mary Bratrud

Mailing address 38594 182<sup>nd</sup> Ave. SE

City Erskine State/Province MN Zip/Postal Code 56535

Home phone 218-687-2150 Cell phone 218-521-0793

Email address mebrat33@hotmail.com

## **Congregational Demographics**

Number of **paid** staff (full- or part-time): Full time : Clergy 1 Seretary 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Part time: Choir director, Organist, Educational Director, Financial Secretary, Janitor, Treasurer

Average worship attendance 107                      Average Sunday school attendance 50-55 children  
12-15 adults

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

Small town with 500 residents plus the surrounding rural areas. Erskine has access to healthcare, industry, education, and retail. The town of Erskine surrounds a small lake and is also surrounded by several recreational lakes.

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

Primarily Caucasian, with ethnic composition of mostly Scandinavian. The multi-generational congregation is complete with infants, children, pre-teens, teenagers, young adults, adults and elders.

### **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.**

To worship and glorify God, having fellowship in God's family, being grounded by scripture and equipped to be servants of the Lord.

Our Mission Statement for this congregation is "Serving all people by sharing God's Word and Gift of Grace." This is our prayer for the future of God's people in this church body.

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

To continue to grow as a Bible based church. To grow in discipleship both within and outside our church. To carry out the Great Commission to God's glory. To be a presence as Christians in our community involvement.

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

We gather each Sunday at a single service. We worship midweek throughout Advent and Lent. Other worship services occur at weddings and funerals.

Our liturgy is from the Lutheran Book of Worship and With One Voice. Congregation follows the liturgical service from the worship book and from a large video screen. Our service is also recorded and then televised on our local cable system a few times through the week for a large surrounding area. Our vestments are traditional and recently purchased. Our hymns are standard and familiar, but we attempt new music throughout the year. We have an organ and organist, a piano and a CD system all of which are used for musical accompaniment. Our Choir has a big part in lifting us up with new and refreshing songs to help elevate our passion in worship. And a children's choir that delights us with their contagious enthusiasm. We are blessed to receive the sacrament of Holy Communion twice a month and on church festivals. We have an open table to [baptized](#) and believing Christians.

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

Awesome! We share in learning and rejoicing over the inspired Word of God in various groups. Throughout the month we have multiple active Bible Study groups. Just recently the need for another group of young women was formed and is growing. We have an active and well attended Sunday School program. During the school year we have a Wednesday release time approved and supported by the local school system with from 80-100 children in attendance from local community. We offer a summer VBS program and welcome

all children to attend from our surrounding communities. Confirmation classes, first communion classes, marriage instruction and new member classes are all available as the need arises. Any of our worship services are infused with teaching the word of God, through liturgy, sacraments, readings and biblically based sermons.

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

It is our mission to reach others according to our call and their need. We provide for both global and local ministries.

A Ukrainian church and ministry that we support with dedicated moneys. Our Sunday school along with church members support children from “Compassion”. Our congregation led by the Sunday School children participate in Operation Christmas Child (shoebox program). We participate in Bible Sticks for the military. Our teens are active in the “Feed My Starving Children”. Lutheran World Relief, NALC missionary and seminary funds are given on an annual basis.

We make and distribute mission quilts to five local organizations in need. We have congregational leadership for our “Meet You at the Pole” on public school grounds. We send supportive funds to our local nursing home. We house and support a local food bank and support a backpack program in our community. Ladies Aide is active and support a variety of local and global ministries. Church members participate in a “Jail Ministry”. We support our local cemetery, and Minkota Mission District. Our youth group collects cans, helps periodically with local yard work, go on mission trips to help others outside of our small community.

As needs are brought to our attention, again both local and global, we will collect a special offering during church services.

**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. **And want to know MORE.**
- 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 congregation hopes for in its next Pastor**

1. Dedicated to a Bible based ministry and preaching.
2. Called to work with a Multi-generational congregation.
3. A Christ centered teacher
4. Willing to be involved and supportive of our youth
5. Loving, compassionate and trustworthy in their call to serve God and God’s people.

**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.**

1934 Church Fire and recovery: demonstrated our history of unity in the face of trials and our faith to rebuild.

2010 Choosing to break from the ELCA: testament of unity with scripture as our authority (we were the first Minnesota church to join NALC and our congregational vote was 98% in favor).

2016 Celebration of 125 years of Service to our Lord in this community: staying power of a church that is founded on Christ.

**Has your congregation participated in the Congregational Workshop Preparatory to the Call Process?**

[Type an X by the appropriate response]

Yes                       No

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

1. Unification in our vision, purpose and future goals for this congregation.
2. Embracing of the NALC Core Values
3. Communication and consensus on our pastoral needs
4. A hunger to learn and to grow spiritually in order to carry out the Great Commission.

**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?**

With Council leadership we are actively involved in incorporating inclusive activities within our multi-generational congregation in order to minimize conflict. We are growing, sharing and mentoring to include leadership and participation between all ages. This is a desire expressed by the congregation and we are moving in the right direction making sure that all voices are heard.

**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?**

We were in a loving and supporting relationship with our last Pastor. The relationship was very positive, honest and cooperative. He had strong discipleship skills and was able to attract people to receive the forgiveness that only Christ can give. We respected and trusted his relationships with our youth and his ability to sit for hours with the dying. We shared joys and sorrows openly and encouraged one another to live our faith boldly. He was able to help the congregation in times of change and built us up as God's family. He stood on the Word of God in both his preaching and teaching. He was respected and accessible.

Most recently we have an intentional interim Pastor who we have embraced. His style is different, and we have adjusted. Our church has not been vacated during this transition and all worship and study activities

have progressed. We acknowledge our need for this interim minister, not only in his role to bring us God's Word and sacraments, but in allowing and acknowledging our time of grief and giving us guidance through the call process.

**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: \$ 204,929.95

Benevolence to the North American Lutheran Church: \$ 4,000.00

Other benevolence: \$ 7159.00 (plus special offerings, is Bible Sticks etc.)

Total debt of the congregation: \$ 0

Total savings, reserves, and endowments: \$ 228,209.16 (as of 02/28/2019)

**Compensation of Last Pastor**

Salary: \$ 45,619.00                      Parsonage/housing allowance: \$ Parsonage offered

Social security offset: \$ 3489.85                      Pension: \$ 6493.06

Health Insurance: \$ 23,000.00                      Vacation: 4 weeks

Continuing education (time/funding): \$1700.00

Travel reimbursement: IRS: All miles traveled for church work were reimbursed

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**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.**

Ersine, MN, Grace: av att 107; Known as "God's Country" we are surrounded by lakes and nestled between pine and prairie. Rural community with access to shopping in town and in larger cities an hour away. Cultural and tourist attractions are available in the community and surrounding area. Many opportunities for outdoor recreation including abundant hunting and fishing areas.

We are a congregation committed to serving God, His people and our community. We are a well-established multigenerational Christian family seeking an ordained minister to join with us in a committed relationship. We are seeking a pastor called by the Holy Spirit to teach us the truth of Holy Scripture and equip us with the full armor of God for evangelism and discipleship to profess the true Word of God. We pray for a minister that can encourage our youth and care for our aging while joyfully embracing our community of hard working, family valued people.

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

Completed by: Grace Lutheran Church Call Committee

Date: 4-29-19

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**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).

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