

## **DRAFT Ministry Site Profile**

### **(to be finalized after July 16, 2017 presentation)**

This is the text that will be included in the Synod's template that candidates will review to learn about St. Mark's and the Lead Pastor position.

**Summary Description:** Please describe your ministry setting and position opening in 75 words or less. This is the brief description that will be publicized.

We seek a bold Senior/Lead Pastor to help us identify opportunities to share the word of God both inside and outside our walls. While some look forward to change, we must also honor our heritage and those who embrace it. St. Mark's seeks an encouraging, passionate, dynamic leader who is inspiring to all ages. We strive to find someone who Christ calls to St. Mark's, and who shares our excitement and passion about the future.

#### **Part 1: Who We Are**

##### **Section 5. 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.

St. Mark's serves multiple communities, including North St. Paul, Maplewood, Oakdale, Woodbury, Stillwater, Hugo, White Bear Lake, St. Paul, and others. Data from school district #622 (North St. Paul, Maplewood, Oakdale) shows the following: Limited English proficiency at 11% with 50 different languages spoken; free and reduced price school lunch for 55% of the students; 3.2% are homeless.

Demographic information indicates that North St. Paul's population will remain fairly consistent at around 12,000 through 2030 and 2040, while the Twin Cities Region overall will grow during that same period. The number of households in North St. Paul are predicted to grow and employment is predicted to rise. Household income varies with 31.8% at less than \$35,000, and 20.6% at \$100,000 or more, with the balance relatively evenly distributed in between. Fifteen percent of residents live below the poverty line.

Employment data shows a wide variety of industries with the higher employment numbers being in health care and social assistance, retail trade, educational services, and manufacturing.

**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.

Our community has changing demographics. There is a more diverse population than in the past. Nearly 130 years ago, when St. Mark's was getting started they boldly decided that they would speak English at this congregation (not German or Swedish as the practice was at the time). Now in neighboring Oakdale, the First Karen Baptist Church is well-established. Race and ethnicity statistics for

North St. Paul show people of color at over 25% of the population; “English only” households are at 85%.

People in general are seeking different worship experiences. “Membership” is not as important as in the past, and “regular attendance” now might mean once a month or so, rather than weekly. In surrounding suburbs, mega church Eagle Brook has six locations with a live sermon at one that is broadcast to the other five.

As it is everywhere, the population is aging. A large senior housing complex was built in North St. Paul. As older folks move out of their single-family homes, younger families are buying them as starter homes.

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

After several years of declining attendance at St. Mark’s, the last few years have shown more stable attendance at around 390 per week. Regular giving per confirmed member has increased the last two years. St. Mark’s has successfully promoted online giving; we also have a kiosk available in the narthex.

Three years ago St. Mark’s was in the process of calling a senior pastor. In April 2015 our new pastor started. What we expected to be a relatively long-term relationship with this pastor ended after two years. This has had an impact on the congregation, affecting members in different ways including hurt feelings, anger, and lack of trust to a certain degree. We are in need of some healing and are thankful to have Pastor Tom Hansen as our interim pastor to help us move through that healing and look forward with hope and expectation to what God has planned for us.

We have had other turnover as well. Our long-term music director left two years ago. The new director has established herself with the choirs and congregation. Our youth director position had been filled by a Luther Seminary student. She graduated and moved on to other things and in the last year or so we hired a part-time youth director who is connecting well with the youth of St. Mark’s. We also have a new part-time receptionist in the office.

**Programs:** Describe your congregation’s current programs for mission and ministry.

St. Mark’s has many programs for mission and ministry. We are happy to be growing our Children, Youth and Family programs, and see them as distinctive compared to other churches. As mentioned earlier, our new youth director is making a strong connection with our youth.

One of our unique mission programs in the community includes a partnership with North High School, which is across the street, where we participate in the Polar Pack Program. Members of St. Mark’s provide a backpack full of weekend meals for North students in need and their families.

We have a long-standing relationship with two international mission programs – the Iringa Diocese in Tanzania and the Reach Orphanage in Bapatla, India.

We are proud of our drama program which involves community members as well as members of St. Mark’s in both the productions and the audience.

We also have a variety of bible study and other small -group opportunities – a long-standing men’s group, several women’s groups, along with pastor/intern-led groups. We have people who make quilts, prayer shawls, and soup for Soup Sunday fundraisers.

We have a Wednesday evening service, followed by confirmation classes. When we noticed a lot of harried families arriving with take-out food and eating on the run, we started providing dinner before the worship service. This has been a big success and has created a nice sense of community as people gather together for dinner and conversation.

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

Our current mission statement is Bringing Jesus to People and People to Him by providing excellent worship, education and relationships. This mission statement has served us well for many years, but we are interested in developing a new statement and logo (and brand, if I may use that business term).

We have a strategic plan that has been presented to the council, the staff and the congregation, but with leadership changes and other distractions, we have not implemented the plan as we had intended. We look forward to working on this with our new pastor.

Our goal is to grow God’s kingdom. The three pillars that support that goal are (1) building a dynamic and engaged community, (2) creating relevant acts of worship and service, and (3) encouraging generosity of time, talents and treasures.

**Energy:** What is your congregation really excited about right now?

The Transition Team prepared a survey and asked the congregation about this and other related issues. We were pleased to have 88 people respond to the survey and 62 responded to this particular question.

The strongest responses were around children and youth ministries. Many members know the value of being involved in church at a young age and are excited about how St. Mark’s supports and continues that ministry.

Another very strong area of response was around community involvement, social change, and relevance in our community. Although St. Mark’s does this and is excited about it, the Transition Team talked about how we could do much more in this area. There are pockets of people who are anxious to help make that happen.

People are excited about our music program and they are excited about finding our next pastor.

A few people said they were not excited about much of anything, and find things rather stale and not relevant. We could tap into those people to help with the social change and community involvement mentioned above.

The Transition Team had a lengthy discussion about the survey results. Many of us started working on a Visioning Team several years ago. When the senior pastor position was going to be open, this Visioning Team shifted gears and became the Transition Team. After that we went back to work on the strategic plan. When our last new pastor started, we met with her and then shared the strategic plan with

council, staff and the congregation. However, the plan was put on the back burner; now we have transition again. It feels like we've been "stuck" for too long and we need movement.

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

We provide voting members to the Synod Assembly each year. We make our benevolence a budget priority. We value our association with the Synod in our intern program and we take seriously training and encouraging new pastoral leadership. We hope to continue that in the future. We also participate globally with the Iringa Diocese in Tanzania and support the Reach Orphanage in Bapatla, India.

**Part II: Ministry Site Characteristics** (shaded areas indicate changes from last MSP)

**As A Community**

We tend to be formal and programmatic	A little like us		We tend to be informal and spontaneous
We have clearly defined goals and plans for our future		A little like us	We have no stated goals or plans
We are racially and economically diverse		A lot like us	We are demographically homogeneous

**Our Leadership Style**

We welcome ideas that are provoking and challenging		A little like us	We prefer ideas that are tried and true
We rely on our leaders for direction	A little like us		We rely on group decision making
We have learned how to use conflict constructively	A little like us		We tend to perceive conflict as something destructive

**Our Programming**

Our facilities are often used by community groups		A little like us	Our facilities are only used for our activities
We train people to minister outside our walls		A little like us	We train people to minister inside our walls
We focus on ideas and beliefs	A little like us		We focus on skills and action

**Our Theological Perspective**

We are obviously Lutheran in identity and practice	A lot like us		We are less obvious about our Lutheran heritage
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We participate in synod and ELCA activities		A little like us	We are not very active in the synod and ELCA
We focus on Biblical studies and doctrine	A little like us		We focus on contemporary issues and topics

**Purpose:** How does this congregation understand its reason for being in light of God’s call to mission and service? Who are you? Why are you here?

Currently, our mission and purpose statement is Bringing Jesus to People and People to Him through excellence in worship, education and relationships. Our relationships with one another and the community are probably our best strength. We support each other through worship, friendships, social activities and in small groups. We are good at being there for each other in good times and in bad which facilitates a welcoming atmosphere. We want to provide opportunities for people of all ages and understanding to experience God’s love in Christ and grow into the grace we receive.

We recognize that our mission statement is ten years old and needs to be re-imagined for this time and the energies of our congregation. We look forward to working on this with our new pastor.

**Giftedness:** What are your gifts and resources for fulfilling this purpose? What are the congregation’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?

Our gifts and resources include:

We have no debt, and we came together in a big way to make that happen.

We have committed and invested volunteers.

We have a healthy music program with a strong leader who is redeveloping the program. St. Mark’s has a strong tradition of a high-quality music program and we are working to restore that.

We are a teaching and nurturing church as evidenced by our intern program. (Our current intern’s assignment is ending at this time, but we have contracted with her to stay on in a pastoral associate role during our time of transition and her awaiting a call.)

We have had a history of strong local and international missions. As our survey indicated, there is excitement around relevant, local connections in our community for social change and justice.

Our staff is strong and stable.

Our buildings are in good shape.

Obstacles that need to be overcome include:

Utilizing resources of talent and time in meaningful and innovative ways so as to not burn people out (we’re dangerously close).

Involve parents with kids in our programs more intentionally through faith formation leading to greater engagement in time, talent and treasure.

Keeping our general operating support strong. As stated in the Trends section, we have had several years of declining attendance, with some stabilizing the last few years. Attendance is around 385 per week for the year, and at 408 during the program months/non-summer months. Regular giving per member has increased the last couple of years, but we still face budget challenges and struggle with the budget each year.

Keeping youth engaged after confirmation and high school.

Providing relevant activities for all age groups and interests.

**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?

The top three mission priorities that we believe hold the most promise for the continued development of St. Mark's mission are:

Providing faith formation and other opportunities for engagement for all age groups and interests.

Ensuring relevancy in programs and dynamic worship opportunities to connect with changing demographics.

Developing a year-round stewardship mindset to increase involvement and commitment to grow membership and giving.

### **Part III: Leadership Needs**

Roster type: Ordained clergy

Position type: Senior Pastor/Head of Staff - full time

Education: Master's Degree (seminary or graduate school)

Primary language: English, fluent

Experience: (Ranges selected are listed here) 4-9 years, 10-15 years, 16-20 years

### **Top Five Ministry Tasks**

- Preaching/worship leadership
- Building a sense of community
- Spiritual formation/direction
- Innovation/creativity
- Strategic mission planning

## Gifts for Ministry

### Top Priority:

- Be an effective communicator
- Build a sense of community among the people with whom he/she works
- Help people develop their spiritual life
- Be able to share leadership and work in a team
- Provide care and nurture

### Very Helpful:

- Be an effective administrator
- Help others develop their leadership abilities and skills for ministry
- Deal effectively with conflict
- Be creative and innovative about his or her tasks
- Work regularly in the development of stewardship growth

**Mutual Expectations:** Please 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.

- A. Let's get to know each other. During the first few months we want our new pastor to do the "basics" or "givens." Get to know the staff, get to know the congregation, learn how we operate, attend meetings and get involved. Hit the ground running and ready to go. Get to know people individually, in groups, in whatever manner suits your style. We're excited to have you join us and we want you to get engaged right away.
- B. Let's worship together. During the first few months we also want our new pastor to become familiar with all three of our worship services. It's important to us to offer a variety of worship opportunities and each is a unique experience. Fresh eyes are welcome to identify areas that may need attention. We honor our Lutheran heritage in our traditional service, but we also look for new paths to introduce our faith in non-traditional ways, especially to people who didn't grow up in a Lutheran church or any church at all. The Sunday contemporary and the Wednesday evening services are places where we would encourage experimentation with new or different ideas on how to "do church." We want you to feel free to be bold!
- C. Let's explore what is relevant. This ties in with the worships services, but goes beyond that. When we've asked the congregation what they want, all age groups said they want something for their age group. It may be stages rather than ages – younger or older single adults, younger or older couples, families with small children, families with teenagers, blended families, families dealing with serious health issues, empty-nesters, retirees, etc. We want our new pastor to help people identify what is relevant to them and then engage them and help provide ways for them to connect with each other. We know this isn't the pastor's job alone, but we see the pastor in a leadership role in the process.

- D. Let's look outside our walls. St. Mark's has a history of social ministry and community engagement, but that has changed over time and perhaps waned in recent years. Our sense is that there is passion in this area, but people aren't sure what to do or how to do it. We provide weekend backpacks full of food for North High students in need and their families. There's definitely passion there, but we can do more. We are also involved in two international ministries. We want our next pastor to explore possibilities with North High and other community organizations to see what role St. Mark's can play in the community. Again, we know this isn't the pastor's job alone, but we need leadership in this area. There is interest in social justice and the courageous conversations that need to take place around current issues. We want our new pastor to help us provide a safe environment for these conversations and helps us explore what we might do as a congregation and as small groups.
- E. Let's look to the future. We know it's just the first year, but leaders also need to be looking ahead beyond the day-to-day business at hand. We have a broad strategic plan – broad enough for you to put your own stamp on it – and people interested in moving it forward. We want our new pastor to meet regularly with a group that might include people from the transition team (most were on the visioning team), a couple of council members, and perhaps one or two from the call committee. This team would serve as a sounding board for the pastor about new ideas, a group where it's safe to have challenging conversations about where we're going. We see the need for leadership in goal setting, focus, establishing priorities and accountability in all areas. Together we can identify other leaders to help move St. Mark's from planning to doing.

Please 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.

- A. Let's get to know each other. As a congregation, we have some "givens" too. We will pray for you and for St. Mark's. We will welcome you into everything we do. We will meet with you and have open conversations with you. We will answer your questions and help you get acquainted with everything that is St. Mark's.
- B. Let's worship together. It has been a while since we've had a Worship and Music Committee but we see the need for one. This group might meet monthly for ongoing plans, and then seasonally with a larger group for big-picture planning and coordination. We want to look at everything from worship, music, preaching, hospitality, sound, ushers, greeters, communion servers, etc. We have different services but want the same level of quality and expectations for each service. There are people interested in working on this and we feel the timing is right to start this work with our new pastor. We will identify people to work on this with our new pastor. We will give you permission to try something new and whether it succeeds or fails, we will support you. We will encourage open, honest communication with the congregation: "We're going to try something new. Let's see how it goes!"
- C. Let's explore what is relevant. We will help gather information through small group discussions or surveys to help move this forward. We will help identify people of various ages or stages who can help.
- D. Let's look outside our walls. We will share information on what we've done in the past, what we're currently doing, and help explore possibilities for the future. We will introduce you to our contacts at North High School. You'll meet the congregation members who champion our international ministry efforts.

- E. Let's look to the future. The people who have worked on visioning, the strategic plan and the transition team are excited to work with our new pastor. We will review the work we've done and welcome your input on the strategic plan. We will work with our new pastor to carve out time to look beyond the day-to-day, to the future. We will help identify priorities and areas of focus.

#### Part IV: Commentary.

#### Ten Things you need to know about St. Mark's

Here's the basic content that is shared with new members at their "Celebration of Belonging" class.

1. Our Purpose. We are Christian, meaning we believe that God is revealed to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - the Holy Trinity. That's our foundation. We are Lutheran Christians, meaning that what Martin Luther rediscovered in Scripture, the good news that we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, is the way we live. Next, we exist to bring Jesus to people through all we say and do, so that people will be drawn to Jesus and his church. We do this through education, worship, and loving relationships, so that we can be a vibrant and growing family of God.
2. Faith Formation. We want all of St. Mark's people to grow closer to God, to develop a deep and trusting relationship with Jesus our Savior. This begins with baptism ministry, continues in JAM (Jesus And Me), confirmation and youth group, and follows into adulthood in small groups and bible studies.
3. Serving. A cornerstone of life in St. Mark's is the servant's heart. Sharing our time and talent we help grow God's Kingdom through words and deeds of love, both within the church and in our community.
4. Stewardship. Part of the Christian life is generosity with our money. We know we don't truly own anything - all has come from God and returns to Go. We are stewards (managers) of what we have. In practical terms we support the day-to-day ministry of the church through the General Fund offering. There are other opportunities to give to support the building and grounds projects, technology, etc.
5. Worship and Music. Music helps us praise and glorify God in worship. Weekly worship is Sundays at 8:45 (traditional) and 10:15 (contemporary), and Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. (blended, family-friendly). We offer special services on holidays and for individuals, like weddings and funerals, too.
6. Outreach/In-reach. St. Mark's has a long history of touching lives both inside and outside the church. St. Mark's outreach ministries vary from local projects like Polar Packs to global ministries like the Reach Home orphanage in India and Kihesa Lutheran Church in Iringa, Tanzania. In-reach includes support groups and pastoral care. Did you know that a dozen St. Mark's people visit and bring Communion to over 30 shut-in members every month and host an annual worship and dinner for them and their caregivers?
7. Christians, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Lutherans like us connect with other believers across a wide spectrum of traditions. We sit in between the very conservative Protestant churches (Baptist, Bible churches, Wisconsin Synod and Missouri Synod Lutherans, etc.) and the hierarchical ones like the Roman Catholics. What Lutherans center on is the good news that we are justified by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

8. Structure. Major decisions in our church are made by confirmed members in congregational meetings. There, elections are held for church council representatives, votes are taken on calling pastors, budgets are adopted, and other major decisions like building programs are made. We relate to other ELCA congregations through our local St. Paul Area Synod, and through them the national ELCA Church headquartered in Chicago. Again, major decisions (e.g., selecting a new Bishop) are made by representative from member congregations.

9. St. Mark's is in a period of transition!

10. It's about God! Despite this focus on the Church, it is good to remember that ultimately it is always about God and what the Lord is doing in the world and the church. The Church exists to make this known!