

Ministry Site Profile – EAST UNION LUTHERAN CHURCH 2017

Trends in the Community Context of the Congregation

Characteristics - Write a description of your community in terms of socio-economic status, demographics, primary areas of employment and lifestyle.

We are a congregation physically located in a rural setting with suburban growth literally on our horizon. Carver MN is experiencing rapid population growth (15.9% 2010-2015) and housing development. The EULC congregation is changing along with the community, with many long-standing families, mostly farmers and blue-collar workers. There are deep family roots at EULC with many families being members for generations. Newer members include retirees who have moved to the area, and young families who have roots in smaller communities. Working families tend to be commuters employed in technical or professional fields. It is important to the EULC congregation that all people feel welcome, and we would like for all members to share equal status, a vision that we continue work on through both internal fellowship and community welcoming activities.

List three ways that the community in which you are located has been challenged by change and transition in the last three to five years.

*Freeway development and the 2011-2017 economic recovery have spurred change in the community. Much of the development, including one big box retail store, many single-family homes, a 60 unit affordable housing apartment and a new elementary school, is within three miles of our church. More retail and housing development is imminent.

*Expansion of increased racial and economic diversity in population.

*Rising awareness of environmental and social issues

List three changes or trends within the congregation or organization which have occurred in the last three to five years

1- Renewed membership growth in young families and baptisms. (Unfortunately the membership data has not been recorded and reported consistently so synod records do not reflect the growth.)

2- Transition of fellowship and education leaders and activities reflect an increased interest in young families including offering support to parents (Parents Night Out) as well as growth in local social activism and environmental awareness that will appeal to younger generations.

3- The ongoing effort to deal with the financial challenges of a congregation that has no current debt and is significantly debt averse, while simultaneously struggling to achieve adequate regular giving from membership.

Programs - Describe your congregation's current programs for mission and ministry

After-service fellowship is very prominent and serves as a meeting place for new and long –time members. A Welcoming Committee has been formed to be more visible in welcoming the community to our church. The congregation supports several community fellowship/fund raising programs (plant sale, spaghetti supper, numerous potlucks and dinners, ice cream social, children's programs, "trunk or treat", parent's night out). Small group fellowship: quilters, women's bible study. Adult music programs include choir, hand bell choir, diverse special music participation opportunities.

Education: Sunday School, age 3-5th grade, Vacation Bible School in summer, library. Confirmation for grades 6-9. Youth program (part-time youth director). Heritage Scholarship (\$1,000) for one high school senior.

Outreach – Current local missions include: Bags of Love (a program to support local children with weekend food), intermittent involvement with Feed My Starving Children, Love INC and local food shelves. For three consecutive years the congregation has directed Special Offerings to the ELCA clean water program through Good Gifts.

Goals - If there is a Strategic Plan in place for the congregation; what are the primary goals to which you are committed?

No strategic plan is currently in place. The transition process and church council have identified these possible goals:

- 1 – Sustained involvement in social outreach to the greater community
- 2 – Lifelong learning and spiritual growth
- 3 – Youth and family involvement
- 4 – Continued building upon our strengths of history and community.
- 5 – Identify activities that will demonstrate to the greater community ELCA's and EULC's interest in social justice, environmental justice and support of families of all kinds.

Energy - What is your congregation or organization really excited about right now?

Calling a new pastor, implementing new staffing for administration and youth programming, maintaining and upgrading property and facilities, all while moving forward with, and growing into, our new goals and aspirations.

Stabilizing and improving our financial outlook.

Continuing to put energy into fellowship opportunities.

Expanding our efforts to address the social and economic needs within the church family and neighborhood. Participating more actively in the wider ELCA efforts to sustain and renew God's world.

Partnership - How does this congregation or organization see itself as a member and active participant in the ELCA in America and the synod?

Many people in the congregation seem to be unaware of what the synod or the ELCA does locally and globally. Our financial support of the synod is minimal. In earlier years (prior to 1996), the congregation was a strong supporter/contributor to the synod, but the budget has gotten tighter, our contribution to the synod has been reduced to near nothing. Recent support of ELCA programs such as the Water Well program in Good Gifts may indicate an opportunity to change direction. We also look forward to restoring participation by our youth in ELCA Youth gatherings, locally and nationally.

PURPOSE, GIFTEDNESS AND MISSION – How does this congregation or organization understand its reason for being in light of God's call to mission and service? Who are you? Why are you here?

We understand that we are called to be disciples of Christ to grow and support each other in our faith, to be charitable with our assets, and to pass on our Christian faith to future generations. We desire to be connected to our past but also able to change and move forward to meet our future as a wellspring of Christian faith, hope and love. The congregation has adopted the following statements:

OUR VISION: We will be a wellspring of faith, hope and love.

OUR Mission:

We are a congregation inspired by Jesus Christ to bring God's message faith, hope and love into the world by:

- Creating a community, open to all yearning for a relationship with God and neighbor, offering what the world does not offer.
- Embracing the gifts and needs of our members as we grow in our community in Christ.
- Honoring our past, facing our future with courage and moving forward through grace.

Giftedness – What are your gifts and resources for fulfilling this purpose? What are the congregation's or organizations top three assets and how are

they being used? Are there obstacles that must be overcome to be able to use these gifts and accomplish the mission?

Our people, while respecting our heritage, are invigorated by the opportunity to engage in forward looking change. The congregation has a history of being hard-working and willing to stand by the church through all challenges. This expresses itself as having a genuine care for the church and its people.

Our location is unique; we are in an area that is on the edge of suburbia, yet clearly in a beautiful rural setting. Our history is rich. The church building is on the National Historic Registry and the congregation is proud of its historic role in the founding of Gustavus Adolphus College.

Mission In light of the way you have described your ministry context in the MSP, what are the top three mission priorities which, if accomplished, hold the most promise for the continued development of this ministry.

Our top priorities are lifelong learning and spiritual growth, youth and family involvement, and getting involved in social outreach in the greater community. We hope to grow our ministry by increasing our visibility in our surrounding community.

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION – Please describe your ministry setting and position.

We are a congregation in a rural location on the edge of suburban growth. We seek a full-time solo pastor who demonstrates visionary and spiritual leadership; effective preaching skills, ability with and passion for working with all members and age groups, and who possesses a deep commitment to the ELCA.

THE LEADER WE SEEK

We are open to interviewing either Ordained Clergy or someone In Candidacy/First Call

Solo Pastor, full time.

Education - Master's Degree from Seminary or Graduate School

Language – Speaks fluent English

Experience – A candidate with 0-15 years experience

TOP 5 MINISTRY TASKS

- Innovation/Creativity
- Pastoral Care and Visitation

- Youth and Family Ministry
- Preaching/Worship Leadership
- Stewardship

GIFTS FOR MINISTRY

TOP PRIORITY

- Help people develop their spiritual life.
- Be active in visitation of members and non-members
- Work regularly in the development of stewardship growth
- Be an effective communicator
- Be effective in working with youth

VERY HELPFUL

- Provide care and nurture
- Be an effective teacher
- Deal effectively with conflict
- Bring joy and good humor to relationships
- Be creative and innovative about his or her tasks

MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS

List the five primary areas of activity or focus that you wish your newly-called rostered leader to give special attention to during the first year of his or her ministry at this congregation

- Familiarize him/herself with the congregation
- Guidance and support of congregational stewardship
- Youth and family involvement
- Spiritual guidance
- Mission vision planning/church visibility

List five ways that this congregation will support and encourage the rostered leader during the first year in order to help her or him accomplish these responsibilities:

- Support our pastor with our prayers
- Open and honest support and communication
- Willingness to change
- Increase our giving of time and finances
- Participate in church worship and activities