

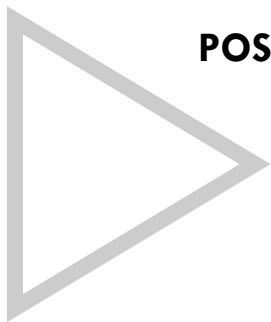
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
**LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE**

The Congregational United Church of Christ of Amery  
Amery, Wisconsin

Full Time Settled Pastor

Wisconsin Conference, Northwest Association

May 7, 2021



## POSITION POSTING

- LISTING INFORMATION
- SCOPE OF WORK
- COMPENSATION & SUPPORT
- WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

### LISTING INFORMATION

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|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Church name:</b>        | The Congregational United Church of Christ of Amery  |
| <b>Street address:</b>     | 201 Harriman Avenue North   Amery, WI 54001  |
| <b>Website:</b>            | <a href="https://www.ameryucc.org/">https://www.ameryucc.org/</a><br><a href="https://www.facebook.com/Amery-Congregational-UCC-240699869317431/">https://www.facebook.com/Amery-Congregational-UCC-240699869317431/</a> |
| <b>Conference:</b>         | Wisconsin Conference   |
| <b>Association:</b>        | Northwest Wisconsin Association  |
| <b>Conference Contact:</b> | Rob MacDougall, Associate Conference Minister WI Conference UCC<br>715-308-6120<br><a href="mailto:rmacdougall@wcucc.org">rmacdougall@wcucc.org</a>  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Summary of Ministry Description:</b> | We are a congregation that energetically welcomes those from all walks of life. This includes discussing the opportunity to become an open and affirming church, led by a group formed in January of 2021. We have a vision for growth and renewal that we hope an outgoing faith leader can help keep us motivated to achieve. |
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| <b>Photographs:</b>                            | See Appendix 1  |
| <b>What we value about living in our area:</b> | We are a faith-based community with a plethora of small town charms and fast access to big city culture just an hour away from Minneapolis - St. Paul. Our community is a year-round outdoor playground. We boast a wonderful school district and Health Partners Hospital. There are opportunities to grow spiritually, physically, & emotionally within our community.<br><a href="https://www.amerywi.gov/">https://www.amerywi.gov/</a> |
| <b>Current size of membership:</b>             | 171   |
| <b>Languages used in</b>                       | Though currently only ministering in English we are open to the   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>ministry</b>  | idea of extending the message of Jesus to those speaking other languages.   |
| <b>Position Title:</b>   | Pastor  |
| <b>Position Duration</b>   | Settled – a called position intended for longer-term ministry in which the minister moves church membership to the congregation and moves standing to related association |
| <b>Compensation Level</b>  | Full Time   |
| <b>Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?</b> | Yes, we intend to follow the conference guidelines.   |

## SCOPE OF WORK

### **Core Competencies:**

- Caring:** Our congregation is looking for someone who is able to connect with all ages of the membership
- Generalist:** Since we are a small congregation, there is a need for the pastor to be a generalist, seeking and supporting the congregation and the community where we are on life's journey.
- Outreach:** It is our goal to grow our congregation. To make this happen outreach in the community will be paramount. We are also a strong mission-driven church, Ware seeking a pastor who sees the church as not the building, but rather the world outside our walls.

### **Job Description:**

See APPENDIX 2

## COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

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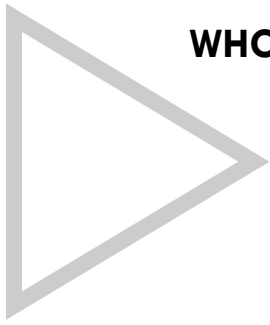
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| <b>Salary Basis:</b>   | The salary and benefit range offered is per Wisconsin Conference guidelines, which will include salary, housing allowance, car travel allowance, health insurance and pension.   |
| <b>Benefits:</b>   | Salary plus Benefits   |
| <b>What is the expected living situation for your next minister?</b>                                   | The living situation for our next minister is to live within the community. There is a housing allowance available.  |
| <b>Comment on the residential/commuting expectations for your next minister.</b>                       | We feel that to have the most effective ministry, living within our community will be best. We will provide a housing allowance to help with this. If a new Pastor would choose not to live within the community, commuting expenses would not be covered.   |
| <b>State any incentives:</b>   | We are open to discussing potential incentives. At this time we do not have any in place.  |
| <b>Describe peer and professional supports available for ministers in your association/conference:</b> | The Amery community has a local ministerium that meets monthly to collaborate and uplift one another. It helps bring the whole community together in many ways, including community Thanksgiving and Good Friday Services. Check out our virtual Thanksgiving Service from 2020 here:<br><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uuE_2IKYSQI">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uuE_2IKYSQI</a><br>There is also a Wisconsin Conference Circle of ministers that meets monthly for support. |

## WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

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| <b>Describe the ministry goals you envision your next minister co-collaborating with the congregation to achieve.</b>                  | Our goal is to have church growth with continued outreach and spiritual guidance for our members. Our church goal is to encourage each member to be active within the church. |
| <b>Describe how your vision of the minister you are now seeking will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond its walls.</b> | We would like our Pastor to be a leader for our members so everyone can embrace mission and outreach beyond our walls.  |
| <b>Specify language requirements or culturally specific capacities preferred in a</b>  | We do not have any specific language requirements but are open to new ways of outreach within our community.  |

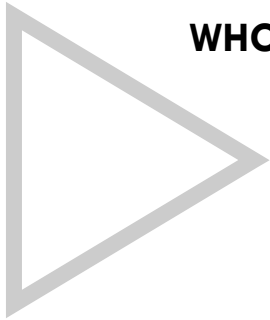
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| <p><b>next ministerial leader, and why those matter to the congregation's sense of calling.</b></p>  |   |
| <p><b>Based on what you have learned about who your church is, who your church's neighbor is, and who God is calling the church to become, describe four areas of excellence from <i>The Marks of Faithful &amp; Effective Authorized Ministry</i> that your next minister will display to further equip the congregation's ministry in these areas.</b></p> | <p>The four Marks of Faithful &amp; Effective Authorized Ministers in the United Church of Christ that our congregation finds most important are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation &amp; Ongoing Spiritual Practice</li> <li>• Caring For All Creation</li> <li>• Working Together for Justice &amp; Mercy</li> <li>• Strengthening Inter- &amp; Intra Personal Assets</li> </ul> |



## WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” (Matthew 22:37 NRSV)

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?</b>   | <p>We believe God is calling us to be/have the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mission-minded congregation</li><li>• Strong support for youth</li><li>• Come as you are, wherever you are</li><li>• We like each other, we’re a family</li><li>• Compassionate, caring group of people</li><li>• We want to have a glow that goes into the community</li></ul>  |
| <b>Describe how God is calling you to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of your community and congregation.</b> | <p>Through the year 2020 and beyond, as have many churches, we have had to adjust to this unpredictable virus. We found ourselves thinking outside the box and moving forward with new and exciting activities. We brought ourselves together with things like drive-thru birthday celebrations, phone trees, virtual coffee hours, and socially distanced worship. Our worship services went through many stages including virtual, outdoor, &amp; indoor with Covid precautions. The outdoor services went so well that we plan to continue with outdoor worship and expand on it by building a permanent outdoor shelter.</p> <p>We also spent many years hosting a community block party that we put on as an event that anyone could attend for free, which included food, fun, &amp; music. This brought so many people together in our green space. Though we have put it on hold with our help dwindling, we hope to find the volunteers to bring it back in the future one way or another.</p> <p><b>Our mission statement is:</b><br/>“We are a family of faith dedicated to the mission of making disciples, spreading the Good News and baptizing in the name of Jesus Christ! All are welcome!”</p> <p>Though we don’t disagree with our statement, we are very open to changing our statement in the future to reflect who we are as a congregation. We will accomplish this with the help of our new pastor. Our goal would be to create something every member can remember easily and the church can live by.</p> |



## WHO ARE WE NOW?

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)

- CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS
- 11-YEAR REPORT
- CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS
- PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING
- CHURCH FINANCES
- HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Describe your congregation's life of faith.</b>                             | We persevere and overcome challenges; we roll up our sleeves to put our faith into action.<br>We DO ministry, outreach, & community.  |
| <b>Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.</b>  | We have a positive reputation in our community because we enrich our faith through our actions towards others.  |
| <b>Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.</b>           | We have motivational Bible-based services that we relate to real life. Our family-like congregation comes together no matter where we worship, from the sanctuary, to outdoors, and even barn services at Christmas.  |
| <b>Describe the educational program/faith formation vision of your church.</b> | Sunday School, Youth Group, Confirmation, Adult Bible Study. People of all ages are involved in leadership and on committees, as well as participating in age-appropriate faith-building opportunities.   |
| <b>Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.</b>   | We have five permanent committees. We form sub-committees for special activities or programs when needed. Each committee has a representative who comes to monthly council meetings. They bring important information from their own committee meetings before council for information. This includes any decisions the committees may have made since the last council meeting. Council has final say in sustainable decision making. The Pastor is not a voting member of council, though the Pastor's input is valued. If needed we will call a special council meeting for situations that require immediate attention. For example, with ever-changing COVID-19 we did have an urgent council meeting when the virus |

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|  | <p>first struck to be sure to put our members' safety first. Overall the Pastor is expected to attend Diaconate and council meetings but is welcome at any others. This could be up to six hours a month in meetings.</p> <p>The Five Committees Are:<br/> Diaconate, Congregational Giving Committee (&amp; Memorial),<br/> Christian Education, Trustees, and Missions &amp; Social Concerns</p> <p>Church Officers Are:<br/> Moderator, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Clerk, &amp; Recording Secretary</p> |
| <p><b>Can you provide the next minister with a copy of an organization structure, bylaws and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance?</b></p> | <p>Yes</p>  |



# 11-YEAR REPORT

## UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST ELEVEN YEAR CHURCH PROFILE BASED ON DATA REPORTED IN UCC YEARBOOKS



Church#: 880020

Assoc: 828

Schedule: 0

Congregational UCC

Amery

WI

54001

| YEAR | MEMBERS | AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE | CHR ED/ FAITH FORM | CONFIRMATION | CONFESSION | TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM | DEATHS OR TRANS OUT | OTHER LOSSES | NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED |
|------|---------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------|------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| 2009 | 272     | 125                   | 24                 | 1            | 22         | 0                    | 5                   | 9            | 9                      |
| 2010 | 258     | 125                   | 15                 | 4            | 6          | 0                    | 4                   | 20           | -14                    |
| 2011 | 244     | 125                   | 48                 | 4            | 4          | 0                    | 6                   | 17           | -15                    |
| 2012 | 238     | 106                   | 55                 | 3            | 19         | 0                    | 5                   | 23           | -6                     |
| 2013 | 241     | 105                   | 90                 | 4            | 1          | 2                    | 4                   | 0            | 3                      |
| 2014 | 237     | 105                   | 55                 | 5            | 5          | 0                    | 7                   | 7            | -4                     |
| 2015 | 237     | 105                   | 55                 | 0            | 0          | 0                    | 0                   | 0            | 0                      |
| 2016 | 257     | 105                   | 80                 | 1            | 0          | 19                   | 5                   | 0            | 15                     |
| 2017 | 205     | 87                    | 90                 | 3            | 0          | 7                    | 3                   | 59           | -52                    |
| 2018 | 205     | 87                    | 90                 | 0            | 0          | 0                    | 0                   | 0            | 0                      |
| 2019 | 205     | 87                    | 90                 | 0            | 0          | 0                    | 0                   | 0            | 0                      |

| YEAR | CURRENT EXPENSES | CAPITAL PAYMENTS | BASIC SUPPORT | TOT OTHER UCC GIVING | TOTAL OCWM | OTHER GIFTS | WIDER MISSION | BASIC SUPP% CURR LOCAL | TOTAL EXPEND | PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS |
|------|------------------|------------------|---------------|----------------------|------------|-------------|---------------|------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| 2009 | \$175,692        | \$0              | \$8,325       | \$1,892              | \$10,217   | \$0         | \$10,217      | 4.74                   | \$185,909    | \$204,445             |
| 2010 | \$176,887        | \$0              | \$8,544       | \$1,890              | \$10,434   | \$0         | \$10,434      | 4.83                   | \$187,321    | \$205,349             |
| 2011 | \$179,010        | \$0              | \$7,304       | \$1,364              | \$8,668    | \$0         | \$8,668       | 4.08                   | \$187,687    | \$288,871             |
| 2012 | \$188,588        | \$0              | \$6,802       | \$1,038              | \$7,840    | \$0         | \$7,840       | 3.61                   | \$196,428    | \$217,873             |
| 2013 | \$179,111        | \$0              | \$8,744       | \$791                | \$9,535    | \$0         | \$9,535       | 4.88                   | \$188,646    | \$173,438             |
| 2014 | \$166,250        | \$0              | \$5,881       | \$8,732              | \$14,613   | \$42,944    | \$57,557      | 3.54                   | \$223,807    | \$161,986             |
| 2015 | \$166,250        | \$0              | \$7,395       | \$1,844              | \$9,239    | \$0         | \$9,239       | 4.45                   | \$175,489    | \$0                   |
| 2016 | \$166,250        | \$0              | \$9,754       | \$5,137              | \$14,891   | \$0         | \$14,891      | 5.87                   | \$181,141    | \$196,600             |
| 2017 | \$182,700        | \$0              | \$11,074      | \$2,583              | \$13,657   | \$0         | \$13,657      | 6.00                   | \$190,307    | \$172,200             |
| 2018 | \$182,700        | \$0              | \$8,094       | \$2,313              | \$10,407   | \$0         | \$10,407      | 4.43                   | \$193,107    | \$0                   |
| 2019 | \$182,700        | \$0              | \$13,355      | \$2,634              | \$15,989   | \$0         | \$15,989      | 7.31                   | \$198,689    | \$0                   |

| % CHANGE  | MEMBERS | AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE | CHR ED/ FAITH FORM | TOTAL ADDITIONS | TOTAL REMOVALS | CURR LOCAL EXPENSES | TOTAL OCWM | TOTAL EXPENDITURE |
|-----------|---------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 2014-2019 | -13.50  | -17.14                | 83.64              | -100.00         | -100.00        | 9.89                | 9.42       | -11.22            |
| 2009-2019 | -24.63  | -30.40                | 275.00             | -100.00         | -100.00        | 3.99                | 56.48      | 6.87              |

Please note: Zero values ("0" or "\$0") may reflect missing information in some years. Christian Education/Faith Formation refers to Church School Enrollment for all figures before 2007.

## CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

|  |     | <i>Is this number an estimate?</i> |
|--|-----|------------------------------------|
| Number of active members:                                | 90  | Yes                                |
| Number of active non-members:                            | 45  | Yes                                |
| Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above): | 135 |                                    |

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

|                                  |     | <i>Is this number an estimate?</i> |
|----------------------------------|-----|------------------------------------|
| More than 10 years:              | 85% | Yes                                |
| Less than 10, more than 5 years: | 10% | Yes                                |

|                    |    |     |
|--------------------|----|-----|
| Less than 5 years: | 5% | Yes |
|--------------------|----|-----|

**Total of total participants by age:**

| 0-11 | 12-17 | 18-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | 65-74 | 75+ | <i>Are these numbers an estimate?</i> |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|---------------------------------------|
| 16   | 25    | 6     | 5     | 10    | 10    | 12    | 24    | 23  | Yes                                   |

**Percentage of adults in various household types:**

|                                  |     | <i>Is this number an estimate?</i> |
|----------------------------------|-----|------------------------------------|
| Single adults under 35:          | 1%  | Yes                                |
| Households with minors:          | 5%  | Yes                                |
| Single adults age 35-65:         | 5%  | Yes                                |
| Joint households with no minors: | 49% | Yes                                |
| Single adults over 65:           | 40% | Yes                                |

**Education level of adult participants by percentage:**

|                         |      | <i>Is this number an estimate?</i> |
|-------------------------|------|------------------------------------|
| High school:            | 100% | Yes                                |
| College:                | 65%  | Yes                                |
| Graduate School:        | 40%  | Yes                                |
| Specialty Training:     | 20%  | Yes                                |
| Other (please specify): | N/A  | Yes                                |

**Percentage of adults in various employment types:**

|                                    |     | <i>Is this number an estimate?</i> |
|------------------------------------|-----|------------------------------------|
| Adults who are employed:           | 40% | Yes                                |
| Adults who are retired:            | 50% | Yes                                |
| Adults who are not fully employed: | 10% | Yes                                |

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| <b>Describe the range of occupations</b> | Service, Trades, & Professionals all in our congregation, |
|--|---|

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| <b>of working adults in the congregation:</b>   | a well-rounded mix.   |
| <b>Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation, and the overall racial make-up. Most UCC congregations tend to describe themselves as “diverse.” Yet, the vast majority of UCC congregations are mono-cultural. What does diversity mean in your context?</b> | Being located in a small rural town we have little diversity, almost totally Caucasian simply due to the population of our area. Our youth group has a small amount of diversity. |
| <b>Has your congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do you plan to hold one on the near future (perhaps using, for example, the Welcoming Diversity Inventory)? Please note the date. Comment after the exercise:</b>                        | We have had conversations about being open to new possibilities and truly believe we open our doors to everyone no matter who they are or where they are in their life.           |

## **PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING**

**Complete the following chart. Please leave blank any fields that are not applicable to your congregation.**

| Ways of Gathering                  | Estimated number of people involved in attendance | Who plans each of the listed gatherings? <i>(list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff)</i> |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Adult Groups or Classes            | 8/class   | Money Management Class - Led by church member, Pastor had previously been involved but would not be expected to be.                               |
| Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i> | ~ 4   | Pastor & Family/Parents/Individual  |
| Children’s Groups or Classes       | 15  | Youth Director & Sunday School Director/Teachers  |
| Christmas Eve and Easter Worship   | ~ 100   | Pastor, Music Director, Youth   |

|  |  |   |
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|  |  | Director  |
| Church-wide Meals                                  | 150 (Monthly Family Table and Annual Walleye Dinner) | Church Members Organize & Work these dinners.                                 |
| Choirs and Music Groups                            | 4  | Quartet led by Music Director   |
| Church-based Bible Study                           | 25   | Three Bible Studies led by church members; Previous Pastor led some of these. |
| Communion ( <i>served how often?</i> )             | 1/Month  | Pastor & Deacons  |
| Community Meals                                    | ~30 weekly   | Church Members, Youth Director, Volunteers                                    |
| Confirmation ( <i>number confirmed last year</i> ) | 3  | Pastor & Youth Director   |
| Drama (dinner theater)                             | 550  | Mission Team Plans, Help from Many  |
| Funerals ( <i>number last year</i> )               | ~ 8  | Pastor, Families  |
| Intergenerational Groups                           | N/A  |   |
| Outdoor Worship                                    | ~ 50   | Pastor, Music Director, Church Members  |
| Prayer or Meditation Groups                        | N/A  |   |
| Public Advocacy Work                               | N/A  |   |
| Retreats   | N/A  |   |
| Theology or Bible Programs in the Community        | N/A  |   |
| Weddings ( <i>number last year</i> )               | Avg, 2   | Pastor, Couple  |
| Worship (time slot: Sunday)                        | Avg. 40<br>Pre C19 ~100                              | Pastor, Youth Director  |
| Worship (time slot: Wednesday)                     | Avg. 30  | Pastor, Youth Director  |
| Young Adult Groups or Classes                      | N/A  |   |

|   |         |  |
|---|---------|--|
| Youth Groups or Classes                   | Avg. 30 | Youth Director, Pastor, Youth Volunteers   |
| Other: Mission Trip (20 Years & Counting) | ~25     | Mission Team Members   |
| Other: Ruby's Pantry Food Distribution    | ~200    | We assist financially & with volunteers, Monthly distribution is planned by separate multi-church committee. |

**List all members or regular participants in your congregation who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers. Indicate those with current United Church of Christ Three-Way Covenants (i.e. serving in a congregation) or Four-Way Covenants (i.e. serving in a ministry beyond a congregation).**

| Name           | Three- or Four-Way Covenant?<br>(3 or 4 or No) | Ministry Setting               | Type of Ministry Role | Retired?<br>(Y or N) |
|----------------|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Chuck Yoak     | No   | Member for Retirement Purposes | Retired               | Yes                  |
| Barry Schaefer | No   | Member for Retirement Purposes | Retired               | Yes                  |

**If one or more previous pastors or retired ministers currently hold membership in the church, describe their role(s) in the life of the congregation:**

Retired ministers who have membership but are not active in the congregation. One was not a minister at our church.

**List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill. Indicate which staff person serves as head of staff.**

| Staff Position   | Head of Staff? | Compensation<br>(full time, part time, volunteer) | Supervised by     | Length of Tenure for current person in this position |
|------------------|----------------|---|-------------------|--|
| Church Secretary | No             | Part-time   | Chair of Trustees | 5 Years  |

|                |    |           |                   |          |
|----------------|----|-----------|-------------------|----------|
| Youth Director | No | Part-time | Chair of Trustees | <1 Year  |
| Music Director | No | Part-time | Chair of Trustees | 40 Years |

## REFLECTION

**Reflection:** After reviewing the congregational demographics and activities above, what does this information reflect about your congregation's overall ministry?

The age of our congregation has little to do with the effectiveness to do ministry and outreach in the community. You will see all members working hand-in-hand to accomplish our goal of reaching out locally and beyond. We see ourselves as the hands and feet of Jesus.

## CHURCH FINANCES

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Current annual income (dollars used during most recent fiscal year)

| Source  | Amount     |
|---|------------|
| Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving   | \$ 151,674 |
| Endowment Proceeds ( <i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i> ) | \$ 0       |
| Endowment Draw ( <i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal"</i> )                   | \$ 0       |
| Fundraising Events  | \$ 1,690   |
| Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose   | \$ 20,000  |
| Grants  | \$ 0       |
| Rentals of Church Building  | \$ 4,730   |
| Rentals of Church Parsonage   | \$ 0       |
| Support from Related Organizations ( <i>e.g. Women's Group</i> )  | \$ 0       |
| Transfers from Special Accounts   | \$ 0       |
| Other (specify): Interest   | \$ 843     |
| Other (specify): Outside Communion  | \$ 52      |

|       |             |
|-------|-------------|
| TOTAL | \$ 178,989* |
|-------|-------------|

\*due to COVID-19, this value is an approximate 10% reductions from 2019.

**Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year):**

\$ 192,980 - *See recent church budget in Appendix 3 for full details.*

**Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage?**

\$202,358 for 2020 – 39%. There was a 2-month period between retirement of current pastor and starting of interim pastor where the church paid for no ministerial support.

**Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church?**

No

**Is your church 5-for-5, i.e. does it include each of the following contributions during the church year? (*Indicate those included during the most recent fiscal year*)**

- ☒ Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM – Basic Support)
- ☒ One Great Hour of Sharing
- ☐ Strengthen the Church
- ☒ Neighbors in Need
- ☒ Christmas Fund

**In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered? If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, what is that percentage? (*Recommended 10%*)**

Within our budget we allocated 4% of our contributions to OCWM.

**What is the church's current indebtedness?**

**Total amount of loan debt:** \$0

**Reason for debt:** No debt

**Are capital and other payments current?** All payments are current.

**If a building program is projected or underway, describe it, including the projected start/end date of the building project and the total project budget.**

No building project at this time.

**If the church has had capital campaigns in the last ten years, describe:**

| Year(s) | Purpose                          | Goal     | Result    | Impact   |
|---------|----------------------------------|----------|-----------|--|
| 2012    | Purchase Land/Parking Lot        | \$60,000 | \$ 60,000 | We were able to add green space to our church and a new parking area. We raised these funds in just three weeks.   |
| 2020    | Pastor Schaefer Scholarship Fund | \$5,000  | \$5,710   | To honor our previous pastor of 34 years we established a scholarship fund to be given to one or more high school seniors for future years. This is an active fund that can be continually added to. |

**If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:**

| Year(s) | Purpose | Goal | Result | Impact |
|---------|---------|------|--------|--------|
|         |         | \$   | \$     |        |
|         |         | \$   | \$     |        |

**Describe the prominent mission component(s) involved in the most recent (or current) capital campaign.** None

**Does your church have an endowment?** No

#### **Other Assets**

**Reserves (savings):** \$ 77,784

**Investments (other than endowment):** \$ 132,190

**Does your church have a parsonage?** No

**Describe all buildings owned by the church:** Church Building Only

**Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church:** N/A

**Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?**



All spaces are wheelchair accessible. The exception of the pulpit, which could be made wheelchair assessable.

**Reflection: After reviewing the church's finances and assets described above, what does this information reflect about your congregation's mission and ministry?**

COVID-19 changed many of the mission and outreach activities we normally conduct. For context, in 2019 the church had expenses associated with Missions and Social Concerns of \$52,267, which represented about 20% of our total expenses. We truly see the church as being outside our walls.

## **HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

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**Name one to three significant happenings in the history of your church that have shaped the identity of your congregation. Add the most important event in the life of your church in the past 10 years.**

Rather than a specific event we feel that the group activities that make up our outreach are what shape who we are as a church. These include things like our mission trips, our block parties and our youth group, who also participate in outreach and help with projects in the community. We are focused on outreach.

**Describe a specific change your church has managed in the recent past.**

Going through the pandemic of COVID-19 brought our church new challenges and reasons to be creative. We worshipped in many forms and advanced our digital presence on Facebook & YouTube. We added a second camera to our sanctuary and worked on details to make the service run smoothly, even when having a hybrid service, to serve both a limited number in the church as well as those watching online. We feel we have come out much stronger.

**Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. "Where two or three are gathered, there will be disagreement...." Describe your congregation's values and practices when it comes to conflict.**

We can honestly and joyfully say we have not had any major conflicts within our congregation. When a small conflict arises, it is typically a clash of personalities and we have been able to openly communicate with one another. We also have a church moderator who acts as a neutral party in conflicts and will work hard to help resolve any issues. Overall, we work as a team and family.

**Ministerial History *(include all previous ministerial staff for the past 30 years)***

| Staff member's name | Years of service       | UCC Standing (Y/N) |
|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| Barry Schaefer      | Nov. 1985-Jul.<br>2020 | Yes                |

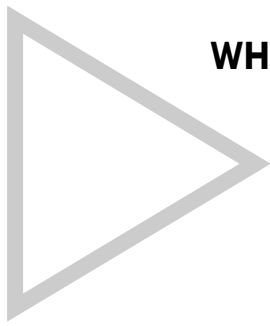
**Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:**

We have learned that we rely on a pastor that is committed to the congregation and the work we do here. We appreciate longevity, as solid relationships can be formed with familiarity.

**Has any past leader left under pressure or by involuntary termination?** No

**Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?** No

**Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at your church?** No



## WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)

- COMMUNITY VISION
- MISSION InSite

## COMMUNITY VISION

**How do the relationships and activities of your congregation extend outward in service and advocacy?**

For 20 years our church has gone on a weeklong mission trip. These trips are in participation of a Habitat for Humanity build. Relationships are made with the leaders of each affiliate of Habitat. Our team size varies from year to year, but the total of participants over 20 years is 156 people. People in our community beyond our church have joined us in the Habitat builds. Our trips have taken us to five different states, meeting different families who just needed a hand up.

Meeting individuals and families in their time of need is what our church does. In our community the church has reached out to support members and non-members who are suffering. Support provided has been after a devastating house fire, a tragic loss of life and life-threatening illness. Our youth actively reach out as volunteers for local organizations, including helping with the local homeless shelter regularly. Outreach and service has been a vital part of who we are as a church. It is what we continue to strive for and build on.

**Describe your congregation’s participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ (association / conference / national setting).**

This is an area we could grow. Currently we participate in times of giving to things like One Great Hour of Sharing, The Christmas Funds, & Neighbors in Need.

**Many local churches love to tell the story of what they are doing in the community to transform lives. Some have identified certain aspects of their witness into the wider community using language shared with other UCC congregations. (Find more information as desired at [ucc.org](http://ucc.org).) Check any statements below that apply to your UCC faith community.**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accessible to All (A2A)           | <input type="checkbox"/> Just Peace                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creation Justice                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Global Mission Church                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Justice                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Open and Affirming (ONA)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faithful and Welcoming            | <input type="checkbox"/> WISE Congregation for Mental Health   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> God Is Still Speaking (GISS)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Other UCC designations:               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Border and Immigrant Justice      | <input type="checkbox"/> Designations from other denominations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None                       |

**Reflect on what the above statement(s) mean(s) to your community. Is your congregation interested in working toward any of the above statements of witness in the near future?**

Our church is currently enrolled in informational sessions regarding becoming an ONA church. We are open to exploring other areas as well as we continue to grow and experience further congregational awaking.

**Describe your congregation's participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities (with other denominations and religious groups, local and regional).**

The churches in our community hold a community Thanksgiving Eve church service which involves all of the churches in Amery. The host church changes each year. During COVID-19, our community churches held not only a virtual Thanksgiving Eve service, but also a virtual Christmas Eve service with parts of the service done by each of the area churches. These are coordinated at the monthly ministerium meetings that keep all of the local congregations well connected. We also have a good relationship with the church across the street from us (New Life Church). We have held joint services with them once a year to enjoy each other's company and talents.

We also hold combined VBS jointly with other churches in the area to increase the overall number and experience for our young Christians.

**If your congregation has a mission statement, how does that mission statement compare to the actual time spent engaging in different activities? Think of the range of activities from time spent gathering, to governance, to time spent going out.**

We feel that our mission statement is due for updating. We do not focus on what our mission statement says. Instead, we plant seeds of faith through our outreach and programs with youth.

**Reflect on the scope of work assigned to your pastor(s). How is their community ministry and their ministry in and on behalf of the wider church accounted for in the congregation's expectations on their time?**

While focusing on the wider church is important, we believe that it is important to focus on our local community where the need is great.

## **MISSION InSite**

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**Comment on your congregation's MissionInsite report with data for your neighborhood(s) or area. What trends and opportunities are shown?**

Overall, we see that our community and county fall below the national average for large household concerns, such as violence, divorce, job insecurity, etc. We also see that we are trending towards area population growth.

**How do your congregation's internal demographics compare or contrast to a) the neighborhoods adjacent to your church, and b) other neighborhoods with which your church connects?**

Our demographics are reflective of our neighborhood and community.

**How are the demographics of the community currently shaping ministry, or not?**

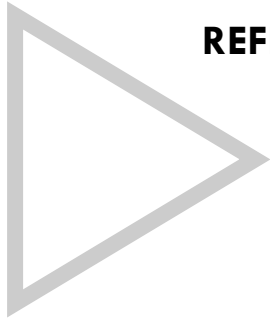
Our community and county have lesser concerns or worries about religion, as we fall below the national averages where these are concerned. We also see that the biggest desire and importance to people when selecting a church is to have a warm and friendly welcome, which is something our church thrives at.

**What do you hear when you talk to community leaders and ask them what your church is known for?**

Other churches and members of our community know us for the outreach and volunteer work we do within our community and beyond. They also know us for our meals like the Walleye Dinner and Dinner Theater.

**What do new people in the church say when asked what got them involved?**

Many of our members and new friends to the congregation got involved through personal invitation or attending a church-sponsored community event. Once they come, they talk about our welcoming and friendly atmosphere.



## REFERENCES

Full Written References can be found in Appendix 4.

### REFERENCE 1

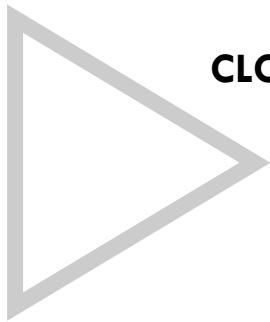
Garth Schumacher / Interim Pastor / Amery Congregational Church  
612-251-3773 / garthschumacher@gmail.com / He is our current interim pastor helping us through this process and leading us in worship

### REFERENCE 2

Glen & Mary Strom/ Members & Youth Leaders / New Life Church  
715-268-8217 / They are leaders of the church across the street which our congregation interacts with as well as having been on mission trips with our members.

### REFERENCE 3

Stephanie Lechman / 4K Paraprofessional / St. Croix Falls School District  
Stephanie.lechman@gmail.com / Previous Youth Director at our church



## **CLOSING THOUGHTS**

- CLOSING PRAYER
- STATEMENT OF CONSENT
- CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION VALIDATION

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

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Most wonderful Father, we call upon your name as we begin a new chapter in the life of our congregation and our newly chosen pastor and family. May they become an intimate part of our church family as we grow together in your loving spirit. Enable them to work with us as a team and fill them with patience and perseverance as they build a foundation for a caring and outreaching ministry. We pray that our new pastor will always have a passion to know Christ more intimately and pastor out of a humble spirit. May we as a congregation in turn provide a solid Christ-like foundation for them and their family to bloom and grow in your Word. Gracious Father may our pastor's messages and preaching come to us, not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that our faith might not rest on the wisdom of man, but upon Your power. This we ask in Your holy name Amen.



## STATEMENT OF CONSENT

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The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors and teachers and in other ministerial positions is strengthened when vital information is openly shared by covenantal partners. To that end, we attest that, to the best of our abilities, we have provided information in this profile that accurately represents our church. We have not knowingly withheld any information that would be helpful to candidates.

As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending suitable new minister for our church, we have been authorized to share the information herein with potential candidates. We understand that a candidate may wish to secure further knowledge, information, and opinions about our church. We encourage a candidate to do so, recognizing that an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing and healthy relationships between calling bodies and persons seeking a ministry position.

### **Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile?**

Our church assembled a multi-generational Pulpit Committee, made up of eight members, one from each of five church committees, one church officer, and two additional church members. We reached out to the congregation as a whole for input through surveys and focus groups.

Signed:  \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ May 7, 2021 \_\_\_\_\_

Chad W. Leonard  
Chair, Pulpit Committee

## Appendix 1 - Photographs

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Some highlights of our church life include, our mission trips working with Habitat for Humanity affiliates, our youth ministry, Annual Dinner Theater fundraiser, & our block parties.



## Appendix 2 – Job Description

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### **Pastor**

**Use of position:** The position of Pastor is a full-time position with responsibilities for congregational spiritual growth, care and support, communication, management/leadership of staff and outreach.

**Reports to:** The pastor shall be under the direction of the Trustees.

**Education/Experience:** Master of Divinity Ordination in the United Church of Christ

**Physical Requirement:** Ability to spend various amounts of time sitting, standing, bending, twisting, reaching, and walking. Able to occasionally lift to 20 pounds.

### **Qualifications/Skills:**

- Must be an avowed Christian with a faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.
- Must be a highly motivated individual who enjoys working with a congregation of multiple generations to help them grow spiritually, have a penchant for bringing people to Christ, and to provide pastoral care to all members of the congregation.
- Must have good organizational and communication skills to successfully relate to the public and members of the congregation in a positive and effective manner.
- Must present a pleasant and helpful attitude to church members, visitors, and community.
- Must conduct oneself in a manner consistent with the norms and policies of the Congregational Church of Amery at all times.
- Must maintain a neat and proper appearance.
- Must maintain strict confidentiality regarding all ministry matters of private concern.
- Must follow Polk County mandatory reporting guidelines.
- Eagerness to continue learning as needed to perform job duties.

### **Duties and Responsibilities: Promote the Spiritual Growth of the Congregation**

- When the Pastor leads worship he/she:
  - Teaches Congregation the principles of Christian faith.
  - Challenges Congregation to implement Christ's teaching in our lives.
  - Selects appropriate/interesting and various topics for sermons.
  - Delivers sermons that are well-organized and thought provoking.
  - Shows appropriate emphasis on public or social issues.
  - Shows appropriate emphasis on current Congregation issues.
  - Effectively conducts announcements, celebrations, and concerns.
  - Chooses appropriate music for services.
  - Effectively leads communication.
  - Effectively teaches/interprets Scripture.
  - Encourages participation by lay readers.
  - Engages Congregation in worship by using creative/innovative methods.
- When teaching **classes**/other groups he/she:
  - Is organized and prepared.
  - Is knowledgeable about the subject being addressed.
  - Is interested/enthusiastic about the subject.
  - Responds to the needs of participants.

- Uses a teaching style appropriate for the participants and subject.
- Encourages discussion of biblical and theological issues by all ages.
- Provides appropriate direction/support for Committees.

### **Care and Support**

- Pastoral Care:
  - Initiates, or on request, visits members in hospital, nursing homes or shut ins.
  - Responds in a timely manner to emergency or crisis needs of the Congregation.
  - Makes self-available to all members of Congregation.
  - Effectively uses lay leadership to assist in pastoral care.
  - Facilitates incorporation of church newcomers into the life of the Congregation.
  - Seeks creative ways to form personal relationships with Congregation members.
  - Effectively conducts ceremonial rites.
- Personal Contact:
  - Is easy to talk with.
  - Understands individual concerns.
  - Is effective in trying to assist individuals.
  - Helps to explore our concerns.
  - Makes helpful referrals when needed.
  - Is not judgmental.
  - Is an effective listener.
  - Maintains confidentiality.
  - Brings Christian principles and prayer to individual concerns.
- Welcoming:
  - Fosters a welcoming atmosphere in worship.
  - Maintains a system to follow-up on visitors.
  - Visits potential members.
  - Models a warm and welcoming attitude to Congregation.

### **Management Leadership:**

- Assists the Trustees in evaluation.
- Attends church events regularly.
- Delegates to personal assistant and Congregation members duties when possible.
- Maintains good rapport with staff.
- Follows through on commitments.
- Responds to mail and phone messages promptly.
- Keeps appointments.
- Keeps Christ at the center of the work of the Council and Pastor-Congregation relations.
- Is able to earn trust/confidence of lay leaders and Congregation.
- Involves others in decision making.
- Exercises appropriate use of authority.
- Actively participates in discussions and activities.
- Is open to other points of views and suggestions.

- Works effectively with small groups.
- Recognizes the diverse gifts and talents of individuals.
- Deals constructively with criticism of himself/herself.
- Deals constructively with interpersonal conflicts.
- Challenges lay leaders in spiritual growth.

**Outreach (Ministry beyond the Congregation):**

- Is actively involved in ministry beyond the Congregation.
- Encourages the Congregation to become involved in ministry to the community.
- Selects appropriate groups, issues, or missions with which to work.
- Spends appropriate amount of time in outside activities.
- Is effective in ministry beyond the Congregation.
- Helps establish a positive image in the community.
- Strives to be a role model of Christian faith and service in the community.
- Devotes an appropriate amount of time to UCC activities.
- Assists the Congregation in appreciating its connection to the wider church.

**Professional and Personal Growth:**

- Recognizes his professional strengths and weaknesses.
- Seeks continuing education opportunities for skill development and spiritual growth.
- Balances professional and personal needs effectively.
- Plans regular time away from the Congregation and informs the Congregation of these plans in a timely manner.

## Appendix 3 – 2021 BUDGET

### 2021 Congregational Church Budget Details

| High Category       | Category                         | CY2020    | adj2021   | \$ Variance | % Variance | Comments  |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|------------|---|
| Buildings & Grounds | Secretary's salary               | \$ 13,775 | \$ 13,811 | \$ 36       | 0%         | 2% increase   |
| Buildings & Grounds | Utilities-electric               | \$ 8,700  | \$ 8,700  | \$ -        | 0%         |   |
| Buildings & Grounds | Cleaning Services                | \$ 6,200  | \$ 6,200  | \$ -        | 0%         |   |
| Buildings & Grounds | Multi-peril insurance            | \$ 5,220  | \$ 6,000  | \$ 780      | 15%        |   |
| Buildings & Grounds | Utilities-gas                    | \$ 3,000  | \$ 3,000  | \$ -        | 0%         |   |
| Buildings & Grounds | Building maintenance             | \$ 16,000 | \$ 12,000 | \$ (4,000)  | -90%       |   |
| Buildings & Grounds | Telephone                        | \$ 1,500  | \$ 1,500  | \$ -        | 0%         |   |
| Buildings & Grounds | Copier expense                   | \$ 3,000  | \$ 3,000  | \$ -        | 0%         |   |
| Buildings & Grounds | Snow Removal/Lawn                | \$ 1,800  | \$ 1,800  | \$ -        | 0%         |   |
| Buildings & Grounds | Utilities-water/sewer            | \$ 850    | \$ 850    | \$ -        | 0%         | based on actual                                       |
| Buildings & Grounds | Garbage Services                 | \$ 1,100  | \$ 1,100  | \$ -        | 0%         |   |
| Buildings & Grounds | Office Supplies                  | \$ 1,300  | \$ 1,500  | \$ 200      | 14%        |   |
| Buildings & Grounds | Social Security                  | \$ 1,054  | \$ 1,075  | \$ 21       | 2%         | 2% increase   |
| Buildings & Grounds | Association dues                 | \$ 925    | \$ 925    | \$ -        | 0%         |   |
| Buildings & Grounds | Postage                          | \$ 400    | \$ 900    | \$ 500      | 204%       | includes \$250.00 for Congregational Giving Committee |
| Buildings & Grounds | Equipment/Software               | \$ 2,000  | \$ 2,000  | \$ -        | 0%         |   |
| Growing the Faith   | Youth Director                   | \$ 17,217 | \$ 17,561 | \$ 344      | 2%         | 2% increase   |
| Growing the Faith   | Social Security                  | \$ 1,487  | \$ 1,517  | \$ 30       | 2%         | 2% increase   |
| Growing the Faith   | Nursery                          | \$ -      | \$ -      | \$ -        | -100%      |   |
| Growing the Faith   | Youth Activities                 | \$ 1,000  | \$ 1,000  | \$ -        | 0%         |   |
| Growing the Faith   | General Christian Ed             | \$ 1,500  | \$ 1,500  | \$ -        | 0%         |   |
| Growing the Faith   | eGiving Expenses                 | \$ 500    | \$ 750    | \$ 250      | 43%        |   |
| Growing the Faith   | Youth Director - Cell Expense    | \$ 1,344  | \$ 1,344  | \$ -        | 0%         |   |
| Growing the Faith   | Youth Director - Auto Expense    | \$ 250    | \$ 250    | \$ -        | 0%         |   |
| Growing the Faith   | Youth Director - Continuing Ed   | \$ 200    | \$ 200    | \$ -        | 0%         |   |
| Missions & Outreach | Diaconate                        | \$ 300    | \$ 300    | \$ -        | 0%         |   |
| Missions & Outreach | OCWM                             | \$ 7,772  | \$ 8,088  | \$ 316      | 4%         | based on 4% of the budget                             |
| Worshiping Together | Pastor Salary                    | \$ 60,866 | \$ 52,000 | \$ (8,866)  | -15%       |   |
| Worshiping Together | Pastor Social Security Offset    | \$ -      | \$ 3,978  | \$ 3,978    |            |   |
| Worshiping Together | Pastor Health Insurance          | \$ -      | \$ 3,240  | \$ 3,240    |            |   |
| Worshiping Together | Pastor Housing                   | \$ 19,123 | \$ 20,000 | \$ 877      | 5%         |   |
| Worshiping Together | Pension                          | \$ 9,561  | \$ 10,080 | \$ 519      | 5%         |   |
| Worshiping Together | Pension Medicare Supplement Plan | \$ -      | \$ 7,776  | \$ 7,776    |            |   |
| Worshiping Together | Pension Dental Insurance         | \$ -      | \$ 984    | \$ 984      |            |   |
| Worshiping Together | Life/Disability Insurance        | \$ 1,024  | \$ 1,080  | \$ 56       | 5%         |   |
| Worshiping Together | Organ/Music Director             | \$ 6,750  | \$ 6,750  | \$ -        | 0%         | \$125 @ 54 sessions                                   |
| Worshiping Together | Social Security                  | \$ 516    | \$ 516    | \$ 0        | 0%         |   |
| Worshiping Together | Pastor Cell                      | \$ 1,344  | \$ 2,160  | \$ 816      | 58%        |   |
| Worshiping Together | Relief Pastor                    | \$ 600    | \$ 600    | \$ -        | -100%      |   |
| Worshiping Together | Religious Supplies               | \$ 500    | \$ 600    | \$ 100      | 20%        |   |
| Worshiping Together | Pastor's Auto Expense            | \$ 2,600  | \$ 2,860  | \$ 260      | 12%        |   |

Version 1

### 2021 Congregational Church Budget Details

|                     |                 |            |            |          |    |                      |
|---------------------|-----------------|------------|------------|----------|----|----------------------|
| Worshiping Together | Relief Organist | \$ -       | \$ -       | \$ -     | 0% | moved to Organ/Music |
| Worshiping Together | Music Expense   | \$ 800     | \$ 800     | \$ -     | 0% |                      |
| Total               | Total           | \$ 202,078 | \$ 210,296 | \$ 8,218 | 4% |                      |



## **Appendix 4 – References**

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### **REFERENCE LETTER**

#### **Areas of strength**

Congregational, United Church of Christ of Amery has several strengths. Mission is foremost on the list. The people here like to roll up their sleeves to do good works in the local community or on their annual mission trips. This includes large town-wide events that helps to raise funds for worthy causes.

Another strength is their youth outreach. Before the pandemic, their Wednesday afternoon, after school youth group had between 20 and 35 attendees. Many youth are not members of the church, but found solace here with a meal, religious education, and fun activities. Several other community churches have sent some of their own youth here. The church sees this ministry as an important mission as well.

Finally, the community itself is an asset. People in Amery support one another throughout the year. When one church has an activity, the other churches support it. For instance, our theater program has been well attended each year by members from all the other faith communities.

#### **Areas for improvement**

Having come off a 35 year pastorate, the church is in need of some new creative ideas and challenges. For instance, during this interim time, church members are beginning to study if and when to begin the Open and Affirming (ONA) process. The decision has not yet been made as of this writing.

#### **Significant Experience**

I began my interim ministry here in September 2020. We were/are still in the middle of the pandemic. I've been very pleased and excited to have people with the will and the skills to maintain an on-line presence while continuing to serve our youth community with masks and social distancing.

Finally, any minister would do well to live in such an up and coming community. Because of our proximity to the Twin Cities, the church offers an interesting mix of folks who vacation and retire here (with our many lake homes), work in town or on agricultural properties, and/or have a 45-minute commute through God's country to St. Paul. Amery provides a variety of positive experiences and advantages for ministers and their family!

Rev. Garth Schumacher

Interim Minister since September 2020

March 28, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

Our experience with the Congregational Church of Amery has been nothing but favorable.

We were invited to join with their members in 2006 for a Habitat for Humanity outreach to Alexandria, MN. It was very well organized and we were blessed from beginning to end.

Beginning in 2012, we began combining our service on a Sunday in August with the Congregational Church. Pastor Barry would preach and New Life would be responsible for the worship and message was alternated between New Life and the Congregational Church until June 30, 2019.

April 6, 2016, our youth group was invited to hear a special speaker at the Congregational Church and really enjoyed it. In 2018, two of our young ladies from our youth group did an expressive dance during a joint worship.

We have a great respect for Pastor Barry for reaching out to the community through dinner theaters and annual block parties. We pray our long standing relationship with the Congregational Church of Amery will continue with your new pastor and we look forward to serving together in Christ.

Sincerely,

New Life Community Church

Glen D. Strom, Elder & Mary E. Strom, Youth Leader



March 29, 2021

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Stephanie Lechman and I served as the Youth Director at the Amery Congregational Church from 2011-2013. While I did not serve long term, it was evident this congregation has many strengths in ministry and that the Spirit is alive and at work through this church. My experiences from serving at this congregation have stayed with me and continue to impact my life.

One of the strongest areas of ministry within this congregation is hospitality and outreach. This congregation is centered around friendliness, kindness, and sharing Christ's love. They not only have strong connections within the congregation, but they extend Christ's love outward and have amazing outreach ministries as well. My family was welcomed as one of their own from the first day I served, and it is clear they welcome everyone. While the youth ministry reached a variety of youth, it was clear the congregation has a strong outreach ministry as well. The leadership of the church and church members made it a priority to welcome and invite others to worship, ministry experiences and more. Whatever your life experiences may have been – you were welcomed into this congregation.

This is a congregation that reaches out in prayer and action when people are in need. They celebrate life's milestones together and truly are a church family. They have a strong history of Habitat for Humanity Mission Trips which is another example of the gift they have for hospitality and outreach. This is a mixed age mission trip and truly one of the most successful mixed age mission teams I have experienced. They extend hospitality to all they meet on the mission experience and graciously welcome hospitality extended their way as well. The way the trip is designed allows for shared leadership which is powerful to creating a team environment. This mission experience has stayed with me and has helped me in thinking about how to help design mixed age group mission experiences.

While I was serving at this congregation, they also held a Block Party for the community. What originally started as a small idea grew into an event impacting the entire community. The congregation was on board with growing the small idea into a big (free) event for community members – simply to show love to our neighbors by providing a meal, music and school supplies. Their love of serving, providing outreach and welcoming their neighbor is evident through all they do. They came together to financially support the event and provided volunteer leadership to make the event happen for the community.

Every congregation I have been a part of has areas for improvement in their ministry – including the Amery Congregational Church. While they have great strengths in hospitality and outreach it seems that at times, they lose sight of intentional spiritual growth opportunities for current members. While there were occasional study opportunities, youth group and Sunday School it seemed many of the adult members were looking for additional study opportunities or fellowship opportunities outside of worship. That may have changed in recent years; however, that was my experience while serving. And, as in the case in many small town and smaller congregations it can be easy for the same group of individuals to serve on leadership teams or committees in the congregation. These individuals are dedicated and committed to serving the Lord and the congregation (and they do so joyfully!), yet it would be nice to see a wider range of leadership on a regular basis. This was something that was starting to change, yet I was not there long enough to see changes happen.

(Continued on Next Page)

This congregation has many strengths in ministry. It was a privilege to serve the Lord through this congregation and to become part of the church family. While there are many things that can be learned and taught, I believe powerful hospitality is a gift from the Lord. The Spirit is clearly at work in the congregation through this manner and has not only made an impact on my life but in the lives of the congregation members and surrounding community. While I was not familiar with the congregation prior to my employment nor did I know congregation members prior to serving, I was welcomed and invited in with open arms. I am confident that the right fit for a pastoral candidate will be welcomed as well. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or if I can help clarify anything provided in this letter.

In Christ,  
Stephanie Lechman  
stephanie.lechman@gmail.com  
(715) 557-0737

## VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

The congregation is currently in good standing with the association / conference named.

Staff Comment:

To the best of my knowledge, ministerial history information is complete.

Staff Comment:

To the best of my knowledge, available church financial information is presented thoroughly.

Staff Comment:

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rev. Rob MacDougall", written in a cursive style.

Name / Title: Rev. Rob MacDougall/Associate Conference Minister

Email: rmacdougall@wcucc.org

Phone: 715-308-6120

Date: May 10, 2021