

MINISTRY SITE PROFILE
First Evangelical Lutheran Church

Kearney, NE

Completed:



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

The Ministry Site Profile (MSP) is intended for use by congregations and church-related organizations that are seeking to call an ordained or lay rostered minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or a First Call candidate for rostered ministry. Congregations must complete the entire MSP. Church-related organizations may, with the concurrence of the synod bishop, complete only the required sections (Part I, III and IV).

Once complete, this form is submitted electronically to your synod bishop for review and posting to the "Current Openings" listing on the ELCA website (www.ELCA.org/call).

Summary Description

First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kearney, Nebraska is prayerfully seeking a full time Senior Pastor to lead our congregation. We are a larger congregation in a vibrant and progressive community. We seek a leader who loves Jesus, can bring joy and good humor to relationships, enhance worship and spiritual fulfillment for our members, and bring energy and momentum for our strategic vision and plan for the future.

PART I: WHO WE ARE

Name and Location

CONGREGATION

CONGREGATION/MULTIPLE POINT PARISH/ ORGANIZATION

Kearney, NE, 68847

CITY, STATE , ZIP

Nebraska Synod (4A)

SYNOD

Small city (10,000 - 49,999)

SIZE OF COMMUNITY

First Evangelical Lutheran Church

NAME

US

COUNTRY

Congregation - Organized

TYPE OF MINISTRY SITE

03401

CONG ID

1884

YEAR ORGANIZED

Contact Information

Ministry Site (preferred contact information)

3315 G. Ave.

ADDRESS LINE 1

ADDRESS LINE 2

Kearney, NE, 68847

CITY, STATE, ZIP

US

COUNTRY

office@firstlutherankearney.org

www.firstlutherankearney.org

WEB SITE

(308) 237-5544

PHONE

FAX

E-MAIL

Chairperson of Congregation or Head of the Organization

Kyle Means

NAME

811 15th Ave.

ADDRESS LINE 1

ADDRESS LINE 2

Kearney, NE, 68845

CITY, STATE, ZIP

US

COUNTRY

(308) 240-0014

EVENING PHONE

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CELL PHONE

FAX

DAY PHONE



k.r.means@gmail.com

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Chairperson of Call or Search Committee

Steve Boyer

NAME

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ADDRESS LINE 1

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CITY, STATE, ZIP

US

COUNTRY

(308) 440-0500

DAY PHONE

EVENING PHONE

CELL PHONE

FAX

sboyer59@gmail.com

E-MAIL

Demographics

Language Spoken

In the congregation/ organization

English

PRIMARY LANGUAGE

SECOND LANGUAGE

THIRD LANGUAGE

In the surrounding community

English

PRIMARY LANGUAGE

Spanish

SECOND LANGUAGE

THIRD LANGUAGE

Race/ Ethnicity (In the Congregation)

Caucasian (95%)

Other (5%)

LARGEST

SECOND

THIRD

FOURTH

COMMENTS OR EXPLANATION

Race/ Ethnicity (Surrounding Community)

Caucasian (95%)

Hispanic (5%)

LARGEST

SECOND

THIRD

FOURTH

COMMENTS OR EXPLANATION

Gender comparison

48%

52%

MALE

FEMALE

Age distribution

20%

15%

20%

25%

20%

19 YEARS OR YOUNGER

20 - 34

35 - 49

50 - 65

OVER 65

Number of Paid Staff

2

0

0

1

1

4

CLERGY

LAY ROSTERED

OTHER LAY PROFESSIONALS

SECRETARIAL SUPPORT

CUSTODIAL SUPPORT

OTHER

Congregational Information

251 - 400

101+

Single site

AVE WEEKLY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

AVE ATTENDANCE IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

PARISH TYPE



Distance members live from church facilities:

5%	30%	45%	20%
1/2 MILE OR LESS	1/2 - 1 MILE	1 - 3 MILES	MORE THAN 3 MILES

Community Type

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bedroom community | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College or University | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Farming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inner City | <input type="checkbox"/> Mining/logging | <input type="checkbox"/> Ranching |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industrial | <input type="checkbox"/> Resort | <input type="checkbox"/> Retirement |

Budget of the Congregation/ Organization

2015

	2015
\$802,838	LAST FISCAL YEAR
TOTAL BUDGET FOR THE LAST FISCAL YEAR	\$0
	TOTAL DEBT OF THE CONGREGATION/ ORGANIZATION AT THE END OF THE LAST FISCAL YEAR
\$50,466	\$1,722,367
MISSION SUPPORT TO THE ELCA/ SYNOD FOR THE LAST FISCAL YEAR	TOTAL SAVINGS, RESERVES, ENDOWMENT AT THE END OF THE LAST FISCAL YEAR

PART II: OUR VISION FOR MISSION

Trends in the Community Context of the Congregation or Organization

Characteristics:

Write a description of your community in terms of socio-economic status, demographics, primary areas of employment and lifestyle. The Demographic ZIP Code report for your primary ZIP codes may be helpful.

Kearney, Nebraska is a historic community with progressive people. It's a very safe place to raise a family. It's a growing community with one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country. We're also considered the second most affluent city in the state. Many people refer to Kearney as having small city charm with big city amenities. Citizens can enjoy ample shopping, dining and entertainment opportunities. One of the most appealing features of this community is the school system. Kearney provides very high quality education options with excellent facilities. A brand new high school facility opened in the fall of 2016. It is one of the finest educational buildings in the country. The University of Nebraska at Kearney offers an excellent and affordable higher education option in central Nebraska. UNK has enrollment close to 7,000 and is a point of pride in our community.

Kearney's larger employers include CHI Good Samaritan Hospital and UNK. There are several industrial businesses that employ high numbers such as Eaton Corporation and Baldwin Filters. Agriculture also plays a big role here with emphasis on water and land resources. The city is surrounded by fertile farm land.

The issue of a low unemployment rate is both a blessing and a challenge. There are over 700 unfilled jobs and employers are having a hard time filling them with quality applicants. This is partly due to a lack of skills training in technical fields – an issue that Kearney officials are working on and planning to solve in the near future with the help of a new Central Community College, planned Workforce Development Center, and new high-school level programs. Along with this, there is a median income problem that needs to be addressed in Kearney. As a community, we can do a better job of getting people to work and improving their skills and income. This could also help combat our 15% poverty issue.

The people of Kearney care about one another. We help our neighbors; we give generously of our time, resources, and talents; and we expect the best of our kids and for our kids. It's a truly amazing community filled with hard working, caring people.



Trends:

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

One change in recent years that is a tremendous blessing for our church is the payoff of our debt. We are debt free. It's a great position to be in and it's a credit to our wonderfully generous congregation. As such, we can focus on supporting other ministry opportunities without worry of debt. Our challenge now is to identify those ministry opportunities to be enhanced. With that said, we are just now starting conversations about a capital campaign project to improve our office space. This may or may not include taking on debt in a responsible way. The congregation is open to this idea and exploring the best options for approaching this effort.

Another trend that has developed in recent years is a decrease in regular attendance. We understand this is not a unique problem to our church, but it is disheartening for our congregation. We seek a pastor who can help us find ways to promote spiritual growth and teach us to be more proactive with inviting new people to worship.

In recent years there is a lack of clarity and communication regarding the responsibilities of our ministry teams. We have fallen into a habit of "doing things the same way because that's how it's always been done." Many would like to see more collaboration between ministry teams. A part of this is a need to develop new programs to breathe new life into the congregation and create opportunities for increased interaction. The people truly enjoy being together and uniting in social settings or to work on a church/community project, but at times we don't provide enough new opportunities for such interaction. Our church seeks pastoral leadership to guide us in this sense, recruiting and equipping leaders to carry out this effort.

Adding a fourth trend, due to the transition and coterminous status of our current Associate Pastor for Youth & Family, we will likely be changing our organizational structure for Children's and Youth Ministry. We are considering scaling back to a two-pastor structure (Senior Pastor + 1 Associate), whereas we were a three-pastor church for the last 6 years. Moving forward, this would require us to add a full-time, non-called staff position to oversee Christian Education, specifically focused on children and youth ministry. We seek a Sr. Pastor who can provide some guidance and direction for a full-time staff person in this area.

Context:

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.

Kearney has had a few areas that have posed challenges. One that is now solved was a high school building that was outdated and overcrowded. This was a serious issue that needed to be addressed. A committee was organized, and with the help of numerous volunteers a campaign was created to push for a brand new high school building. Two-and-a-half years ago, Kearney voted on a bond issue to approve funding of a new building, and the issue passed overwhelmingly. This reinforced our community's dedication to strong education for our children.

Another challenge is the large number of unfilled job openings. Many employers have struggled to keep qualified people on staff. Again, as mentioned before, it's an issue of skills training in technical fields. But plans are in place and efforts are being made to address this issue. It will take time and financial resources to completely eradicate this problem.

Finally, housing is a problem that has plagued Kearney for more than a few years now. Particularly, affordable low-income housing options have been scarce. However, a number of new apartment complexes and townhouses are being built around the city and this continues to be an area of focus for the city planning committee and developers in town.

One thing about Kearney...as a people, we face challenges head on. We don't let problems tear us apart. We work together to help others and create better opportunities for our community.

Programs:

Describe your congregation's or organization's current programs for mission and ministry.

YOUTH EDUCATION:

Preschool - A 3-4 year old class and Pre-K class make up the Pre-School that operates 4 days a week. It's a very successful program that serves families within the congregation and community.

Sunday School - Each week, we dig into God's Word with creative activities, group discussions, prayer and worship. Kids build healthy relationships with others and God.



Mid-Week Programming - Our FROG program (Fully Rely on God) provides an organized and fun look into God's Word through games, music and lessons to help youth better understand the story for the week. Each Wednesday night kicks off with a fellowship meal called "Feeding the Flock," followed by midweek worship service with youth.

Confirmation - 8th graders focus on the catechism and 6th-7th graders study the old & new testaments alternating years using Collaborate materials.

High School Youth Group - Different topics and studies are led by the Associate Pastor or adult volunteers. There are discussions and activities that enhance the lesson, as well as fun in the game room.

ADULT ED.

In recent years, we've done Creative Faith Bible studies where participants paint together. We've have a "Made to Crave" women's Bible study and exercise program to strengthen the mind, spirit and body. There have been dramatic plays, short skits, and even video series to visually tell a story, educate us, and entertain at the same time. In 2015, an Associate Pastor led a "Revelation" Bible study that was enlightening and spiritually uplifting. We have a Women of the ELCA group and other synod programs. Finally, the "Companions in Christ" program led by Connie Stover is getting rave reviews as it focuses on finding our spiritual gifts and intentionally using them to serve God.

There are also a variety of study groups and circles at FLC. There are 6 women's circle groups focused specifically on service projects.

SPECIAL MINISTRY & OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Outdoor Worship Service each summer, Rally Day & Ministry Fair, Chili & Cinnamon Roll Cook-off with Mystery Maze in October, Pre-School breakfast, Advent Fair, Holiday Brunch, Youth Christmas Program, etc.

Our congregation remains dedicated to serving others in the community. We regularly organize volunteers to help Habitat For Humanity, Jubilee Center, hospital visits, and more.

Dinners for Eight is a small group ministry that includes sharing a meal and fellowship.

Goals:

What are the primary goals of your ministry site (please refer to any Strategic Plan that has been adopted).

At First Lutheran, we recognize and accept that we are in a time of transition. During this time, we see opportunities to build and grow in our faith and service to God. One goal is to enhance our worship services so that they are more spiritually fulfilling and uplifting. We also wish to become a more unified congregation, focused on service to God and others in the community. We plan to improve our overall communication and visibility within the community, actively engaging with non-members, and inviting them into our faith community. We hope to strengthen youth programming and have our youth more visible in the church and community. We seek to be more Christ Centered with a focus on educating the congregation and equipping others to be disciples of God. Finally, we intend to be more supportive of the Synod, including their activities and mission efforts. Each of these goals requires spiritual growth, which our members crave.

Energy:

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

There is a lot of excitement around the "Companions in Christ" program that many have gotten involved in. This program, led by congregational member and synod staff member Connie Stover, is designed to help people recognize and act on their spiritual gifts. It shows others how to live more intentionally with a stronger focus on God, carrying out His will, and sharing His story. Those who have gone through the program rave about it and encourage others to get involved too. As more and more take part, the Spirit will grow throughout the church and the possibilities of where it takes us are endless. This is the most spiritual program at our church.

We received an estate gift from Dr. Stevenson who passed away a few years ago. Thanks be to God, he left the church more than \$1 million. As one could imagine, this was seen as a great blessing, but the responsibility of it was challenging. How should we plan to utilize this gift with a focus on God and doing the most good for the Church, community, and beyond? The 2014-15 council carefully and prayerfully crafted a plan to utilize this gift in accordance to His will. The plan was approved by the congregation in 2015. It will benefit the church for generations to come. We need to continue to communicate to the congregation about how God is leading us to use this gift according to His will.

Aside from that, the church is eager to establish a new pastoral team led by a charismatic, energetic, and passionate Senior Pastor. It's a critical time in our church's history. We've seen some decline in attendance, but there is a great opportunity to grow in numbers, grow in our faith, and grow in our service to God. We're excited to find a leader who will teach us, challenge us, guide us, and point us to the way of Christ. It's important that our next Senior Pastor models a passionate faith.



There are three things we seek at our church: That people feel God's presence when they worship; that people feel welcome and cared for; and finally, that people feel challenged to grow in their faith and service to God.

Partnership:

How does this congregation or organization see itself as a member and active participant in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the synod?

As a whole, our congregation is committed to the ELCA. We feel a strong connection to the Lutheran roots that are established within each of us. We have provided a wealth of support to our fellow ELCA organization in Kearney: Campus Lutheran. The partnership between First Lutheran and Campus Lutheran has been strong and beneficial for both sides. However, our Mission Share has been lower in recent years and our overall support could improve. This issue is coming to light throughout the congregation, and leaders within the church are rallying stronger support for the Synod. A Senior Pastor with commitment to the ELCA would undoubtedly help this effort.

With that said, we still participate in many synod events and programs. Members actively participate in synod assemblies, and our church coordinates support for the Synod Assembly when that event is held in Kearney. Women of the ELCA groups participate in cluster, state and national assemblies. Members have attended Synod Multicultural workshops, Agriculture meetings and other special meetings as called by the Bishop or his staff. Members actively support Lutheran World Relief and Mosaic of Nebraska.

Members actively participate in Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries and Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministries. Our youth consistently participate in National Youth Gatherings and Lutheran Youth of Nebraska events. Yet, these activities vary in support. We hope to encourage more youth to participate in camps and other opportunities. Our new Senior Pastor should show spiritual growth and bring focus to that area.



Ministry Site Characteristics

AS A COMMUNITY

	A LOT LIKE US	A LITTLE LIKE US	A LITTLE LIKE US	A LOT LIKE US	
We tend to be formal and programmatic.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We tend to be informal and spontaneous.
We have clearly defined goals and plans for our future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We have no stated goals or plans.
We are racially and economically diverse.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	We are demographically homogeneous.

OUR LEADERSHIP STYLE

We welcome ideas that are provoking and challenging.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We prefer ideas that are tried and true.
We rely on our leaders for direction.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We rely on group decision-making.
We have learned how to use conflict constructively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We tend to perceive conflict as something destructive.

OUR PROGRAMMING

Our facilities are often used by community groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Our facilities are only used for our activities.
We train people to minister outside our walls.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We train people to minister inside our walls.
We focus on ideas and beliefs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We focus on skills and action.

OUR THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

We are obviously Lutheran in identify and practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We are less obvious about our Lutheran heritage.
We participate in synod and ELCA activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We are not very active in the synod and ELCA.
We focus on Biblical studies and doctrine.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We focus on contemporary issues and topics.



Purpose, Giftedness and Mission

Purpose

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

Our Mission as a congregation is "Receiving God's Grace. Sharing God's Love. Uniting in Christ." Our purpose is "uniting as one to worship God, to follow Christ, and to share a spirit of love and service to others.

Our Core Values include "Inspiring Worship that connects us to God and others. Engaging Discipleship that invites us into a committed relationship with God and others. Compassionate Service that empowers us to be the body of Christ in our community and the world. And Radical Hospitality that welcomes others as Christ welcomes us."

First Lutheran is at its best when the people come together and unite as one body to serve God and others. We are intentionally prayerful and seek God's guidance and wisdom often. Having a strong leader to keep us on the same, clear path is crucial to our effectiveness as a congregation.

Giftedness

What are your gifts and resources for fulfilling this purpose? What are the congregation's or organization's 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?

One of our gifts is financial assistance. We are a very generous group that supports programs and efforts to serve God and enhance worship. We have been in a good financial position in recent years, yet we need to be challenged and encouraged in terms of Stewardship education and practices. It's important that we fully understand the deeper meaning of "why" we give and how it affects our overall mission. We seek a pastor who can keep us focused on the "why" when it comes to giving.

Secondly, we have a very strong group of volunteers who help keep things running smoothly. The care and love that people of the congregation show to God and others is very evident. We have a strong sense of responsibility to ensure all areas of the church are being taken care of according to God's will. However, the sense of volunteerism is not congregation wide. Rather, there are a finite number of people who continue to step up time and time again. One obstacle within this church is finding new volunteers. We admittedly struggle with intentionally asking new people to get involved with new opportunities. We hope that new church leadership can provide guidance and renew a spirit within us to volunteer faithfully and joyfully.

Thirdly, another asset at FLC is Children's Programming, particularly for younger kids. We have a tremendous Pre-School that serves families throughout the community. Our Sunday School is well run and provides excellent educational opportunities. We have a Wednesday evening F.R.O.G. program (Fully Relying On God) that is focused on teaching kids in a fun and interactive way. Our children's music programming is outstanding, and our children's music directors do incredible work with the kids. We have our elementary age kids and a middle school vocal group sing in church regularly, along with a youth bell choir. Plus, our Vacation Bible School has seen growth in volunteers and participants most years.

With that said, our Middle School and High School youth groups don't get as much dedicated attention for the size of our church. An obstacle to this is the need for more dedicated youth leaders who can focus primarily on continuing the education process from elementary level into a higher level for the older youth. We also need leadership to encourage parents to be more involved in their kids' spiritual growth. As mentioned earlier, a planned full-time position dedicated to this area would aid this effort tremendously.

Mission

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



B. STAFF ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE:

The Council has put together a subcommittee to review our staff organization and structure. Based on the plans that this subcommittee presents, we ask the Sr. Pastor to be influential in guiding these changes and maximizing the potential of our new staff structure. Ensuring that we have the right staff setup for this congregation is very important to the success of the church.

C. DEVELOP A PLAN AND VISION FOR YOUTH MINISTRY:

It is NOT the expectation that our Senior Pastor will lead the effort for Youth Ministry. However, this person should have a hand in creating an organized and progressive plan/vision to enhance this area. Our youth (middle school and high school aged) need to be more active and visible within the church and out in the community. They need guidance in learning about their faith and understanding how to live a more Christ centered life. A clearer expectation for dedicated leadership in this area is necessary. Yes, there has been an Associate Pastor for Youth & Family Ministry over the last 6 years, but this person has also been focused on other areas of ministry not directly related to her area of call which is Youth & Family ministry. Taking a different approach as this person transitions out of FLC is needed.

D. PASTORAL CARE AND VISITATION PLAN:

First Lutheran recently added a part time position for a Visitation Lay Person. We also started sending communion ministers to our homebound members, and started a new program called "Caring and Sharing" to help care for those in need and celebrate new joys. Building off of this, we ask the Senior Pastor to further develop a plan for effective ministry not only to call on the sick, hospitalized and homebound people of the church, but also to include ministry for the handicapped, elderly, grieving, troubled or those celebrating special occasions.

E. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT WITH A SPECIAL FOCUS ON SMALL GROUP MINISTRY:

The church is ready for new and innovative programs to provide spiritual growth and development. We're looking for a leader who can recruit and equip others to execute these programs. Participation in small group ministry has dwindled in recent years. It is our hope that the Senior Pastor can spend time and energy focusing on rejuvenating this important form of interactive fellowship.

****AND 1 MORE****

ENHANCING WORSHIP AND PREACHING

Two styles of worship exist at FLC: Traditional & Contemporary. There's a clear need for two styles based on congregational preference. However, some consideration has been given to an occasional blended worship as a way to bring the congregation together. People desire more spiritual fulfillment from worship and sermons each Sunday. We need to solidify our worship style rooted in Lutheran theology and focus on spiritually uplifting and inspiring worship.

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

A. EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES FOR PROFESSIONAL ADVANCEMENT:

We are a church that offers resources to help with professional advancement. Whether it be a need for more administrative training, conflict management, skills in technology, counseling, etc...we are willing and eager to provide the necessary resources for all of our staff.



B. CARE AND SUPPORT FROM OUR CHURCH LEADERSHIP:

At FLC, we pride ourselves on being a caring congregation. Our midwestern values of hard work and taking care of our friends and neighbors stands out. When it comes to supporting our church staff and leadership, we will lift them up in prayer, by offering our time and energy, or by any means necessary. Our church leadership is dedicated to ensuring a smooth transition and creating positive environment for the future. We are all willing to help and assist in any way possible. There is not an expectation that the Senior Pastor must act alone and assume all responsibility for the church. We prefer to work as a team, operating prayerfully with a clear focus and vision.

C. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION PLAN:

We have strong communications elements including E-blasts, newsletter, social media, live webstream of Sunday worship services and more. We are fortunate to have a talented communications specialist on staff to help in these areas. However, through research and feedback from the congregation, we've determined that FLC is not as visible in the community as it could be. Therefore, with the help of volunteer assistance from marketing professionals within our congregation, we intend to create a marketing plan. This plan will focus on spotlighting the worship opportunities and programs at FLC. We will also spotlight the works of our pastoral staff and congregation in the community. By doing this, we hope to draw in new members to FLC and provide opportunities to share God's Word beyond the walls of the church. Having these plans in place will allow the Sr. Pastor to focus on ministry and not feel as much pressure to build regular attendance.

D. REQUEST ASSISTANCE FROM THE SYNOD:

We recognize the support and assistance that the Synod can offer. They have a great staff who have expertise in handling many situations that churches deal with. At First Lutheran, we will not hesitate to bring the Synod in to help in any way necessary. We intend to continue growing our relationship with the Synod both financially and spiritually.

E. ENHANCING ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS

First Lutheran Church proudly held a joint Thanksgiving Eve worship service with congregations from multiple churches in Kearney in November of 2015. As a part of this, there was tremendous collaboration between pastors and ministers from these churches. It's our hope that this type of ecumenical support and interaction can continue. This would support the new Senior Pastor by having a network of industry professionals to collaborate and interact with.

Compensation

No	Yes
PARSONAGE	SOCIAL SECURITY TAX OFFSET
Synod Guidelines	
MAXIMUM AMOUNT AVAILABLE FOR DEFINED COMPENSATION	

Benefits

Yes	Yes	4 weeks
PENSION	MEDICAL	VACATION WEEKS
No	Yes	
SABBATICAL POLICY	PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY	
Yes		
ARE BACKGROUND CHECKS REQUIRED		



Professional Expenses

Yes	Yes
_____ AUTO / TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT	_____ PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES ACCOUNT
Yes	Yes
_____ FIRST CALL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION	_____ CONTINUING EDUCATION

Comments:

Please offer any comment or explanation regarding the compensation package, especially as it compares to synodical recommendations or guidelines.

We include a housing allowance as part of the salary package.

Other Supporting Resources

Are you able to supply the following items, if requested?

Mission and Vision statement of the congregation or organization	Yes
Printed history of the congregation or organization	Yes
Strategic Plan: Goals and Objectives	No
Budget	Yes
Annual Report	Yes
Position description: Duties and Responsibilities	Yes
Communications Piece (publicity, newsletter, etc.)	Yes

PART IV: COMMENTARY

You are encouraged to offer information or commentary that will help the reader appreciate the vision, opportunities, challenges and nature of your ministry site. Use this opportunity to creatively promote and commend your ministry possibilities.

GENERAL COMMENTARY

As mentioned at the end of the ENERGY section, there are three things we seek as a church: That people feel God's presence when they worship; that people feel welcome and cared for; and finally, that people feel challenged to grow in their faith and service to God. There's a sense within our church that we're falling short in each of these areas. Therefore, we seek a Sr. Pastor who has the right mix of skills and abilities to lift us up in these ways. We're not a perfect church and we pray that God presents a Sr. Pastor to us who is eager to take on a challenge and make a difference with a congregation that has tremendous potential to do amazing things in Christ's name.

UNHEALTHY COMMUNICATION AND TRIANGULATION

It's important to point out an area that we have worked on very diligently over the past 6 months. Early in 2016, we started recognizing more and more unhealthy communication taking place. This was happening some within the congregation, but also within the staff. It was determined that this unhealthy culture had been going on for some time - long before our transition period began - but the time of transition seemed to bring out additional triangulated conversations.

Through thoughtful and prayerful evaluation and decision making, we worked to solve the problem. Our church council faced this issue head-on. We started educating and pointing out what triangulation really means and how detrimental it can be within a church. We sought Synod help and support to get us back on a healthy track. The Synod office assigned another Senior Pastor from this region as a 3rd party consultant to conduct a thorough review of our church and offer recommendations for changes. We also made some difficult decisions to let certain staff go. We continue to promote positive ways to handle conflict and healthy ways to communicate. We are happy with the progress made, but we know it will take a very intentional effort to keep us on the right track. Although it was a difficult process, we are very glad to have this issue out in the open so we can address it appropriately. Because of this, we feel more prepared to accept a new Sr.



Pastor into a healthier environment.

STRATEGIC PLAN & VISION

One hope that FLC leadership has is to create a proactive plan for the future. We don't currently have a strategic plan or vision written out. However, there is a strong desire (due in part to information gathered during this transition phase) to create an organized and well thought-out plan that we can all focus on and work towards. To restate our Purpose Statement of having "Inspiring Worship, Engaging Discipleship, Compassionate Service and Radical Hospitality," we will use this as the foundation for our larger vision. We need a Senior Pastor who can help us frame our strategic plan and lead our efforts to carry it out. This would be a great way to bring Ministry Teams together, bring the congregation together, and help us take more of a unified and proactive approach to everything we do in God's name. Ultimately, we want to break the mold of "doing things the same way" and, instead, blaze new trails for the future.

WORSHIP STYLE COMMENTARY

As mentioned in some of the responses throughout this profile, our traditional vs. contemporary worship style has created a feeling of separation in the congregation. Our traditional worship service takes place at 6 p.m. on Saturdays and 8:45 a.m. on Sunday mornings. Then, the contemporary service is at 11 a.m. on Sundays (10:30 a.m. in the summer). We understand that there will always be some separation in the congregation based on "early service vs. late service" people who rarely cross paths. But can we get beyond that "us vs. them" mentality and embrace the fact that people have different preferences in worship style and that's OK?

Some history about the evolution of our contemporary service:

As we started to hear more and more about families leaving the church to experience contemporary worship styles at other churches in town, we realized that we had to make a change. A new generation of worshipers were calling for a new style of worship. FLC had initiated a music group called "Hearts Alive" that provided contemporary music once a month. That service took on a more blended style with contemporary music.

Over time, our church leadership decided to add a more contemporary service every Sunday. Our contemporary service began in 2010. It added a 4th service to the mix with a traditional 8:30 service, contemporary 9:45 service and traditional 11:00 service. This was simply too many services and spread our congregation thin at each one. It was also a problem that Sunday School Teachers were not able to attend contemporary service and some families would have their kids in Sunday School while the adults attended service. This led to fewer kids in church each week. After a short while, the church decided to go back to two services, with a traditional early service and late contemporary service, which is what we continue with today.

Survey results show that there is a clear need for two services. There is a demographic that really feels attached to the traditional style and another demographic that has a strong connection to contemporary. However, the contemporary still feels new and continues to be tweaked and adjusted. We need a Senior Pastor who can bring a consistent and settled feeling to the outline of the contemporary service. Furthermore, we need to create more opportunities for the entire church to come together for worship, community projects and other events. This is not a crippling issue in the church, but rather an "unsettled" feeling that comes up regularly in conversation and discussion.

PASTORAL TURNOVER AT FIRST LUTHERAN (2000 to 2007)

First Lutheran Church has a long history of 132 years in Kearney. Long-time members often reminisce of previous pastors who passionately and effectively guided this church for decades. We had the luxury of long-term pastors throughout the 20th century. And our last Senior Pastor served for 8 years, from 2007 to 2015. However, from 2000 to 2007, we had 2 different Senior Pastors interchanged with 3 different interim Senior Pastors, not to mention various Associate Pastors and interns during that stretch. The high turnover rate was related to a variety of different issues that were not completely related. We bring this issue to light because we don't want it to come as a surprise for any pastor who would consider a call to FLC. Each situation can be explained. However, naturally, it has created some degree of fear and distrust among our long-term members who experienced it. For any pastoral candidate who wants more information and explanation of this era, we will graciously honor that request.

PART V: COMPLETION OF PROFILE

Discernment Process and Adoption



Please describe the process used to gather information, formulate responses, and officially adopt this Ministry Site Profile. (Approximately 100 words maximum).

Elected leaders from the FLC congregation, with guidance from the Synod and our Transitional Sr. Pastor, worked together to prayerfully gather information used to write this MSP. The process included:

"Listening Sessions" - Five different meetings of 15-25 congregational members and HS youth where each member was given an opportunity to speak their mind including hopes, dreams, aspirations, concerns and frustrations within the church. In all, nearly 100 different people participated. A full report was written and is available upon request.

"Telling Our Story Event" - This one day event was executed according to the instructions provided by the Synod. Approximately 80 people participated and put together a history of the church with key notes from each era. By reviewing where the church has been, we were able to more clearly see where we are headed.

"Church Evaluation Survey" - The council conducted a written and electronic survey with more than 120 responses.

Enter the date on which this Ministry Site Profile was adopted by vote of the Congregation Council or organization's board: **10/11/2016**

CALL PROCESS ADMINISTRATOR

The name of the person on the synod staff that the bishop has designated as the Call Process Administrator for this call process.

Pastor Steve Meysing

NAME

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**Assistant to the Bishop -
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