

GRACEPOINT CHURCH (EFCA)
Bismarck, North Dakota



Dear Pastor,

We are excited to tell you about GracePoint (GP)! We hope that this Lead Pastor Packet (LPP) will inform you about our church in ways that extend beyond our website and our ministry job posting. Thank you for investing your time to learn about what the Lord is doing among the people of GP. Perhaps the Lord might lead you to apply for the position of Lead Pastor at GP or to recommend someone else for this position.

This Lead Pastor Packet has three major sections: **Our Story** (page 3), **Our Community** (page 9), and **Our Next Pastor** (page 10). Accordingly, we think that you will find *our story* to be a compelling sketch of God's faithfulness to us, *our community* to present excellent opportunities for your family life and our outreach together, and the section on *our next pastor* possibly to sound like you (or someone you know).

The elders have contracted with *Flourish Coaching* to aid us in our pastor search process. Flourish's Executive Director, Matt Bohling, has come alongside our elders to prepare us and our Pastor Search Committee (PSC) as we seek the Lord's will regarding the next man that the Lord has raised up to help lead GracePoint forward for the sake of His Kingdom.

Enjoy reading this LPP and please do not hesitate to reach out to us or to *Flourish Coaching* for further information!

May the Lord continue to guide us all in this process,

The Pastoral Search Committee:

Mason Buchholz
Jason Burdette
Steve Burke (Chairman)

Kirby Evanger
Jerry Grosz
Ryan Jockers

Kaili Mae Maike
Brenda Nottestad
Lynn Schindler

(Find our PSC member bios on page 15)



GRACEPOINT

PART 1: OUR STORY

OUR ORIGIN STORY

While we've only been known as *GracePoint* since 2015, our roots sink much deeper. We were previously named First Evangelical Free Church and just celebrated our 70th anniversary last year. Even today, we have members who have been with us for over six decades! Gladly, the Lord is still bringing many new people along to join us to follow Him as well. Here's a snapshot of our history:

“Founded in 1953, GracePoint was planted by a small group of faithful believers from Mission Evangelical Free Church in

Wilton, North Dakota—a small congregation 20 miles to the north of Bismarck. The Wilton pastor had a dream to reach people that were moving into Bismarck and as a result, 22 charter members were

sent out to establish a new congregation... Since the very beginning, GracePoint has embraced the values that are part of the EFCA's distinctive: *In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, charity. In all things, Jesus Christ.*”



“In essentials, unity.
In non-essentials,
charity. In all things,
Jesus Christ.”

(source: NL Moore & Associates, January 2017)

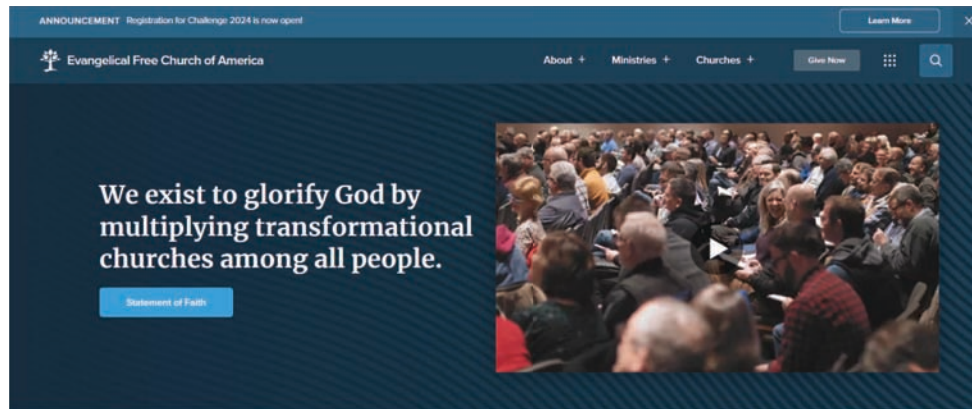
From those early years, we have grown significantly in size. In 1985 we purchased ten acres of land at our present location and began worshiping in the multi-purpose room in 1991. We ultimately built our current sanctuary in 2004, where we can seat 700 people in the worship space and effectively use cutting-edge technology. God has faithfully provided for us, and we are so grateful to be debt free. Even with our growth, some things remain the same: We know that the Lord is our Rock, His Spirit is the source of our strength, and His Word is our abiding joy. We are grateful to Him and by His grace we can say that we are a loving, giving, and serving church. Even so, we continue to seek ways that we may *excel still more* (from 1 Thesalonians 4:1, 10 NASB 1977).



OUR BELIEFS AND VISION

Beliefs

As a congregation of the Evangelical Free Church of America, we are part of a group of churches that are gospel-centered and Bible-believing. You can visit efca.org to explore the beliefs and practices of our association of over 1,600 member churches.

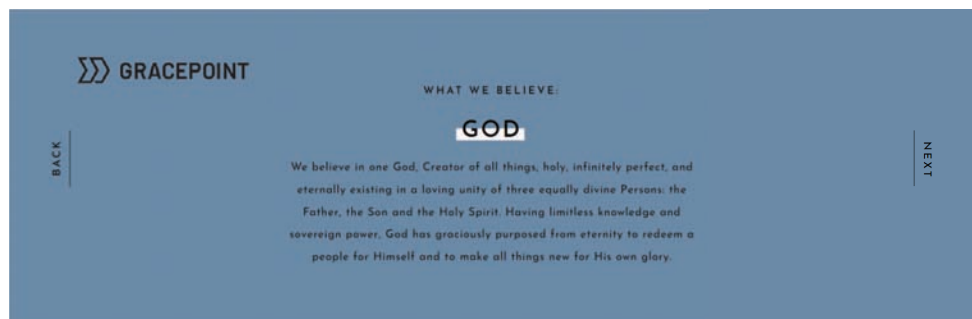
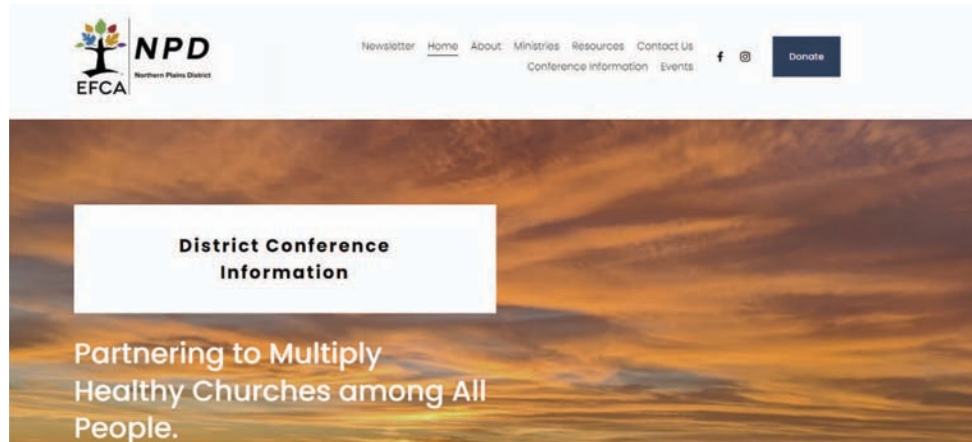


For those of us in the Free Church, salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone is essential. We emphasize these essentials, allowing a breadth of theological perspectives, and hold to a congregational form of church government.

The Evangelical Free Church of America is comprised of 17 districts. GracePoint is part of the Northern Plains District, which you can read about here:

npdefca.com.

In addition, we've posted our local statement of beliefs on the GracePoint site which you can access at gracepoint.life/next-steps. Simply scroll $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way down the page to the blue "What We Believe" section and use the buttons on the right or left to click through ten topical slides. You will also find a page on our site with further details about our church and a position profile at gracepoint.life/job-openings#.



Our Mission Statement

GracePoint exists to develop passionate **followers** of Christ while **connecting** people into life-giving community where they **discover** their spiritual gifts and are invited to **serve** within the church and in the heart of the community.

Follow

Developing passionate followers of Jesus



Connect

Connecting people into life giving community



Discover

Helping people discover their spiritual gifts, purpose, and calling



Serve

Inviting each individual to serve within the church and in the heart of the community



Our Vision Statement

“To be passionate disciple makers with practical Biblical teaching; a place of grace, where the Holy Spirit is moving and changing lives through ministry that meets the heart-felt needs of our local and global community.”



Our Values



Family-Centered. *We value families at every stage, no matter their background. We love and invest in marriages, parents, singles, kids, and students.*

We are committed to helping each GracePoint family unit to thrive. We demonstrate our commitment to our families both through our teaching and also by holding special events, such as occasional date nights for married couples that include free childcare.



Relevant Bible Teaching. *We are committed to relevant biblical teaching that transforms lives.*

We know that our faith consists of timeless truths that we can live out every day in loving obedience to our Savior. God's Word is pertinent for the current day and we seek to make our teaching practical and useful to our people.



Offering our Best. *We offer God our best, most creative work – and leave the results to Him.*

We believe that it is honoring to the Lord to have our ministries unto Him marked by excellence. While never sacrificing function over form, we serve the Lord with zeal and passion. Our GP Production ministry is a prime example of how we live out this value:

Our production team at Gracepoint was created to help our congregation better experience the presence of God. Whether this is through sound, lighting, visuals, or watching online, we hope to provide a service that helps others participate in what a relationship with Christ is all about!





Value Each Individual. *We serve others even when it's not convenient. We care for the hurting and broken.*

Since we believe that all human beings are created in God's image, we seek to treat each unique individual with dignity and grace. When we hurt or offend one another, we are committed to pursuing reconciliation, expressing forgiveness, and loving one another well.



Passionate Worshipers. *Our goal is to express our devotion to God through joyful praise and intimate worship.*

Our worship leaders want to be lead worshipers themselves and count it a high privilege to then invite our people into the presence of our living, loving Lord. This is expressed through contemporary worship with some of the great hymns of the Faith blended in as well.



OUR NUMBERS

255

MEMBERSHIP

Current Members



500+

ATTENDANCE

Average Worship Attendance



750

AFFILIATED

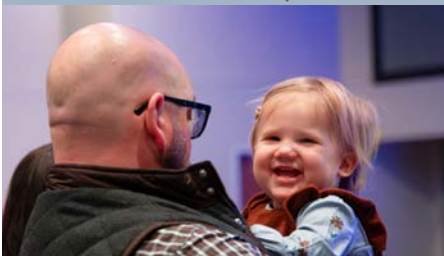
Those Calling GP Home



175

FAMILIES

Number of Family Units



9

ELDERS



4

PASTORS

Including 1 Interim



1

DIRECTORS



5

SUPPORT STAFF



1.1 MM

OUR GIVING

Projected for 2024



PART 2: OUR COMMUNITY

GracePoint is situated in the northern part of Bismarck, North Dakota– the second-largest city in the state and its capital. The city is home to 75,000 people, and the metropolitan area (Bismarck-Mandan) comprises twice that figure. Bismarck is located in the south central part of our state, along the Missouri River. The river itself is flanked by a plethora of cottonwood trees, creating a lovely environment that is lush and green. You can even take a ride on the Lewis and Clark Riverboat!

Bismarck's **economy is vibrant**. There is a lot of commercial development near GracePoint, which is set just off of two major roads, including the city's main north-south corridor.

The city is bisected by Interstate 94 and you can get just about anywhere here in under 15 minutes. The Northern Plains Heritage Area is nearby and you can learn about the history of the Native American people, who currently make up 4% of our city's populus. There are many parks and walking trails as well as the Missouri River and numerous nearby lakes with world class, year-round fishing and hunting opportunities, so **life here is perfect for the outdoorsman**. Another key element is the city's strong sense of community and **welcoming atmosphere**. Admittedly, winters get cold here but you'll find that the warmth of the people of GracePoint more than makes up for that.

Additionally, Bismarck offers a **reasonable cost of living** compared to many other cities in the United States. The median home value is just over \$350,000 and the affordability of housing, utilities, and everyday expenses along with very low state income taxes contributes to a high quality of life for residents. The city's economic stability, driven by industries such as healthcare, manufacturing, energy, and agriculture, further enhances the overall appeal. With a **thriving job market** and a range of recreational and cultural amenities, Bismarck stands out as an attractive destination for those seeking a balanced and fulfilling lifestyle in the heart of North Dakota.

Bismarck is also home to Bismarck State College, University of Mary, and United Tribes Technical College. Small colleges and universities dot the state within close proximity to Bismarck, with larger schools such as North Dakota State University in Fargo (three hours to our east) and the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks (about four hours to the north-east) still within reach.



PART 3: OUR NEXT PASTOR

Who Is Our Next Pastor?

SUMMARY:

Gracepoint is a Bible-believing, gospel-centered, and a loving church. Our next Lead Pastor needs to reflect these priorities in his life as well. Preaching doctrinally sound sermons is non-negotiable of course (more on that in a bit) and, in addition, we need a man who is a strong leader, who values and invests in his staff. In other words, we don't need someone who may be a world-class communicator but who wants solely to be a teaching pastor without any shepherding responsibilities. No, we'd rather have **a very good gospel preacher who also has a pastor's heart.** You will multiply your ministry to us by living out your faith, both in the community by sharing the Faith and among us by developing our staff.



WHAT OUR PEOPLE ARE SAYING:

GracePoint's congregation was invited to provide feedback regarding needed traits in our next pastor by completing an assessment tool provided by Flourish Coaching. We received completed surveys from a good cross-section of our people, some 90 individuals in all. Since GP has a congregational form of church government, we highly value their input. Here's what they told us they want in our next pastor:

1. A Strong Leader who works well with a Team.

Casting vision and setting direction for the church (in collaboration with the elders) is imperative for GP. We need a Lead Pastor who knows our place and purpose in the community and who inspires our people to follow him as we engage in ministry together. Along with that, our lead pastor needs to be someone who sees the church staff as one of our greatest resources.



While he doesn't need to be a micromanager, he does need to be able to help individual staff members to grow and for the team to grow together—especially in the area of communication. We need better communication between our ministry staff and elders, along with the support staff. This would enable us to live out the alignment of values that already exists here at GracePoint.

Conflict is inevitable in God's Church. A strong leader will maintain a calm presence and wade into it with a plan to help facilitate conciliation in ways that are both biblical and relational. This promotes the health of the church. Avoidance benefits no one and causes problems in the long run. Addressing matters graciously and effectively, will prevent our people from losing confidence in our leaders. To this end, our elders are currently studying *The Peacemaker*, by Ken Sande.

2. A Communicator who encourages people to relate their faith

to their daily lives. Giving accurate, faithful messages that reflect biblical truth is a given, yet our pastor needs to model sharing the Faith in his own life as well. We don't want him to be purely academic. Rather, we want to know that he makes Bismarck his home and that he builds relationships in the community because he is engaged in people's everyday lives. We hope our next pastor might have quite a bit of longevity here and want to see him sink roots. Sharing the Faith in your sphere of influence will not only set an example for us— it will also inform your preaching so that you'll be better able to convey to us how we can do likewise. Help us improve at articulating our own faith.



Furthermore, we want our next pastor to help us to apply the Bible to our lives. It's easy to say, "Now go tell someone about Jesus." However, we desire a gospel communicator who will offer ways that we can better connect with those around us, by teaching and training us to live as believers in our homes, schools, and workplaces. We want to be equipped to walk in a manner worthy of our calling, by a pastor who wields God's Word in a practical, Christ-exalting manner. In other words, we don't want just to nod our heads while you're preaching, we want to know how to take the gospel to our neighbors without fear.

3. A man who is mature and emotionally secure.

So, being a *good leader and a relevant communicator* requires a certain kind of person. Our next pastor will need to be self-aware and humble. Because he is confident in his identity in Christ, he will be free to look to the needs of those around him, starting with his family, and then his staff and elders. Because he is sure of his salvation and God's love for him, he is willing to admit his own mistakes and models appropriate transparency. This will cause people to trust him and recognize that he's genuine.

You'll need to be compassionate, and caring, sensitive to others' needs. Being a fellow recipient of the grace of God in Christ, means that you can turn around and extend that forgiveness and mercy to others who the Lord places around you. There's simply no substitute for Godly character.



WHAT OUR LEADERS ARE SAYING:

We brought in Flourish's Executive Director, Matt Bohling (who is himself a seasoned pastor) to lead our elders and our staff through a series of exercises that helped us identify key traits that are important to us. Here's a brief synopsis of that time together and a composite sketch of what we think is vital for the next pastor to know, to do, and to be. You will note that the mindset of our leaders resonates greatly with what our people are saying, so it is clear that our leaders seem to have their finger on the pulse of our people. We're glad to be in one accord on this –

- **As a man of God**, he will live a life marked by demonstrable integrity. He will be humble and self-aware, which will allow him to be highly relational with people. Following

in Jesus' steps, he will exemplify a servant's heart that manifests itself by having compassion for the lost. He will maintain healthy boundaries with his family life and, as a self-differentiated leader, will not seek the approval of others.

- **As an effective gospel communicator,** he will hold to sound doctrine in all of his preaching and be a catalyst for outreach through his teaching and by example. He will insist that GracePoint be Christ-centered, not pastor-centered. He will not show partiality in the church.
- **As a visionary leader,** he will courageously help GP to chart a course of making disciples of the next generation. He will not allow the church to “coast” or simply maintain programs. Instead, he will encourage the implementation of gospel initiatives that will lead GP into the future with hope and new growth.

He will lead and guide our staff and volunteers through mentoring and team-building that includes celebrating achievements together and allowing for a spirit of freedom, joy, and playfulness. This will create a highly relational culture, although he will not need to be the center of attention.

He likely also will have enough of an administrative mind to help shape processes with some attention to detail, while also demonstrating that he is a willing delegator who trusts and empowers his staff members.

He will accomplish the executive functions of his office with a willingness to surround himself with leaders with strengths that complement his own. He will help delineate and define our leaders' decision-making authority and foster and promote the lines of communication between the Board of Elders and the Church Staff.



What Will Our Next Lead Pastor Do?

→ **PREACH** 65% of Sundays (~15 hours per week in sermon prep).

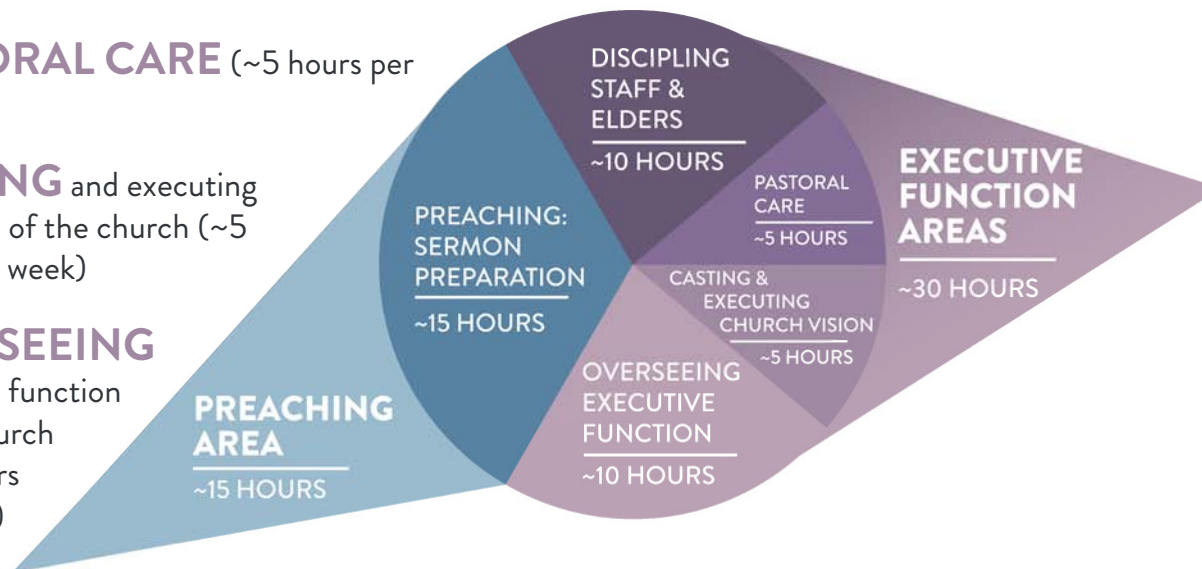
→ **INVEST** 30 hours per week in other “Executive Function” areas, including:

- **DISCIPLING** staff and elders (~10 hours per week)

- **PASTORAL CARE** (~5 hours per week)

- **CASTING** and executing the vision of the church (~5 hours per week)

- **OVERSEEING** executive function of the church (~10 hours per week)



- He will also be active in our district and denomination as much as possible.
- He is credentialed or will promptly work towards being credentialed in the EFCA.
- Undergraduate Degree in ministry related field and 10+ years of Pastoral leadership experience OR Masters degree in ministry related field and 5+ years of Pastoral leadership experience. Previous Lead or Campus Pastor experience preferred.

Compensation

GracePoint will offer a salary ranging from \$80,000 - \$120,000 (commensurate with experience) plus benefits for our new pastor. In addition, a reasonable relocation reimbursement will be provided upon substantiation of expenses.

OUR TEAM

Search Committee Member Bios (Chairman listed first, then alphabetically)



STEVE
BURKE

*“**Trisha and I** have been a part of the GracePoint family for 16 years. We have three teenagers Ella, Lily, and Noah. I started out serving in the GP children’s ministry and then in some outreaches of the church. Last summer I completed my second term of serving on the Elder Board, during that time I served one year as the chairman. I grew up on a ranch in the southwest corner of the state and now work as a manager of Environmental, Engineering, and IT at a coal mine which, I would say, makes me a coal miner!”*



MASON
BUCHHOLZ

*“**A native of Bismarck**, I’m on staff at GracePoint as Pastor of Worship and Young Adults. I love being around and investing into our next generation, as well as helping lead our congregation in worship on Sundays. I have been married to my wife, Robyn, for five years. We have a two-year-old boy (Owen), and a two-month-old girl (Annie). We love the outdoors and have enjoyed growing together as a family!”*



JASON
BURDETTE

*“**Having grown up** in Illinois, I worked as a corporate recruiter in Chicago and when I moved to North Dakota, I became involved in our family pharmacy business. Currently, I hold the distinctive title of husband to Brita and stay-at-home dad to our four kids who range in age from 17 down to five years old (not to mention our animal menagerie)! I’m a diehard Chicago sports fan (except the White Sox) and I like to hunt, hike, and be outdoors. We’ve been at GP for 16 years and I’ve been involved in small groups, men’s Bible studies, missions, and as an Awana leader to 3rd grade boys.”*



“My wife, Lisa, and I have been married for 30 years and we’ve been at GP since 1996. We have three kids: Jaden (24), Alexa (18), and Mason (12). We enjoy traveling together and we’ve been known to be thrill seekers at some of the biggest roller coaster parks in the U.S.! I have served as an elder for six years (two years as chairman) and have led Financial Peace University at our church for the last 12 years. I was raised on a farm an hour north of Bismarck and now work in banking as Chief Credit Officer and also teach an Emerging Leaders program. My favorite hobby is hunting, and I enjoy following pro sports.”



“I’m likely the longest-tenured person at GracePoint Church, having been connected here for over six decades now! My wife, Laurie, and I have five grown children and seven grandchildren. Laurie and I have hosted small groups in our home and served in many different capacities in the church. I worked in sales in the industrial tools business for 43 years (eventually becoming the owner of the business) and I have been retired since 2017. I currently sit on the Board of Directors of The Baptist Health Care and Rehabilitation Center here in Bismarck, which has ties to our district of the EFCA. I’m also an avid North Dakota State University Bison football fan.”



“I grew up in the Pacific Northwest, in the Seattle/Tacoma area. Kate and I have been married for almost 14 years, and we have three boys who are 12, 10, and 6. During seven years at Grace-Point, I’ve been involved with the Elder Board, Youth, Men’s Bible Study, Young Marrieds, and Vacation Bible School. I work as Assistant Director of Reporting and Analytics for the North Dakota University System.”



KAILI MAE
MAIKE

*“**Chris and I** have been at GracePoint for just about our whole married life—almost 10 years now! We have two kids: Calvin (7 yo) and ToriKate (6 yo) and two dogs, Rosie and Maverick. My church involvement includes Worship, Women’s Bible study and ministry, and the Marrieds class. Originally from Clarkston, Michigan, I am employed as the Controller at LLJohns Aviation Insurance, handling the finances for my dad’s small business.”*



BRENDA
NOTTESTAD

*“**My husband, Tim, and I** have been attending GracePoint for approximately 20 years. We have two grown children who have married wonderful spouses and given us seven grandchildren. I have been active in Women’s Bible Study Ministries for years and I am also involved with the coffee ministry on Sunday mornings. I recently retired after working in higher education for several years. I loved working with college-age students but desired more time to visit our children and grandchildren, who all live out of state. My husband and I enjoy golfing and outdoor activities and appreciate our North Dakota summers.”*



LYNN
SCHINDLER

*“**I’ve attended GracePoint** for 44 years and was married to Bob for 41 years before the Lord took him home in 2020. We have one daughter who is in her last year at NDSU. For a large part of our family life, we had cats and many hunting dogs. Our favorite pastime was travel which often included hiking and backpacking trips in National Parks to enjoy God’s amazing creation. My husband and I served as youth and AWANA leaders, Sunday School teachers, and I served as GP Sunday School Superintendent for several years as well as in many other capacities in the church and also in the Bismarck community. I grew up on a crop and cattle farm near McClusky, ND and although my degree was in Elementary Education, I worked in administration at a dental office for 20 years.”*

QUESTIONNAIRE

We want to get to know you, your heart, and your life with Christ.

Please provide short answers (no more than a paragraph or two) to each of the following:

1. Describe your spiritual journey and how you have found your gifts and talents.
2. What aspects of serving your church and community do you find the most fulfilling and why? What do you find the most draining and challenging?
3. Describe your leadership style. Have you had a vision for a specific project and watched it come to life?
4. Describe your philosophy of ministry?
5. Where would you say you fit theologically compared to the EFCA statement of faith?
6. Tell us about a failure in your pastoral ministry and what you have learned from it.
7. Describe your preaching style and how it has changed over time.
8. How do you balance your personal life and family commitments with your pastoral responsibilities?
9. How do you use technology and social media in your personal life?



APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Please send your materials to apply@gp-psc.com and you will be contacted with next steps which may include requests for additional information or scheduling conversations.

- Cover Letter, Resume, Educational Transcripts, & EFCA Credentials (or equivalent)
- Completed, typed out responses to the questionnaire

Please use the following format to label all attachments (PDFs if possible):

- JohnSmith_CoverLetter
- JohnSmith_Resume
- JohnSmith_Credentials
- JohnSmith_Transcripts
- JohnSmith_Questionnaire

As you may expect, at the appropriate step in the process, information will also be requested to perform a background check, credit check, motor vehicle check, and educational verification.

Thank you for your interest in GracePoint. We look forward to hearing your story and exploring God's plans for you and your possible relationship with our church family. May the Lord grant you wisdom as you seek His face in this discernment process.

