

BRIDGE: Building Relationships in Discipleship and Global Engagement

Application for Admission

June 4 – July 2, 2026

Instructions:

Please complete this application form to be considered for the Church Exchange Program. All sections must be filled out completely and accurately. Applications are due by **March 31, 2026, 14:00 CET**.

SECTION 1: PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Name of Applicant: _____

2. Gender: Male Female Other Prefer not to say

3. Country of Citizenship: _____

4. Country of Birth: _____

5. Contact Information:

- Email: _____

- Phone Number: _____

6. Grade in the school year 2025/26

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7. Home Address:

- Street:

- City:

- State/Province:

- Zip Code:

- Country:

8. Parent/Guardian Information:

- Parent/Guardian Name(s):

- Phone Number(s):

- Email(s):

9. Program preference:

- The Grace Lutheran Church from June 4, 2026, to July 2, 2026

- Our Savior's Lutheran Church from June 4, 2026, to July 2, 2026

SECTION 2: EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

1. Primary Emergency Contact:

- Name:
- Relationship to Applicant:
- Phone Number:
- Email Address:

2. Secondary Emergency Contact (optional):

- Name:
- Relationship to Applicant:
- Phone Number:
- Email Address:

SECTION 3: MEDICAL AND DIETARY INFORMATION

1. Do you have any medical conditions, allergies, or dietary restrictions?

Yes No

- If yes, please provide details (medical conditions, medications, allergies, etc.):

2. Do you have any physical or mental health needs that require special accommodation?

Yes No

- If yes, please provide details:

3. Do you have any specific dietary preferences or restrictions (vegetarian, vegan, etc.)?

Yes No

- If yes, please provide details:

SECTION 4: ACADEMIC AND PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Hobbies and Interests:

(Please list any hobbies, sports, or extracurricular activities you enjoy.)

2. Religious Background:

- Are you a member of a church or faith community? Yes No
- If yes, please provide the name of your church/faith community:
- Please describe your involvement in your church or religious community:

3. Previous Travel Experience:

- Have you traveled outside your home country before? Yes No
- If yes, where and for how long?
- Describe any cross-cultural experiences you have had (optional):

4. How many times have you helped with Vacation Bible School (VBS) organized by the Bible School in Martin?

5. In what capacity have you served in the Vacation Bible School?

SECTION 5: PROGRAM MOTIVATION

1. Why do you want to participate in the program?

(Explain what interests you about the program and what you hope to gain from the experience.)

[250-500 words]

2. What does your faith mean to you, and how do you see it playing a role in this exchange experience?

[250-500 words]

3. Describe how you handle new or unfamiliar situations, particularly in different cultural settings.

[150-300 words]

4. What do you hope to contribute to your host family and the church community during the program?

[150-300 words]

SECTION 6: REFERENCES

Please provide contact information for two references who can speak to your character, academic abilities, or involvement in your church/community.

1. Reference 1:

- Name:
- Relationship to Applicant: Class teacher
- Phone Number:
- Email Address:

2. Reference 2:

- Name:
- Relationship to Applicant:
- Phone Number:
- Email Address:

SECTION 7: STUDENT PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS

Here's a list of expectations for participants:

Before the Visit

1. Learn About the Host Country and Family

- Research the customs, culture, and religious practices of the host country to be better prepared for the experience.
- Learn about the host family in advance (if possible) and be open to understanding their traditions and way of life.

2. Attend Pre-Departure Orientation

- Attend any pre-departure orientations or briefings organized by the church or program to understand expectations, guidelines, and the schedule.

3. Prepare for Cultural Differences

- Prepare mentally and emotionally for cultural differences, including language, food, religious practices, and daily routines.
- Be open to new experiences and a willingness to adapt to different cultural settings.

4. Understand Program Guidelines

- Familiarize yourself with the rules, guidelines, and objectives of the program, including behavioral expectations and participation in religious activities.
- Ensure you understand the program's schedule and expectations for participation in church services, group activities, and other events.

5. Prepare Personal Items

- Pack appropriately for the visit, bringing suitable clothing for both church events and casual activities.
- Include any personal items that will make you feel comfortable during your stay, such as toiletries, a journal, or items of cultural significance.

6. Medical and Travel Preparations

- Ensure all required medical check-ups, vaccinations, and travel documents (passport, visa) are in order before departure.
- Inform the church program and host family of any medical conditions, dietary restrictions, or special needs.

During the Visit

1. Respect the Host Family and Their Culture

- Be respectful of your host family's customs, traditions, and household rules.
- Make an effort to participate in their daily routines, meals, and family activities, even if they differ from what you're used to.

2. Be Open to New Experiences

- Embrace new foods, activities, and religious practices with an open mind and positive attitude.
- Participate fully in the exchange experience, including attending church services, group discussions, and community activities.

3. Communication and Courtesy

- Maintain open and respectful communication with your host family. If something is making you uncomfortable or you have any concerns, speak with them kindly or contact the program coordinators.
- Be polite and show gratitude for the hospitality you receive from the host family.

4. Participate in Church and Program Activities

- Actively engage in the program's scheduled church services, group activities, and outings.
- Show respect for religious practices, even if they are different from your own. If you do not share the same beliefs, participate respectfully and ask questions where appropriate to learn.

5. Follow Program Rules and Guidelines

- Adhere to all program rules, including curfew times, behavior expectations, and safety guidelines.
- Avoid any prohibited activities and be mindful of how your actions reflect on both the program and your home country.

6. Be a Responsible Guest

- Keep your living space tidy and follow household rules set by the host family, such as meal times, curfews, and use of shared spaces.
- Offer to help with small tasks or chores around the house as a way of showing appreciation for the host family's hospitality.

7. Be Flexible and Adaptable

- Be prepared to adapt to changes in plans, schedules, or routines. Flexibility is key in making the most of your exchange experience.
- Stay positive even in challenging situations, such as language barriers or cultural misunderstandings, and work through them with patience and openness.

8. Stay Safe and Healthy

- Take care of your personal health by eating well, staying hydrated, and getting enough rest.
- Inform your host family or program leaders if you feel unwell or if any emergency arises.

9. Respect Privacy and Personal Boundaries

- Respect the privacy and boundaries of your host family members and fellow participants.
- Be mindful of your own need for personal time and communicate respectfully if you need space.

After the Visit

1. Express Gratitude

- Thank your host family and the church program coordinators for their hospitality and the experience. A small gift or a heartfelt thank-you note can go a long way in expressing your appreciation.

2. Serve with Vacation Bible School (VBS) organized by the Bible School in Martin for the VBS week in 2026.

3. Participate in Post-Program Reflection

- Join any post-program reflections, evaluations, or discussions organized by the church program.
- Share your thoughts and insights on the program and your overall experience.

4. Share Your Experience with Others

- Reflect on your experience and share your journey with friends, family, or fellow students back home.
- Encourage others to participate in similar cultural exchange programs and provide guidance for future participants.

5. Provide Constructive Feedback

- Offer feedback to the program about your experience, including what went well and what could be improved for future participants.
- Highlight any significant experiences that made a positive impact on your cultural understanding or personal growth.

6. Reflect on Personal Growth

- Take time to reflect on how the experience influenced your understanding of other cultures, faith, and community.
- Consider how you can apply these lessons in your everyday life moving forward.

7. Stay in Touch (Optional)

- If appropriate, maintain contact with your host family, building a long-term connection beyond the exchange program.
- Keep in touch with fellow exchange students or program participants if friendships were made during the experience.

By following these expectations, students will help foster a positive exchange experience that benefits both themselves and the host families, while contributing to the goals of the program.

SECTION 8: PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT

(To be completed by the parent or legal guardian if the applicant is under 18.)

I, the undersigned, give permission for my child to apply to the Church Exchange Program and, if selected, to participate in one of the programs in summer 2026. I understand that all necessary arrangements, including travel and accommodation, will be made through the church and program coordinators.

- Parent/Guardian Signature:

- Date:

- Printed Name:

- Relationship to Applicant:

SECTION 9: STUDENT SIGNATURE

I certify that the information provided in this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand the expectations of the program and agree to abide by all rules and guidelines if selected.

- Student Signature:

- Date:

- Printed Name:

Submission Instructions:

Please submit the completed application (Application for Admission, Copies of Academic Transcripts, Súhlas so spracovaním údajov) to the Bible School office (M. R. Štefanika 17, 036 01 Martin by **March 31, 2026, 14:00 CET**.

For questions or concerns, please contact the program coordinator at adrian.kacian@gmail.com or by phone 0918 828 560.