

MINISTRY SITE PROFILE
Swamp Lutheran Church

Reinholds, PA

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 a 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

Our Evangelical Lutheran congregation has been serving this pleasant countryside of northern Lancaster County for 214 years. The current congregation, many of whom are descendants of the original German settlers, feel blessed to be able to worship in a large sanctuary and to fellowship in an attached social building with Christian Education rooms and a commercial sized kitchen. A congregation that embraces diversity, we are seeking a forward-thinking pastor to energize our congregation, further ignite our spiritual growth and increase our attendance with strong youth programs. It is important that the pastor nourishes our spiritual needs as we joyfully provide spiritual and physical food for those in need.

PART I: WHO WE ARE

Name and Location

CONGREGATION

CONGREGATION/MULTIPLE POINT PARISH/ ORGANIZATION

Reinholds, PA, 17569

CITY, STATE , ZIP

Lower Susquehanna Synod (8D)

SYNOD

Rural

SIZE OF COMMUNITY

Swamp Lutheran Church

NAME

US

COUNTRY

Congregation - Organized

TYPE OF MINISTRY SITE

01301

CONG ID

1806

YEAR ORGANIZED

Contact Information

Ministry Site (preferred contact information)

275 Swamp Church Road

ADDRESS LINE 1

secretary@swamplutheran.org

E-MAIL

Chairperson of Congregation or Head of the Organization

Lori Gockley

NAME

62 Robert Road

ADDRESS LINE 1

(717) 203-8551

Reinholds, PA, 17569

CITY, STATE, ZIP

(717) 336-2849

PHONE

Ephrata, PA, 17522

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US

COUNTRY

FAX

US

COUNTRY



DAY PHONE	EVENING PHONE	CELL PHONE	FAX
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lgockley2@gmail.com

E-MAIL

Chairperson of Call or Search Committee

David M Sauder

NAME

524 S 6th Street

Denver, PA, 17517

US

ADDRESS LINE 1

ADDRESS LINE 2

CITY, STATE, ZIP

COUNTRY

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dmsauder@armstrongceilings.com

E-MAIL

Demographics

Language Spoken

In the congregation/ organization

English

PRIMARY LANGUAGE

SECOND LANGUAGE

THIRD LANGUAGE

In the surrounding community

English

PRIMARY LANGUAGE

SECOND LANGUAGE

THIRD LANGUAGE

Race/Ethnicity (In the Congregation)

Caucasian (95%)

African American/Black (5%)

LARGEST

SECOND

THIRD

FOURTH

COMMENTS OR EXPLANATION

Race/Ethnicity (Surrounding Community)

Caucasian (90%)

Other (10%)

LARGEST

SECOND

THIRD

FOURTH

COMMENTS OR EXPLANATION

Gender comparison

48%

52%

MALE

FEMALE

Age distribution

15%

20%

15%

25%

25%

19 YEARS OR YOUNGER

20 - 34

35 - 49

50 - 65

OVER 65

Number of Paid Staff

1

0

0

1

1

2

Ministers of Word and Sacrament (PASTORS)

Ministers of Word and Service (DEACONS)

OTHER LAY PROFESSIONALS

SECRETARIAL SUPPORT

CUSTODIAL SUPPORT

OTHER



Congregational Information

151 - 250

0 - 25

Single site

AVE WEEKLY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

AVE ATTENDANCE IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

PARISH TYPE

Distance members live from church facilities:

0%

10%

30%

60%

Community Type

1/2 MILE OR LESS

1/2 - 1 MILE

1 - 3 MILES

MORE THAN 3 MILES

- Suburban
- Inner City
- Industrial

- College or University
- Mining/logging
- Resort

- Farming
- Ranching
- Retirement

Budget of the Congregation/ Organization

2019

\$381,284

TOTAL BUDGET FOR THE LAST FISCAL YEAR

\$30,695

MISSION SUPPORT TO THE ELCA/ SYNOD FOR THE LAST FISCAL YEAR

LAST FISCAL YEAR

\$0

TOTAL DEBT OF THE CONGREGATION/ ORGANIZATION AT THE END OF THE LAST FISCAL YEAR

\$386,116

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.

Current congregants of Swamp Church reside primarily in a ten-mile radius of a tri-county area consisting of a few boroughs and numerous small villages and hamlets. A large portion of the land area is devoted to agriculture. In addition to agriculture, numerous small-scale manufacturing companies exist together with a variety of professional and service-related businesses.

Until recently, the area was populated largely by descendants of original German-speaking settlers. Although that still represents most of the population, within the past 10 -20 years there has been an influx of residents from outside the original German descendency. The area still consists of about 95% all-Caucasian residents although the more recent population includes some Latino, African American, and Asian-American families.

Based on a comparison to most recent Federal US census records, the area represents a middle-class community. Median household income for the area was \$65,300 compared to the national median of \$68,703. Poverty rate was 7.7% compared to the national average of 10.5%. About 75% of the housing was owner-occupied.

Of those persons 25 years and older, about 83% held a high school diploma or equivalent. About 20% held a bachelor's degree or higher. About 85% of households owned a computer and more than 75% of that population possessed broadband internet subscriptions.

Trends:

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



One of the most significant trends in the Swamp congregation over the past five years has been our enthusiastic support of several outreach programs. We have partnered with other secular and religious organizations to serve those in need in the community at large. This includes our partnership with the Ephrata Area Social Services providing food and other basic necessities. We have partnered with several other local congregations in supporting the work of Love, Inc and Homes of Hope in providing temporary housing, financial counseling and spiritual mentoring to families who might otherwise find themselves homeless. During the current coronavirus pandemic, at no charge to the recipient families, we together with local businesses and organizations have prepared and distributed 2,200 meals. Throughout the year contributions are made to the Pastor's Action Fund, a system to respond to calls to the pastor for some type of support e.g., heating oil, food, clothing, etc. that may be appropriated with discretion.

Although our attendance at worship services has been stable during the past three years, like many mainline churches, attendance has declined since earlier years. The biggest impact has been the shortage of young families. It appears that younger families are not fully engaged in the life of the church because of other commitments. As a result, youth attendance at worship services and church-sponsored activities has been declining. Those who do attend are dedicated but, need a critical mass to achieve enthusiastic endorsement of the programs currently offered.

Context:

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

Being close to the Pennsylvania Turnpike and to other major highways facilitates the commute of long distances to employment near several area cities (Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Allentown, and Baltimore). Having that mobility does put a strain on housing prices and affordable rental units for young families. Additionally, because of lengthy commuting times, that mobility creates a challenge for working class families with varying schedules. An ongoing trend is that working families have less time to volunteer and children's non-church related activities are held on Sundays.

Another challenge is that large and multi-site non-denominational churches have developed in our area. These churches appeal to younger families that move or currently reside here. These sites provide a multitude of options for worship including various days and times of the week. Some elements of today's society, particularly younger families, seem attracted to churches where, unlike Lutheran traditional liturgies, there is little or no congregational response.

Programs:

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

Called by the Holy Spirit to demonstrate God's grace and love, Swamp's congregation maintains a legacy of well supported programs in our Church. Each program has a supporting group of volunteers and a liaison that reports to church council monthly.

Our outreach missions include those within the local community as well as outside the local area. Some examples of outreach missions include: mission trips to support areas devastated by natural disasters, Lutheran World Relief, community meals, support of activities at extended care facilities, partnerships with the Ephrata Area Social Services, Love Inc. and an action fund to support families in need.

Some examples of our in-reach missions include prayer chains for our congregation, cards to the prayer list and shut-in, birthday cards to the elderly, gift baskets for special occasions, senior citizens banquet, Mother's Day and Father's Day gifts, graduate gifts, game night and a church picnic.

Our worship committee meets regularly to assure that worship is a unifying event in the life of the congregation at Swamp Lutheran. They regularly plan services, music and special events, openly discuss suggestions to the church council and solicit feedback from the congregation. The worship committee strives to strike a balance between those that seek a more formal Lutheran worship and those that prefer a less formal way of worship.

Our supporting missions include a strong financial committee, which includes dual treasurers and a financial secretary that help manage the budget, pay bills, report to our church council and congregation and maintain the overall health of our church financial assets. Additionally, we have a best in class property committee that uses their spiritual gifts from God to take care of many of the church property needs themselves. The committee recommends church property improvements, continuously repairs items that need maintained, look for areas to reduce costs, handle snow removal, and any other activities to upkeep our well-maintained facility.

As mentioned prior, our Youth and Learning mission is the one most in need of being revitalized with an influx of younger families. These missions have traditionally had strong Sunday School programs and leadership, vacation



bible school, confirmation camp, and activities to excite our youth throughout the year. We've also utilized programs to help our youth engage in service activities and share God's love.

Goals:

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

A principal mantra at Swamp is "Grace is Spoken Here". One of our goals is to exhibit appreciation for His Grace by strengthening our discipleship and to develop deeper personal relationships with Jesus Christ.

A second goal is to increase young family and youth attendance at worship service and church-sponsored activities.

Another goal is to continue and grow our community outreach programs.

Finally, but certainly not least, is the development of a strategic plan. Having a well-defined strategic plan will better enable Swamp to achieve the goals cited above, as well as, others not defined.

Energy:

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

The congregation at Swamp is excited about calling a pastor who will lead us to new diverse opportunities for worship and ministry. Although we were very emotional about the retirement of our beloved pastor who served us for 50 years, we look forward to new horizons afforded by a change in pastoral care. We are open to new direction and approaches to worship and mission.

We, at Swamp, embrace the idea that outreach is a form of discipleship. Therefore, we plan to continue with the many programs cited above. When needed, new programs will be added, and existing programs expanded. As an example of intergenerational congeniality at Swamp, our Kitchen/Helping Hands Committee always stands at the ready to provide a variety of services in a compassionate, joyful, and humorous manner. A few of their offerings include but are not limited to Lenten Breakfasts, Ash Wednesday suppers, Brunch with Santa, Senior Citizen's Banquet, funeral luncheons, and others already identified in the Program Section above.

Excitement is also demonstrated by our youth through a variety of activities that nourish the seeds of discipleship as they grow in Christ. They are a small, but mighty, group that willingly spreads God's love to others. Activities include Sunday School Rally Day, Christmas programs, Touch A Truck, community Easter egg hunt, Vacation Bible School, and numerous youth activities. Our youth group participates in ELCA Youth Gatherings, LWR school kits, assembly of fruit baskets for shut-ins, "Souper" Bowl Sunday, assistance at church dinners, collection of monthly Disaster Response donations, and disaster response trips.

We are also excited about the growth potential of our church and seeing young people come through our doors so we can strengthen our Sunday School classes and catechetical programs.

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?

Swamp Evangelical Lutheran Church actively participates in Lower Susquehanna Synod assemblies and in national ELCA Youth gatherings. During the past 50 years, we have never failed to meet our financial dedication to synodical benevolence. Swamp has been a member of CALM (Cocalico Area Lutheran Ministerium) since its inception. That organization is comprised of six Lutheran congregations within a ten-mile radius. Swamp members have consistently partnered with other local churches and organizations in various disaster relief efforts including the building of 3 habitat for humanity houses.



Ministry Site Characteristics

AS A COMMUNITY

A LOT LIKE US	A LITTLE LIKE US	A LITTLE LIKE US	A LOT LIKE US
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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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We tend to perceive conflict as something destructive.

OUR PROGRAMMING

Our facilities are often used by community groups.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We focus on skills and action.

OUR THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

We are obviously Lutheran in identify and practice.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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.



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| <input type="checkbox"/> Chaplaincy | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Ministry | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Christian Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications/ Media | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Organizing | <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling/ Social Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood Administration | <input type="checkbox"/> Ecumenical Work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evangelism/ Mission | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Global Service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Innovation / Creativity | <input type="checkbox"/> Interim Ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Interpret Theology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inter-personal Climate | <input type="checkbox"/> Ministry in Crisis | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ministry in Daily Life |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ministry with Seniors | <input type="checkbox"/> Multicultural Ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Music / Worship / Arts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor/ Camping Ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Parish Nurse / Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Participant in the Larger Church |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pastoral Care and Visitation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preaching / Worship | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Policy / Advocacy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recruit and Equip Leaders | <input type="checkbox"/> Self Care / Family Life | <input type="checkbox"/> Small Group Ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual Formation / Direction | <input type="checkbox"/> Stewardship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Mission Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Coordination |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Youth and Family Ministry | | |

Gifts for Ministry

The five gifts essential in this position, and the five that are very helpful in this position.

Top Priority		Very Helpful
Yes	Help people develop their spiritual life.	
	Help people understand and act upon issues of social justice.	
	Provide care and nurture.	
	Be active in visitation of members and non-members.	Yes
	Be effective in working with children.	Yes
Yes	Build a sense of community among the people with whom he/she works.	
	Help others develop their leadership abilities and skills for ministry.	
	Be an effective administrator.	
Yes	Be an effective communicator.	
Yes	Be an effective teacher.	
	Encourage support of the Church's wider mission.	
	Work regularly in the development of stewardship growth.	
	Be active in ecumenical relationships.	
Yes	Be effective in working with youth.	
	Organize people for community action.	
	Be skilled in planning and leading programs.	
	Have a strong commitment and loyalty to the ELCA.	Yes
	Understand and interpret the mission of the Church from a global perspective.	
	Deal effectively with conflict.	



Bring joy and good humor to relationships.	Yes
Be able to share leadership and work in a team.	Yes
Be creative and innovative about his or her tasks.	
Be able to use technology and media.	
Appreciate cultural diversity in language and customs.	
Have talents in the areas of music, arts and writing.	

Mutual Expectations

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

- A. Develop relationship with church council, committee leaders and our congregation**
- B. Assist Church Leadership in Goal Setting**
- C. Provide direction and help develop the Catechetical learning program**
- D. Explore additional worship options that are attractive to young families and others in our community**
- E. Expand upon Christian education options**

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

- A. Hold new pastor and congregation in prayer as we transition together, trusting the Lord to lead us**
- B. Call committee members will support transition**
- C. Officers of the congregation and church council will be accessible to the new pastor to provide guidance, leadership, and support**
- D. Receptive to suggestions/ideas/programs to fully utilize our talents and facilities**
- E. Embrace new ideas to fulfill our mission and goals**

Compensation

No	Yes
PARSONAGE	SOCIAL SECURITY TAX OFFSET
\$60,000 - \$65,000	
MAXIMUM AMOUNT AVAILABLE FOR DEFINED COMPENSATION	

Benefits

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



Professional Expenses

Yes	No
_____ AUTO / TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT	_____ PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES ACCOUNT
No	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.

While we do not currently have a parental leave policy, we are open to developing one if the need should arrive. We do not provide a professional expense account per say, but do have numerous pastoral items included in our budget that would cover these type of expenses.

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.

A fire during the winter of 2010 destroyed our fellowship hall and educational wing. Fortunately, the "Breath of God" (the theme of our Sanctuary's stained-glass window) forced the wind in the opposite direction from the attached sanctuary and saved it. An upgraded building was constructed with new educational classrooms, a music room, a large fellowship hall and commercial-grade kitchen. The fellowship hall, with a capacity of approximately 200, provides outside groups/organizations an opportunity for a variety of functions.

In addition to our modern spacious indoor facilities, we own a total of 9 acres of ground for outdoor activities. We welcome the use of this space by outside families/groups as well as for our own congregants. Included in this acreage is a baseball diamond, playground, and a Boy Scout building. We have recently installed a drive-up kiosk with a self-serve mini-food bank and books for community use.

Music is a ministry not mentioned elsewhere in this MSP but must not be dismissed. Music is an essential ingredient in the life at Swamp. We are blessed with a dedicated choir lead by an experienced organist/choir director. In addition to leading the congregation in the liturgy and hymns, the choir sings a different anthem each Sunday at one of the two Sunday worship services. We are also blessed with a fine bell choir directed by a retired music educator. Our bell choir performs prelude and offertory music during frequent worship services. They have also been invited to perform at other venues. In addition to these two ensembles, we occasionally invite musical groups and soloists to our worship services. During the Christmas season, the congregation and guests look forward to the "Night of Music" that features intergenerational musical talents of the congregation.

We have the room, both inside and out to expand our programs and become a more vital part of the community. All are welcome to worship with us as our congregation embraces diversity and visitors will find our intergenerational congregation to be warm, friendly, inviting and with good sense of humor.

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).

The Swamp Lutheran Church Council selected and voted on a proposed call committee, which was then approved by the church congregation. The call committee prayed over and discussed the Ministry Site Profile at length. Upon initial review and discussions of the MSP, the call committee followed multiple processes to complete the MSP. Those options included: drafting some of the content for the more general paragraphs of the MSP, utilizing a survey of church council to complete the "Ministry Site Characteristics" and utilizing a congregation survey to complete the "Top Five Ministry Tasks" and "Ten Gifts for Ministry". The Mission Site profile was presented to the Church Council for input during draft mode, as well as the congregation for review and feedback. The MSP was then approved by the Church Council.

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

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.

Reverend Beth Martini

Assistant to the Bishop

NAME

TITLE



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bmartini@lss-elca.org

E-MAIL

Reference's Recommendation

Reverend Bonnie Oplinger

NAME

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