



**The Congregation of Grace Lutheran Church
would like to introduce Our New Pastor!**

**Rev. Matthew Jon
Smith-Laubenstein**

Reasons the Call Committee recommended Rev. Matthew Jon Smith-Laubenstein for Grace Lutheran's New Pastor!

- Humbleness in that he knows his role and what his job is, which is to serve the Lord and his people. He appears to have an excellent knowledge of the scripture and how it can be applied in our world today.
- Family oriented, which will benefit Grace's pre-school through high-school age members.
- Previous pastoral experience with a congregation that did not want to see him leave.
- References provided extremely positive feedback to call committee members that visited his church.
- Will live in the Libertyville community, allowing Matthew to develop strong ties that will benefit our congregation.
- Lifelong Lutheran
- Grace Lutheran will be enriched by Matthew's variety of church leadership experiences, including youth director and confirmation leader. Also has teaching experience with a science perspective.
- Fantastic opportunity for Grace Lutheran to grow alongside a Pastor with fresh ideas and energy!
- Thoughtful way of communicating with a great perspective on the activities going on in the world.
- Seeks out ways to constantly improve as a Pastor by getting feedback from members and contacting other church leaders to see what is working for them.
- Has built a fabulous network of peers and instructors within and outside the church that he can lean on to help us as a church community.
- Outgoing personality and a good listener.
- Gets involved, both in his church and within the community. Will get Grace Lutheran on the map.
- Has introduced methods to help develop leaders.
- Leads adult study classes.
- Will get Grace Lutheran more connected with the ELCA and the services that we have been missing.
- Appears to have a great memory. Remembers names, vocations, family history, you name it.
- Appears to lean on the Lord in a joyful way!
- Involved in small group bible studies.
- Gets dirty by getting to know congregants out in the world and not just at the church.
- Seems to love his work and always has a smile.
- And the church secretary likes him.

Pastor Matthew has the following interests:

Traveling with his wife	Hunting
Reading to my two daughters	Canoeing
Fishing	Fostering relationships
Hiking	

Causes Pastor Matthew cares about:

Arts and Culture	Children
Civil Rights and Social Action	Education
Environment	Human Rights
Politics	Poverty Alleviation
Science and Technology	

Matthew grew up in a northern suburb of Buffalo, New York; 10 miles north of Buffalo and 10 miles south of Niagara Falls. He has two siblings, one of whom is a teacher and the other is a seminary graduate. His parents and sister live in Buffalo, and his brother, in Chicago. He is a lifelong Lutheran.

Matthew attended Colgate University for his undergraduate degree in biology. At Colgate, he was a leader in the on-campus, protestant church where he directed outreach and *Gastroevangelism* (combining good food with Bible Study and discussion). From Colgate, he went on to Niagara University to Complete a Master's degree in secondary education. He taught biology and while teaching, realized that he did not have enough time for serving the church, so he then applied to seminary. He then attend Princeton Seminary for his Master of Divinity, where he met his wife, Kara. They were married in 2006, just after he graduated, and they stayed in Princeton for two more years. Meanwhile, Kara finished her degree for ministry. Matthew then went on to the Lutheran Seminary in Philadelphia, where he completed a Masters in Sacred Theology and became re-Lutheranized after 3 years with the Presbyterians at Princeton.

In 2008, Matthew and Kara moved to Annapolis, Maryland, where Matthew was the Vicar of Joy Reigns Lutheran Church in Edgewater, Maryland. Kara taught 3rd grade in the City of Baltimore. In August of 2009, their daughter, Amelia Joy, was born. They remained in Maryland for another year while Kara worked full time as a teacher and Matthew worked part time as director of youth ministry and men's ministry at Joy Reigns Lutheran Church. This gave him the time to be home with Amelia.

In 2013, the Smith-Laubenstein family welcomed another daughter to their home, Charlotte Jean. Amelia loves being a big sister and Charlotte is a great little girl.

More recently, Rev. Matthew has served at St. John's Lutheran Church (2010—Present), as Solo Pastor. St. John's is located in Johnson Creek, Wisconsin.

Come and join us
every Sunday for worship!



Grace Lutheran Church

Pastor Matthew Jon Smith-Laubenstein

501 Valley Park Drive, Libertyville, IL 60048

847/367-7050

gracelutheranil@att.net

gracelutheranlibertyville.org