

Namekagon Church Profile for Pastor
Earl, Wisconsin
April 12, 2019

1. A one-paragraph description of who you are as a church.

Namekagon Church has been described by our members as “small but mighty!” Located in the Northwoods of Wisconsin (up the bank from a National Wild and Scenic River) we cherish our rural community setting, our woods and wildlife, and the people we serve. Despite the small size of our congregation, our members are shining examples of making a difference to those around us regardless of our age. We are a close-knit and Spirit-led family, working together with a positive outlook and a sense of humor.

“Namekagon” is an Ojibwa word supposedly meaning “place where the sturgeon rise.” Our church shares a name with the Namekagon National Wild and Scenic River, part of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. Our passive-solar, earth-sheltered church is located about a half-mile from a popular landing on the river, and the members can nearly all recount significant life experiences or amusing anecdotes from time on or by the water.



2. *One paragraph summary of the church's history.*

During the middle of the 1960s, four small churches came together as one to become Namekagon Congregational Church, UCC. The church building in Earl was designated as the “new” church because of its central location. At that time, the members included many families with children. The Sunday School, Ladies Aid, and Sunday services had many participants. At times pastors were hard to locate so Namekagon joined a team of pastors from the Lutheran churches in the area and we became part of the Area Team Ministry. After that union served its purpose, we had pastors from the UCC. Church dinners and Vacation Bible School were well attended. In the 1980s it was decided to build a new church at the same site in Earl. As time went by, the population of members got older and the number of members declined. We currently have 23 members and several steady attendees that come faithfully each Sunday. We have always been active in giving to needs in our community and beyond. We may be small and older now in participation but we are mighty in our prayers, and concerns and offerings.

In the words of one of the founding members, “the Earl church has never been a large church. Its works have been carried on by a handful of dedicated people, changing constantly during the years. But it has buried the dead, baptized the living, trained the children and nourished the souls of those who attend the services. May it ever be thus.”

3. *Statistical Summary*

- Active Membership: 23
- Total Reported Membership: 23
- Sunday Morning average attendance: 16
- Church School registrants: **We currently do not have children attending church often, but have teachers willing to teach if children attend in the future. We have adult discussion groups during Advent and Lent.**
- Average Church School Attendance: **4 to 7 adult participants in Lent and Advent discussion groups**
- Members serving on Boards and Committees (not including ad hoc committees or small groups): **Nearly all active members are involved in the work of the church in one or more of the following formal groups or offices:**
 - Church Board (consisting of the officers and the heads of the Ladies Aid, Deacons, and Trustees)**
 - Officers: Moderator, Financial Secretary, Clerk, and Treasurer**
 - Ladies Aid (6)**
 - Deacons (4-6)**
 - Trustees (3)**
 - Fund Raising Committee (3)**
 - Ushers (2)**
- Mission Giving: **14% of budget in 2018 (we're a long-term “5 for 5” congregation in the UCC Conference, also supporting special offerings for disasters and emergencies, along with annual planned giving from our offering for local, state, national and global needs).**

- Results of most recent stewardship campaign compared with previous year: **We haven't worked on a formal stewardship campaign, but have held a February fundraiser in past years.**
- (any other interesting statistics)
The church currently has no outstanding debts. No building projects are planned other than timely church, parsonage and grounds maintenance or updating as needed.

Since we have had a series of pastors that have their own homes within commuting distance, we currently rent our parsonage (located directly behind the church). We could offer the parsonage if our next Pastor wants local housing, but would need to give ample notice to our renters.

4. *Volunteer Ministries of the Church (including music, fellowship, service):*

- **Church-wide potluck every Sunday! Members stay after church to visit and keep informed on each other's and our community's cares and joys.**
- **Choir – 6 members plus willing visitors make up our choir. We practice before church and perform on the first and third Sundays of the month from September through May (and on other special occasions).**
- **Washburn County Food Pantry – Our congregation has taken regular monthly collections of food and money for our local food pantry for over 20 years.**
- **Quarterly Mission giving – for the past 5 years, the Deacons select a local, state, national or global charity and send a donation. Funding to the Deacons for this mission support has ranged from \$1000 to \$2000 per year, and is currently set at \$1200 for 2019.**
- **Nursing Home Services – Two local nursing homes offer Pastor-led Sunday afternoon services. A number of pastors in the area preach these services on a rotation.**
- **UCC Special offerings – we have been a “5 for 5” congregation for many, many years, meeting our annual pledge through Our Church's Wider Mission and donating to all 4 special offerings. We also participate in the disaster-relief and other special offerings taken by the Wisconsin Conference in response to floods, tornadoes, and other emergencies.**
- **Local and community special needs – when local families face a crisis or ongoing special need, our church responds with clothing, food, money, gas cards, in-home help, etc. to the best of our ability, especially by our Ladies Aid.**
- **Adopt-a-Highway – we are the state-designated highway clean-up crew for two miles of State Highway 63 at Earl.**



- **Community Center role – the church sponsors weekly “Rummikube” players, and is available to non-members for family celebrations or gatherings. We have a written policy and guide on non-member use of the church.**
5. *Staff Members (including the position you are seeking):*
- **Pastor (Half-time position)**
 - **Organist**
 - **Financial Secretary**
 - **Treasurer**
 - **Custodial Services**
- Note: the positions other than the Pastor are given honoraria for their services.*
6. *Describe the mission and or purpose of your church (1 paragraph):*
The purpose/mission of Namekagon Congregational UCC is to worship together as a family, opening our doors with warmth to anyone who wishes to join us. In addition to the weekly church services, we gather and study God’s word through Lenten and Advent studies and ongoing educational programs. Individually and as a group, we go forth and share God’s love with the community by members giving freely of their time, talents and money for needs both large and small, global and local. We try and set a caring and Christian example in the church and wider community. Because He first loved us.
7. *Describe the ongoing pastoral responsibilities of the pastor you are seeking:*
Here are the main areas of the job: (from the job description)
- **Spiritual welfare of the congregation** – The Pastor is the spiritual leader and guide of our church, exhibiting the joy of a Christ-led life by word and example. The Deacons support the pastor in planning services and special programs, as well as serving as a Pastor-Parish relations sounding board.
 - **Sunday services, special services and sacraments** – we currently have one service at 10:30 every Sunday. The Pastor prepares the service and bulletin.* Deacons read the scriptures, and the choir performs on a fairly regular schedule. Special services are held for holidays and other events. Communion is held the first of every month; with baptisms, weddings, and confirmation when requested.
 - **Pastoral care and counseling to members and their families** in their homes upon request, during hospitalization or under medical care, and in response to grief, trauma, or family milestones.
 - **Office hours** – our commuting Pastors have provided one day during each week at the church or at church activities.
 - **Congregational meetings** – our Pastors attend and provide reports for quarterly and annual congregational meetings, as well as frequent attendance or leadership as needed at committee meetings and events.
 - **Serve as an ex-officio member of all boards and committees**
 - **Funeral services for members and non-members when requested**
 - **Nursing home services** – part of a rotation of local clergy providing Sunday afternoon services
 - **Community outreach and UCC Conference (Denominational) activities** – our pastors have kept informed on local events where their presence (along with attendance

by our members) serves as outreach and support to local activities, as well as highlighting our ministry in the area. They have also participated in joint ecumenical services for special occasions.

- **Church Records** – maintaining the official register of membership, births, deaths, marriages, and baptisms in our church family, and annual and special reporting to the Wisconsin and National UCC offices.
- **Continuing education** – for personal renewal and growth

**Support in administrative work such as preparing bulletins is negotiable depending on the needs of the prospective candidate*

8. *Describe the challenges you are facing as a church and how you hope your pastor will work with you to meet those challenges.*

We especially need our Pastor to be skilled and compassionate with elderly people and families facing end of life decisions and bereavement.

As with many congregations, our members are mostly retired. In the past, we were able to gain members or at least remain the same size congregation as people moved away (or moved back) to our area to retire. We have not seen people leave the church to join other local churches, but rather have had members leave the area to enter assisted-living facilities, be closer to family members for care, or they have passed away. Our wider-community support through friends and extended family members has also diminished because of local people either passing away, or leaving the area for closer access to family or care facilities.

We would like the help of a dynamic and enthusiastic pastor in attracting and sustaining new and younger members.

While we don't expect our Pastor to work magic expanding our membership, we need to sustain our church family and at least replace members as our current ones leave. We'd love to see the church full of families and Sunday School children again. We like to have our Pastor focus on meeting people, representing us in the community and at UCC events, and participating in ecumenical services. We have our members and officers take care of the administration and maintenance of the church to allow our Pastor to focus more on our spiritual and outreach leadership.

9. *Describe the gifts, talents, and skills and leadership style you are looking for in your next pastor.*

Spirit-led and passionate preaching – skilled and convincing speaker, sincere and inclusive in worship, prayer and conversation.

Faithful life example – follows the teachings of Jesus in her/his own life, and is empathetic to human demands and failings

Outreach and teaching – has a strong commitment to the educational ministry of the church and helps people develop their spiritual life; helps and encourages people to relate their faith to their daily lives

Compassionate and committed pastoral care – empathetic and compassionate with all people, and especially those facing life changes or in crisis.

Effective team building – builds fellowship and unity among members, friends, and the community; helps members develop leadership skills

Serves as a Good Shepherd – stays in contact with members, is outgoing and welcoming to newcomers, and (along with our members) is the “face” of our church in the community

Exhibits flexibility and acceptance – our members are not shy, but rather are spontaneous, loving, supportive, and enjoy sharing humor.

Joy in living in our rural, Northwoods setting – this is an area to cherish woods, water, wildlife and all the beauty of creation.

10. Describe the compensation you are offering, including dollar amounts. If less than full-time, specify the hours to be worked.

We support a half-time pastorate, and respect our Pastor’s off-time. We do appreciate flexibility in scheduling within a week, or between weeks when special services, celebrations, or funerals are needed. We trust our Pastor to arrange her or his weekly schedule accordingly.

We offer a base salary of \$16,200 per year. We also offer the following additional compensation (exact terms to be specified in the Call Covenant):

- **Mileage reimbursement** – (rate negotiable depending on situation)
- **Education leave** – 2 weeks leave per year; funding toward expenses set annually in the church budget
- **Vacation** – 2 weeks (including two Sundays) per year
- **Flexible half-time schedule** – scheduling includes Sunday Services and special services; midweek scheduling and office hours can be flexible during the week and the month
- **Sabbatical leave** – available after 6 years of service at Namekagon Church

Housing allowance, pension, insurances and moving allowance may be considered depending upon the situation of the prospective candidate.

11. When completed, submit to the Regional Minister for review. Then discuss with each candidate during the interview.