

Name of Church
Congregational UCC
Address
201 N Harriman Ave Amery, WI 54001
Conference:
Wisconsin
Title
Pastor
Start Date
Nov 15, 2025
Description
Pastor

Church Contact Information

(715) 268-7390 (Church Primary Phone)

search.ameryucc@gmail.com (Church Email)

Listing Information

Web Presences

<http://www.ameryucc.org> *Type: Professional*

<http://www.facebook.com/AmeryCongoChurch> *Type: Other*

<http://www.youtube.com/@congregationalunitedchurch1206> *Type: Other*

Additional Formal Ecumenical Affiliations

No response

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person

Name:

No response

Title:

No response

Phone:

No response

Email:

No response

Summary Ministry Description

We are a small but active congregation, committed to service by spreading the love of Christ through our actions. We are seeking growth, not only in our membership but in opportunities to serve our community. Equally important is nourishing the spiritual life of our members through camaraderie, faith, fellowship, and support. In order to facilitate these goals we seek an energetic, compassionate pastor with strong communication and interpersonal skills, a dynamic pastor who can make the teachings of the Bible relevant to the present time, and an engaged pastor who is visible in the wider community, connecting with others and representing the values of our faith.

Church pictures



What we value about living in our area.

Amery, the City of Lakes, is a small town where people know each other and care for one another. We are located just an hour's drive from the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area, giving residents quick access to professional sports, world-class art and music venues, and a large international airport. The Amery area is a year-round outdoor playground, with plentiful lakes and rivers; numerous city, county, and state parks; and non-motorized and motorized state recreational trails. Amery also has a highly-ranked school district and a regional Health Partners hospital. Churches in the Amery community work together to host special ecumenical services, provide youth programming, and plan community outreach events. The pastor of our church has historically been a strong member of this local ministerium group. There are many opportunities to get involved, grow, and serve in our community!

Current size of membership

143

Average in person attendance

50

Does your church hold virtual worship services?

Yes

Choose platform type(s) and number for virtual worship.

Video Hosting Platform

On average, how many views are received per service?

15

Languages used in ministry

English

Position Title

Pastor

Position Duration

Settled

Compensation Level

Full Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

Yes

Link to current Conference guidelines

<https://wcucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/FINAL-2026-Compensation-Guidelines-for-Full-Time-updated.pdf>

Scope of Work

Some fields reference The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers of the United Church of Christ .

The United Church of Christ recognizes *The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers* in the formation of ministers, in the practice of active ministry, and throughout life. For the purposes of completing a denominational Profile, ministers are asked to spend some time with the *Marks*.

The Scope of Work developed by our church using the Call Agreement Workbook.

[Download scope of Work](#)

3 core competencies that we imagine could be foundational in our next minister's relationship with the church.

First:

We seek a compassionate pastor with strong communication and interpersonal skills. Our new pastor should be able to connect with people of all generations and bridge generational divides. Our new pastor should be an empathetic listener, with the ability to resolve conflict in a nonjudgmental, compassionate manner. They should be able to communicate their thoughts and ideas in a clear, concise style, both in person and when using technology.

Second:

We seek a dynamic pastor who can make the teachings of the Bible relevant to the present time. Churches everywhere are seeing declines in membership, and many people have stopped attending church all together, not seeing messages in the scriptures as applicable to their daily lives. Our new pastor should be focused on making the teachings of our faith feel relevant to people in the present day. During the fraught times in which we live, how can our faith inform us to be better people? What is the Good News found in scripture? We believe focusing on these ideas in worship is one way we can make church feel more relevant to the community.

Third:

We seek an engaged pastor who is visible in the wider community, connecting with others and representing the values of our faith. We would encourage our new pastor to be involved in groups and events in the wider Amery community, not solely church or ministerium led events. Cultivating connections outside of our church walls can help bring new people into our faith community, strengthen bonds with other local churches, and demonstrate support of all persons in our community and community events.

Compensation and Support

The salary basis comes from the Call Agreement Workbook, equal to Cash Salary plus Value of Parsonage/ Housing Allowance. The Conference can assist in determining these amounts or provide a worksheet to be used to calculate these values.

SALARY AND BENEFITS OFFERED: SALARY BASIS: ITEM OFFERED	AMOUNT OR PERCENTAGE (IF DETERMINED)	IS THIS NEGOTIABLE	PASTORAL CANDIDATE DETERMINES
Salary (Cash basis determined from Conference/ Association Guidelines)	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing Allowance	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any Experiential Difference (Related to years of experience)	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Salary Basis: 0			
Pension/Annuity	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Security and Medicare Offset	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical/Dental Insurance	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Life Insurance	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability Insurance	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worker's Compensation	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If needed, please comment further on your church's salary and benefits for the minister.

The salary and compensation package follows the UCC guidelines.

The expected living situation for our next minister.

Living nearby with a housing allowance (preferably in the Amery School District).

If a parsonage is provided, will the church offer a home equity allowance to the pastor? (The recommended guidelines for a home equity allowance is equal to 1.5% of the average home value in the community; this is considered taxable to the minister. The Housing Equity Offset should not be calculated into the Salary Basis upon which other Benefits are determined. Churches should consult a tax advisor prior to establishing any account for an equity allowance to ensure compliance with IRS rules on nonqualified deferred compensation plans.)

No

NA

How our church will adopt part-time adjustments in the pastoral schedule to support a minister's bi-vocational employment.

NA

Additional reimbursements the next Pastor can expect to receive as part of their employment:

- Reimbursement for use of personal vehicle.
- Cell Phone and/or Internet.
- Conference and/or Association meeting registrations
- Other meeting registrations (or educational requirement registrations).
- Criminal background checks.
- Community of Practice Participation.

Peer and professional supports available for ministers in our association/conferences.

Locally there is a group of pastors that meets each week to discuss the lectionary readings and different approaches regarding the upcoming services. Once monthly, the local ministerium group meets to discuss topics regarding the community and churches. Upcoming events are shared and ecumenical services arranged there. Pastors, youth leaders, Homeless Shelter coordinator, food shelf, school and Bible camp representatives all attend. The Wisconsin Conference offers resources, including Community of Practice groups, grants and scholarships, etc. available to pastors.

Who Is God Calling to Minister with Us?

The ministry goals we envision our next minister collaborating with the congregation to achieve.

Service and community outreach are the cornerstones of our church. We hope that our next pastor will find new ways to innovate and inspire our membership to continue our focus on serving the community. Innovation might include new opportunities to partner with area churches in areas like outreach, youth ministry, or child care. In addition to our focus on service, we also hope that our new pastor will be an inspiring leader and communicator, helping to make the historical teachings of the church relevant to the people of today. We hope to find a pastor who will be a strong communicator, nurturing the faith of people in all age groups within our walls, as well as those in the wider community. Our new pastor should also be comfortable providing pastoral care to members, regularly visiting those who are sick, shut-in, or new to the community.

How our vision of the minister we are now seeking will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond its walls.

As stated above, service and community outreach are the cornerstones of our church. We have a long history of supporting our community through programs like Habitat for Humanity mission trips, food ministries (like our community food pantry, Ruby's Pantry, and Meals on Wheels), youth organizations (like Scouting America), and community mental health (WISE). We hope that a new pastor will actively support ongoing initiatives while also working with the congregation to explore new ideas for community outreach. Strong, respectful communication skills, empowering of lay leaders, and community connections will support these goals.

Language requirements or culturally-specific capacities preferred in a next ministerial leader, and why those matter to the congregation's sense of calling.

We do not have specific language requirements for a new pastor—we have not historically had non-English speakers attend our services—but we are open to new ways of outreach within our community.

Based on what we have learned about who our church is, who our church's neighbor is, and who God is calling the church to become, these are four areas of excellence from The Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry that our next minister will display to further equip the congregation's ministry in these areas.

- Building Transformational Leadership Skills
- Caring for All Creation.
- Working Together for Justice and Mercy.
- Strengthening Inter- and Intra- Personal Assets.

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)

Who God is calling us to become as a congregation.

God is calling us to connect with and care for our members and the community through emotional, spiritual, and practical support. As a congregation, we feel called to serve people in need in our community, grow our faith, and care for our members through all stages of life. We are called to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world.

There are numerous challenges facing churches and our wider community, like housing and food insecurity, affordability concerns, lack of childcare, political turmoil and injustice, and the perception that church is not relevant for the current day. We feel called to continue working to make our world a more loving, equitable place, where all people can feel supported and welcome!

How God is calling us to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of our community and congregation.

Mental health is a major concern in our community and world. In the last four years, our congregation earned the WISE designation from the UCC. We have partnered with Amery Schools to help fund their mental health collaborative, which provides access to mental health services for underinsured students. In 2023 and 2024, our congregation organized a Health and Happiness Walk and Block Party, which raised money for the mental health collaborative and educated attendees about mental health needs and community mental health resources. In 2025, the congregation hosted a Chinese Dinner to raise money for the school's mental health collaborative. We hope to continue supporting this program in the future.

Since May 2025, our congregation has been without a pastor, and for about two months, we were also without an office manager. Lay leaders emerged during this time taking on pastoral and administrative responsibilities. A handful of people have rotated to lead worship services, a small group of people have organized pastoral care (visiting the sick, etc.), and another small group of people have filled-in managing the church office. Our lay leadership during this time of transition has been amazing! Numerous members volunteered to take on responsibilities that they may not have had a chance to do at other times, and many of our members are more engaged than they have been in some time.

Our congregation does not currently have a multi-year strategic plan or vision statement. Our mission statement states, "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!" Though we do not disagree

with our mission statement, we are open to changing our statement in the future to better reflect our values, especially our focus on service. Our goal would be to create a statement that every members can remember easily. A new pastor could help us with this goal.

Congregation Reflections

We would describe our congregation's life of faith as...

Our congregation is focused on service and community engagement. We roll up our sleeves to put our faith into action. We talk about God and the Holy Spirit working in the world today through our actions and service. Our congregation's faith is very much a living faith.

Strengths or positive qualities of our congregation.

We have a positive reputation in our community because we demonstrate our faith through our actions toward others. Members of our congregation are hardworking, cooperative, and service minded. Our congregation is full of lay leaders, ready to step up and serve whenever the need arises. When members of our congregation are struggling, other members are quick to provide assistance.

A growing edge for our congregation and what we plan to strengthen as a congregation

Our congregation gained the WISE designation a number of years ago, and we have had preliminary discussions regarding going through the formal process of becoming Open and Affirming. Our future pastor could provide guidance in navigating this process. Members of the congregation have also indicated some interest in pursuing Creation Justice designation. Without a settled pastor, it is hard to move forward with these initiatives.

As with most churches, since the pandemic there has been a decline in active members in our congregation, especially young families. There are members of our congregation that don't understand why things haven't returned to "normal" since the pandemic. In reality, the landscape has changed, and it may not ever be just like it was before. Our congregation probably needs to engage in some new vision work for the future.

There are opportunities for growth in the area of member connections. We have a limited number of interest groups (not committees) for church members to participate in. Strong groups in the church do exist, like the mission team and the adult Bible study; however, not all members participate in one of these groups.

What worship is like when our congregation gathers.

Sunday worship takes place in our beautiful sanctuary! Services typically include 3-4 hymns, Bible readings, prayers, special music, and a message.

Messages are typically based on the weekly readings from the Revised Common Lectionary. Members comment that they enjoy messages the best when the message feels applicable to their daily lives, when the leader tells a pertinent story to illustrate the Biblical message, when there is one solid take-away from the message (the Good News), and when the messages are not overly long. Since the departure of our pastor in May 2025, several members have taken turns leading worship and giving the messages. This rotation of these leaders has been well-received by the congregation. Communion is celebrated during worship on the first Sunday of each month. Our church performs baptisms and funerals for members and non-members. During Lent, our congregation also has mid-week services. These services have taken many forms in past, including skits on Biblical themes, journeys through the Bible, or Prayer Around the Cross. We participate in ecumenical services for Thanksgiving, Good Friday, and other global issues.

The educational program/faith formation vision of our church.

Historically, we have had weekly Sunday School for grades K-5 during the worship service. Programming for middle and high school youth typically took place on Wednesday evenings. Since COVID, we have seen a large drop in youth attendance on Sundays and Wednesdays. In response to that change, we have combined our youth programming with two other local churches. This new programming takes place on Wednesday nights. The combined youth programming is led by leaders from three different churches (including ours) as well as leaders from the Bible camp, which is located just outside of Amery (Lake Wapogasset Lutheran Bible Camp). Summer Vacation Bible School is a combined community event, with leadership from multiple churches and the Bible camp. Our confirmation program is currently being led by our youth coordinator and two lay leaders. Two regularly-scheduled adult Bible study groups currently exist, and they cover various topics each month. There is also a men's Bible study at a neighboring church, attended by several members. Previous pastors played a part in the adult studies; though, there has usually been some lay leadership in these groups.

How our congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

Our congregation has five permanent committees: Christian Education, Congregational Giving & Memorial, Diaconate, Missions & Social Concerns, and Trustees. The pastor is an ex-officio member of all committees. The pastor is expected to attend monthly Diaconate, Trustees, and Church Council meetings and is welcome to also attend the other meetings. We form sub-committees or ad-hoc committees for special activities or programs when needed. Each committee has a representative who comes to a monthly Church Council meeting. The representatives report to the Church Council about important information from their committees, including important decisions made since the last Church Council meeting. The Church Council, led by the moderator, has final say in sustainable decision making. The pastor is not a voting member of the Church Council; though, their spiritual leadership and input is valued. The Church Council meets monthly, unless pressing issues arise, necessitating a meeting more quickly. Minutes for Church Council meetings are included in the monthly newsletter. Reports on major decisions are usually given during the announcements section of Sunday worship services.

When it comes to decision-making, 6 hours are spent in meetings per month.

Is the pastor expected to attend all church meetings?

No

In times when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. These were the key leaders in taking this action and this was accomplished by...

In 2023, the church experienced a significant water leak, which left standing water in a portion of the church. After the leak was found and stopped, the moderator, the chair of Trustees, and the pastor formed a team to begin the inspection and remediation process, including working with the insurance company to submit claims. The Trustees committee also worked to create a plan for restoration of the affected building spaces. Carpeting had to be redone in many common areas, and samples were provided for the larger congregation to give input before a final decision was made.

A copy of an organization structure, by laws and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance

[📄 Constitution Amery UCC 2024.pdf](#)

11-Year Report

Download a copy of the 11-Year Report developed with the help of our conference staff and UCC Data Hub.

[📄 Download 11-Year Report](#)

Congregation Demographics

Describe those who participate in your church.

DEMOGRAPHIC	NUMBER
NUMBER OF ACTIVE MEMBERS:	73
NUMBER OF ACTIVE NON-MEMBERS:	7
TOTAL OF CHURCH PARTICIPANTS (SUM OF THE NUMBERS ABOVE):	80

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

TIME	PERCENTAGE
MORE THAN 10 YEARS:	85%
LESS THAN 10, MORE THAN 5 YEARS:	5%
LESS THAN 5 YEARS:	10%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Number of total participants by age:

AGE	NUMBER
0-11	1
12-17	2
18-24	6
25-34	4
35-44	6
45-54	5
55-64	4
65-74	22
75+	31

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

No

Percentage of adults in various household types:

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	PERCENTAGE
SINGLE ADULTS UNDER 35:	5%
HOUSEHOLDS WITH MINORS:	14%
SINGLE ADULTS AGE 35-65:	6%
JOINT HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO MINORS:	46%
SINGLE ADULTS OVER 65:	29%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

EDUCATION LEVEL	PERCENTAGE
HIGH SCHOOL:	25%
COLLEGE:	50%
GRADUATE SCHOOL:	20%
SPECIALTY TRAINING:	5%
OTHER EDUCATION LEVEL:	0%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

EMPLOYMENT TYPE	PERCENTAGE
ADULTS WHO ARE EMPLOYED:	30%
ADULTS WHO ARE RETIRED:	70%
ADULTS WHO ARE NOT FULLY EMPLOYED:	0%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

The range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:

There is mixture of occupations in the working adult member population of our church including those in the medical fields, education, business, engineering, farming, and the trades. Many members in the retired age group were professionals in companies, medicine, teachers, accountants, and the trades as well. We have retired members that are in pool positions who continue to work fairly regularly as well. All are valued and contribute.

The mix of ethnic heritages in our congregation, and the overall racial make-up.

Although our congregation is mainly of Western European and Scandinavian decent, we welcome and embrace ethnic diversity.

What diversity means in our context?

Our congregation is diverse, but we are not racially diverse. Our members are diverse in terms of socio-economic status (wealthy / poor), educational attainment (high school diploma / advanced degrees), employment type (blue collar / white collar), and political affiliation (conservative / liberal). Our diverse membership works together very well!

Has our congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do we plan to hold one on the near future

No

Participation and Staffing

Participation and Planning of Gatherings

WAYS OF CHURCH GATHERING	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN ATTENDANCE	WHO PLANS EACH OF THE LISTED GATHERINGS
Adult Groups or Classes (in person or online)	20	Lay Leaders
Baptisms (number last year)	1	Pastor
Children's Groups or Classes	10	Christian Education Committee
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	120	Pastor / Pulpit Supply
Church-wide Meals	45	lay leaders
Choirs and Music Groups	10	Music Director
Church-based Bible Study	20	Lay Leaders
Communion (served how often?)	13	Pastor / Diaconate Committee
Community Meals	750	Lay Leaders
Confirmation (number confirmed last year)	0	Pastor / Youth Coordinator / Lay Leaders
Drama or Dance Program	250	Mission Team
Funerals (number last year)	4	Pastor / Pulpit Supply
Intergenerational Groups	25	Mission Team / Intergenerational Moment
Retreats	5	Pastor / Lay Leaders
Weddings (number last year)	1	Pastor / Lay Leaders
Worship (digital / online / livestream)	20	lay leaders
Youth Groups or Classes	2	Pastor / Youth Coordinator / Lay Leaders
Other	25	Mission Team

Worship Times

WORSHIP (TIME SLOT):	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN ATTENDANCE	WHO PLANS EACH OF THE LISTED GATHERINGS
10:00 AM	50	Pastor / Worship Leaders

Additional comments:

No response

List of all members or regular participants in our congregation who are ordained or commissioned ministers, or who hold Lay Ministerial Standing. Additionally the names of Members in Discernment in our congregation.

NAME	THREE-WAY OR FOUR-WAY COVENANT	MINISTRY SETTING	TYPE OF MINISTRY ROLE	RETIRED
Barry Schaefer	3	Church	Solo Pastor	
Colleen Kwong	3	Church	Solo Pastor	

Previous pastors or retired ministers who currently hold membership in the church and their role(s) in the life of the congregation:

Barry Schaefer has membership at our church but has purposefully attended another church in the area where he worships and has done some pulpit supply. He and his wife do attend our fundraising dinners as guests. He is scheduled to do a Sunday of pulpit supply in the near future. Colleen Kwong is a retired UCC pastor and has joined our church. She serves on our Pastor Parish Relations Committee and she has been one of the members that intermittently supplies the pulpit since our last pastor left.

List of all current staff:

STAFF POSITION	HEAD OF STAFF	COMPENSATION	SUPERVISED BY	LENGTH OF TENURE FOR CURRENT PERSON IN THIS POSITION
Music Director	Solo	part	Pastor and Trustees/HR	45 years
Office Manager	Solo	part	Pastor and Trustees/HR	2 months
Youth Coordinator	Solo	vol	Pastor and Trustees/HR	3 years

Reflection: What this information reflect about our congregation's overall ministry:

Our congregation has an engaged group of adult members, many with years of experience in the church and community. Age has not been a deterrent to fulfilling our church's ministry within and beyond our walls. We are hopeful that through our community involvement and outreach, we will attract some younger demographic. Our members are able to accommodate change and fill voids in the church when needed.

Church Finances

Current Annual Income

SOURCE	AMOUNT
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	126041
Endowment Proceeds (as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)	20000
Fundraising Events	1400
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	75406
Rentals of Church Building	3715
Interest	1223
Total	227785

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

246125

Attach most recent church budget, spending plan, operating statement, or annual treasurer's report as shared publicly with the congregation, or – if your church does not pass an annual budget–list current budgeted expenses here.

[Download church budget](#)

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

65

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?

OCWM is calculated as a percentage.

If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, this is the percentage?

4

Total amount of loan debt:

No response

Reason for debt:

No response

Are capital and other payments current?

Yes

Capital Campaigns

Description of any building programs projected or underway.

Pictures

Description of any capital campaigns in the last ten years:

YEAR(S)	PURPOSE	GOAL	RESULT	IMPACT
0		0	0	
0		0	0	

Description of any capital campaigns underway or anticipated:

YEAR(S)	PURPOSE	GOAL	RESULT	IMPACT
0		0	0	
0		0	0	

Description the prominent mission component(s) involved in the most recent (or current) capital campaign.

No response

Does your church have an endowment?

Yes

What is the market value of the assets?

577000

Are funds drawn as needed, regularly, or under certain circumstances?

as needed

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)?

0

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years:

Our draws have primarily been to draw down the increase in value historically has been >25%

At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last?

forever as our practice to to not draw more than our growth each year.

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

rounded

Other Assets

Reserve funds of approximately \$300000

Reserves (savings):

30000

Investments (other than endowment):

300000

Does the church have a parsonage?

No

Description of all buildings owned by the church:

The congregation owns the church building at the corner of Birch and Harriman Streets as well as the large parking lot and green space across Birch Street to the south.

Description of non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church:

The church does not rent any additional space.

Accessibility features of our building(s):

Exterior access such as ramps for wheelchair users or people requiring other mobility assistance

Accessible parking spaces

Access to worship spaces, including chancel and pulpit, for wheelchair users and people with other mobility aids

Access to child care spaces for wheelchair users and people with other mobility aids

Large print bulletins

Closed-captioning on sanctuary screen and/or livestream

Wheelchair access in bathrooms

"Quiet room" with worship viewing and listening availability

Handrails on all stairs

Sound system in sanctuary and other meeting places (fellowship hall, large meeting rooms, etc.)

Curb cuts

Accessible bathroom on each floor

Wheelchair areas in sanctuary (other than "front or back")

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs:

We have large print bulletins in addition to the screen for persons with visual impairments. There are curb cuts, handicap parking spaces, and handicap entrances. There is a handicap restroom available. Pews have been adjusted to have intentional spaces in the body of the sanctuary for wheelchairs and walkers. Our church does have a balcony that is not handicap accessible but the remainder of the church is on a single level with wide doorways and hallways. The pulpit is not currently handicap accessible but could be adjusted to be so if the need arose.

Policies regarding financial practices of the church:

- The offering is counted by a team of two individuals that count, record, and deposit the money.
- The Office Manager cuts the checks that need paying, and our Treasurer reviews them, makes sure everything is appropriate, and signs them. The chair of Trustees is the backup person that can sign checks if the treasurer is not available.
- An investment team, made up of 4 individuals, reviews our investments and makes recommendations for any changes that need to be made.
- There is an outside audit performed annually.
- Memorial money is controlled by the Congregational Giving & Memorial Committee.

Reflection: After reviewing the church's finances and assets described above, what this information reflects about our congregation's mission and ministry:

We are a well funded church with the ability do great things in the local and wider community. In 2025 over 30% of our income went to mission work outside of the church walls.

The approved budget for next year was uploaded. It was assumed that we may not have a pastor for the entirety of 2026, so those costs were not included in the expenses. Because our church passes a balance budget each year, the income from offerings and gifts looks lower to balance the expenses. If we are so lucky as to hire a pastor, an adjustment to the budget would be made to reflect that.

Historical Information

Significant happenings in the history of our church that have shaped the identity of our congregation.

In 1999-2000, the Congo Mission Team was formed. Since that time, our team has completed 25 week-long Habitat for Humanity builds throughout the Midwest. 164 unique individuals have participated in these trips over the last 25 years. We are incredibly proud of this long legacy of service! For the past 15 years, the mission team has produced a dinner theater at our church as a fundraiser for our trips. The dinner theaters have been wonderful community building events and also regularly includes performers from other churches.

Over the last several years, we have attained the WISE designation from the UCC. Since officially becoming WISE, we have hosted events to raise money for local mental health programs in the Amery Schools. We have also used these events to raise awareness of mental health needs and services available in our community.

The most significant recent events in our congregation have been our three pastoral transitions during the last six years (see below).

A specific change our church has managed in the recent past.

The most significant happening in the last 10 years was the retirement of our long-term pastor of 35 years, during the height of the COVID Pandemic (July 2020). Our long-term pastor was very active in the community and initiated many mission programs in our church. We experienced a decline in active membership during the pandemic, and this loss of active members was probably made more severe by our long-term pastor's departure at the same time.

In September 2020, we welcomed an interim pastor, and this individual stayed with our congregation for two years. Our interim pastor was considerably more liberal than our long-term pastor and was not afraid to make provocative political statements from the pulpit. Our interim pastor's overtly political stances alienated some of our remaining members; though, many others enjoyed their dynamic preaching style. We were joined by a new settled pastor in October 2022, and their style was different than both of the prior pastors. Many changes!

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

Until recently, any conflicts in the church were mostly handled by the moderator and pastor problem-solving together. This setup became increasingly challenging for the moderator as we moved between three different pastors (and no pastor for periods of time) during the last six years. In response to this challenge, our congregation formed a Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. The committee is made up of three members (one Trustee and two people at-large), who meet regularly with the pastor to check-in on their wellbeing, to navigate any concerns the pastor might be having, and to help navigate any concerns that may arise with members and the pastor. Pastor-Parish Relations members are known to the congregation. If a member approaches them with a concern about the pastor, or another member, they encourage that person to have a discussion with the person directly involved and will offer to go with them as they have the conversation. This process has worked well.

The most recent major conflict through which our church has navigated.

In May 2025, our congregation parted ways with our settled pastor. Performance reviews had identified areas of concern, and minimal progress in those areas had been made. At a congregational meeting in April, the same concerns were expressed by numerous members of the congregation. The concerns of the congregation were relayed to the pastor, who ultimately chose to resign. The resignation prompted lay leaders to emerge and take on the core pastoral responsibilities. The chair of the Diaconate became the point person for coordinating pastoral care; a former chair of the Diaconate became the point person for coordinating worship leadership; a handful of members volunteered to lead worship services; and the Trustees committee worked with the pastor who resigned to negotiate a severance package. Leaders emerged, morale improved, and attendance has risen.

Ministerial History:

Name: Barry Schaefer

Years of service: 35

UCC Standing

Name: Garth Schumacher

Years of service: 2

UCC Standing

Name: Dana Caldwell

Years of service: 2

UCC Standing

What our church has learned about itself and its relationship with people who provided ministerial leadership.

The three pastors we have had during the last six years have all been quite different. After experiencing three different pastors, with different strengths and weaknesses, the congregation is quite unified in what we are looking for in our next leader:

- We seek a compassionate pastor with strong communication and interpersonal skills.
- We seek a dynamic pastor who can make the teachings of the Bible relevant to the present time.
- We seek an engaged pastor who is visible in the wider community, connecting with others and representing the values of our faith.

Has any past leader left under pressure or by involuntary termination?

Yes

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

Yes

Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at your church?

No

Has a previous minister been a contributor to conflict following their tenure as pastor?

No

Community Vision

How the relationships and activities of our congregation extend outward in service and advocacy.

The Congo Mission Team has completed 25 week-long Habitat for Humanity builds throughout the Midwest. 164 unique individuals have participated in these trips over the last 25 years. We are incredibly proud of this long legacy of service! For the past 15 years, the mission team has produced a dinner theater at our church as a fundraiser for our trips. The dinner theaters have been wonderful community building events and also regularly include performers from other churches. Relationship building is a huge part of every mission trip!

Over the last several years, we have pursued the WISE designation from the UCC. Since officially becoming WISE, we have hosted events to raise money for local mental health programs in the Amery Schools. We have also used these events to raise awareness of mental health needs and services available in our community. We have also built relationships with many community mental health providers.

These are only two of the many ways we serve the community.

Our congregation's participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ.

Our church's connection to the wider UCC is a possible area of growth for our congregation. For the past several years, our pastor and/or lay leaders have attended Wisconsin association conferences. At one of these conferences, the idea of becoming a WISE congregation began to be explored. This grew into our church pursuing and achieving WISE status within the UCC. An allowance for the pastor to attend conferences is part of the compensation package.

How our church engages with the community organizing movements in our community.

Our church has taken part in ecumenical services for peace in the Amery area. The church has not historically participated in community organizing movements regarding issues; however, individual members of our congregation have participated.

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, through Just World Covenants or affiliations with other groups. Check any of the following partnerships which your congregation has formally adopted, or movements which otherwise apply to your congregation.

WISE Congregation for Mental Health.

What the above statement(s) mean(s) to our community. How our congregation plans to work toward the above statements of witness in the future.

Becoming a WISE congregation has been a wonderful experience for our congregation. Through the process, we connected with many local mental health providers and community organizations that support people with mental health needs. We have also developed a strong relationship with the Amery School's mental health team. Our congregation has organized two Health and Happiness Walk and Block Party events as well as a Chinese dinner to raise money for the school's mental health collaborative. The collaborative helps provide mental health supports for underinsured or uninsured students.

Our church has had preliminary conversations about becoming an Open and Affirming (ONA) church. Our congregation welcomes all people, so becoming ONA seems like a logical next step for our congregation. Several members of our church have also expressed interest in Creation Justice. So far, our congregation has not explored that designation, but interest is there.

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

The Amery church community regularly collaborates to put on ecumenical services for special holidays and events, like Epiphany, Good Friday, and Thanksgiving. Community churches have also often hosted ecumenical prayer vigils, especially in times of political strife. Catholic, Lutheran (ELCA & LCMS), and UCC churches regularly participate in these ecumenical services. A local ministerium group, made up of clergy from local churches, meets monthly. Former pastors of our congregation have been strong members of this ministerium group.

Our congregation regularly collaborates with community Lutheran churches, as well as the Lake Wapogasset Lutheran Bible Camp (located just outside of Amery), to organize on youth events and Vacation Bible School. These partnerships have been active for years.

How our mission statement compares to the actual time spent engaging in different activities.

Our mission statement reads, "We are a family of faith, dedicated to the mission of making disciples, spreading Good News, and baptizing in the name of Jesus Christ." While we don't disagree with anything in this mission statement, it seems incomplete. The mission statement doesn't acknowledge anything about service, which is one of our congregation's core values. We are open to updating our mission statement, and preliminary discussion has taken place. In terms of what our current mission statement says, our congregation does feel like a family. We enjoy getting together, and we share our faith primarily through our actions and service to the community. Our focus is primarily outward; though, we do need to focus on nourishing the faith of our members too.

The scope of work assigned to our pastor(s). How their community ministry and their ministry in and on behalf of the wider church accounted for in the congregation's expectations on their time.

We would expect our new pastor to be an active member of the local ministerium group, a participant in local ecumenical activities, and a liaison to the greater UCC. Our congregation is supportive of these activities, and time is carved out as necessary to accommodate these commitments.

The ARDA or MissionInsite Reflection

ARDA/MI File

[Download ARDA/MI File](#)

From looking at our congregation's The ARDA or MissionInsite report, these trends and opportunities are what stood out to us.

The most recent data from 2022 shows that the population in the 7 mile radius around our church is minimally growing. There are few young adults but many families. The largest demographic is persons over 55 years. Only a small percentage of people don't graduate from high school. The average income is around \$92,000. Over 80% of the residents live in individual homes. The average rental price (2022) was less than \$1500 per month. Nearly 50% of the employed have white collar jobs, 40% - blue collar jobs, and the remainder work in service areas. 8.5% live in poverty or near poverty.

How our congregation's internal demographics compare or contrast to a) the neighborhoods adjacent to our church, and b) other neighborhoods with which our church connects.

Our internal demographic mimics that of the ADRA report. The largest demographic is over 55 years old. There are few young couples with children. Most members have been in the church for over 10 years, and a large percentage of them attended college. Many members have graduate/professional degrees. The majority of our members live in single family dwellings or senior housing.

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

The demographics of the community has had an impact on our ministry. There are fewer manufacturing jobs than there used to be, decreasing the number of employed young people and young families. There is a housing shortage, causing teachers, medical workers, and others to live outside of the community and commute to work. Decreases in youth at church have resulted from the job and housing issues to some extent. More importantly, protected church time no longer exists. Games and activities now take place on Wednesdays and weekends and seem to take priority over church for many families.

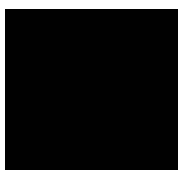
What we hear when we talk to community leaders and ask them what our church is known for.

We are known throughout the community as a warm, welcoming church that serves others. Amery residents see these values promoted in our mission work, our fundraisers for community causes, and our participation in community events. We have a small but engaged congregation, and our members are highly visible in the wider Amery community. See our references for additional information.

What new people in the church say when asked what got them involved.

The welcoming atmosphere of our church is what new people comment on the most. Our warm welcome is genuine, ongoing, and nonselective. All are welcome and encouraged to join in. Making personal connections with those around us is important.

References



Catherine Olsen

Completed: Monday, Jan 19, 2026

Former Office Manager

Primary Email Address: Mckeehan4@comcast.net

Personal Cell: 7632452680

Reference Response

January 5, 2026

As the former Office Manager, I had the privilege of seeing the heart of Amery Congregational in its everyday life. It's from this vantage point that I can say this is a congregation defined by genuine warmth, generosity, and loyalty to the church community. As my personal life took unplanned turns I was supported by the congregation in such a way that I truly felt valued with my work contributions and as a person. There is a deep loyalty to the mission, its people, and its leadership. Even during times of transition, there is a strong commitment to unity, collaboration, and mutual support. This degree of loyalty would provide a stable and encouraging foundation for pastoral leadership. Based on my experience with Congo, I expect the next pastor will feel welcomed, supported, and partnered with a congregation eager to move forward together.

Blessings,

Catherine Olsen

Lou Williamson

Completed: Monday, Jan 19, 2026

I am a non-member of the congregation. I was a funeral director that worked directly with the church and its members for 25 years.

Primary Email Address: lwmsn@amerytel.net

Personal Cell: 612-590-8839

Reference Response

I am writing to offer a perspective on this church congregation based on a lifetime of familiarity and many years of close, positive interaction.

My wife and I are not members of this congregation. However, I have known this church and its people all my life, and I worked closely with them for more than 25 years in my professional role as a funeral director. Throughout that time, my relationship with the congregation and its leadership was consistently respectful, cooperative, and deeply positive. I observed firsthand how they care for families during difficult moments with compassion, organization, and genuine presence.

This is but a small part of what I see as a wonderful congregation in every way. Their community outreach is amazing.

Lou Williamson

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before you to seek Your guidance in finding us the best pastor to shepherd our church. We are in search of a new pastor who will have a heart for inter-generational ministry, who can lead us in worship that touches the hearts of our congregation, who will continue to inspire us to grow in our faith and to serve others, and who will foster unity among diverse backgrounds and perspectives, guiding us in fulfilling Your purposes for our church. We now surrender this part of our search process into Your hands and trust in your perfect timing. In your name we pray. Amen.

Statement of Consent

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

For example, church council or consistory, transition team, etc.

The Pastor Search Committee is made up of one representative from each church committee as well as one member at large. The Financial Secretary/Treasurer and the Clerk also contributed to the Profile.

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

No response