

Congregational Clarion

AMERY CONGREGATIONAL UCC

HELLO JULY



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BEST PRACTICES FOR GROWTH! (...or not)

The #1 thing that parishioners ask for more than almost anything else is, "How can we grow?!!" Always with a little unspoken and very real fear that if they don't grow fast, their church may not survive. It's true that we are a medium to smallish church. But, we're still financially viable, have lately received a large bequest, and still have some very active members that is all to the good. However, demographics and social dynamics have been shifting in our Amery community. How we adapt to these shifts will be crucial going forward. What follows is a brief overview of where we are and what we might do.

First, here are some of the typical dynamics in medium to smallish churches... They are: Small in number; know each other well; have a strong sense of belonging; have a high identification with the territory it occupies; often functions as if it is a "little world off by itself; wisdom, prestige, and authority strongly correlate with the age of each individual; are enhanced by the fact that each generation goes through a similar sequence of life events; position in the local culture/society determines an individual's rights and duties; relationships are ends in

themselves, not a means of achieving an external object; Social recognition is a greater motivator of behavior than material gain; Qualities that contribute to long-term stability, not change, are valued; tradition determines actions; Moral worth attaches to the traditional way of doing things.

As you can read, these are great ways to maintain a stable, loving community in a stable, and loving world. However, I believe we can all agree that this world doesn't appear to be stable and, except in our church, needs a heck of a lot more loving... please!

Our world is rapidly changing. The image of the small church as an unchanging community in an unchanging world has never been less true than today. In order to grow, we need to figure out how our message of God's love through Christ is transmitted into our changing community. Here are 10 Best Practices of Vital Medium-Small Church possibilities. Perhaps we...:
Are engaged with a particular context in which we exist.
Effectively adapting to the changes within the Amery community, and finding ways of letting the new context adopt the (new to us) church.

Are not focused on mere survival, but have something more important that keeps us going [God]. The church is not an end in itself, but a means for personal

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- 07/03 Linda A. Lee
- 07/04 Maxx Harris
- 07/06 Deborah Henke
- 07/07 Adina Vrzal
- 07/11 Sally Haasnoot
- 07/12 Rick Maukstad
- 07/13 Samantha Sigsworth
- 07/13 Duane Morris
- 07/13 Heidi Wilbur



- 07/16 Alora Stalhiem
- 07/20 Casey Haasnoot
- 07/23 Lisa Hill
- 07/25 Jack Porter
- 07/25 Amber Harris
- 07/28 Olivia Russo
- 07/29 Benjamin Bowen
- 07/30 Maycee Harris



Rev. Garth Schumacher Baptizes Adler Stephen Posey, son of Derek and Bailey Posey, in a beautiful outdoor service.

Bailey and Derek with a content Adler. (Below center)

Grandma Pam gets a snuggle from little Adler after the service. (Below right)

The Posey's couldn't have asked for a nicer day for the baptism.



**From
Abby Betzold
YOUTH MINISTER**



Youth Director Contact Information:
Abby Betzold
715.268.7390; ext. 12
715.715.641.2237 (cell)
Youth.ameryucc@gmail.com

Hello Everyone!

Summer is underway! We had a very successful Community VBS in June when we partnered with other area churches and Camp Wapo. Such a blessing to see all the kids having fun and learning about God together.

We also had a very successful first summer youth event, huge thanks to Dave & Cheryl Bowman for hosting a fun evening at their home! I encourage all youth to participate in our other upcoming summer youth events. (see below for more details!) If you're an adult and would like to join us, please do! I will be in search for adult volunteers to come with us as drivers to some of our youth events, let me know if that sounds like fun to you!

Summer Youth Events:

- July 6: Youth Event (Feed My Starving Children & Whirlyball) 7:30am-3pm
- July 20: Youth Event (Northwoods Newsletters & Movie Outing) Time TBA
- Aug 8: Youth Valley Fair Day 8am-8pm
- Aug 17: Youth Event (Painting Service Project & Fun) Time TBA



Blessings for a wonderful July!
Abby

Mission Trip Comeback Service is July 3rd!

We hope you will all join us at 10am on July 3rd to hear all about our trip to work with Habitat for Humanity of Marquette County in Michigan! We are sure to have stories of our service, community building, and of course humor! We hope to see you there!
M.T. 2022

Nyla Anderson
Abby Betzold
Alek Keller-Betzold
Sheldon Betzold

Dave Bowman
Bill Faughn
Chad Leonard
Sherry Monson
Sue Olson

Ed Rassmussen
Nick Silvis
Adam Tulkki
Barry Tulkki



YOUTH FUN EVENT HOSTED BY DAVE AND CHERYL BOWMAN



I Am Restored: How I Lost My Religion But Found My Faith by Lecrae Moore

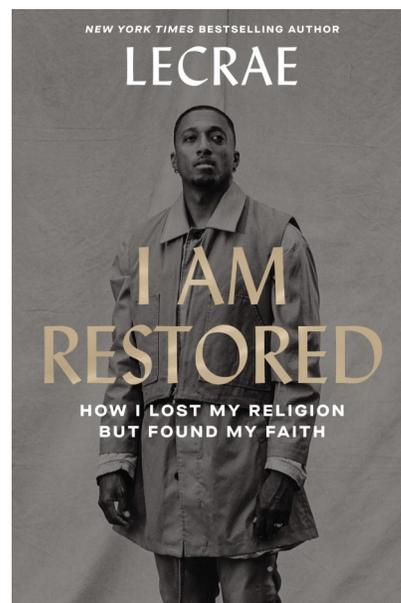


Book Review by Heather Rushfeldt

I Am Restored is the personal account of award-winning musician Lecrae Moore’s struggle through inner and outer chaos. Delving into experiences of trauma, addiction, commercial success, racism, and community alienation, Lecrae leads his readers on a personal pilgrimage of wrestling with these experiences and reconciling them within his faith perspective.

As a longtime fan of Lecrae’s music, I was excited to read this book. In I Am Restored, Lecrae explores the positive and negative impact of his upbringing, as well as the impact of trauma and childhood sexual abuse. Later in his book, he explores the impact of “church hurt” as well as the “chaos” of his community’s engagement with the Black Lives Matter movement. He discusses his experience of commercial success as a Christian music artist while at the same time coping with his own experiences of pain and darkness.

For me, this was an eye-opening read filled with honest accounts of struggle and the pain of shifting community dynamics. I would recommend I Am Restored for anyone who would be encouraged by a



personal story of someone wrestling through trauma and loss, but ultimately finding hope and stability through their faith in Christ.

“I have been wounded by fellow Christians who impugn my motives and make uncharitable statements about my positions...But as much as I wanted to leave the faith altogether, I came to the conclusion that we’re all learning and growing. A few years ago, I was just like them with that same attitude toward others. If I can be redeemed, then so can they.” -pg. 163



I Am Restored is available for check out in our church library.

Congregational Church UCC Annual Meeting
5/22/22

Meeting opened in prayer led by Moderator Sheldon Betzold.

Attendance: Quorum met. 33 members present

Sheldon read 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes. Motions to accept minutes as read made by Chad Leonard & Chris Anderson. Passed

Chad Leonard presented an update on the Search Committee:

- 14 profiles have been submitted to Committee
- 9 profiles were omitted by either the committee or the individuals
- 1 person has been interviewed. There are 3 other potentials with 1 person being interviewed this week.
- There are 15 full-time opening for UCC pastors in WI; 4 ¾ time open positions & 7 part-time open positions.
- Annual salary of UCC pastors in WI are based on 5 steps (A, B, C, D & E) ranging from least experience/education to highest experience/education. Step A wages per year are estimated at \$73,597.00 to Step E at \$108,942.00
- As the search committee moves forward, the church members need to be aware that a new minister is going to cost us more than what we paid our former pastor, Barry Schaefer.

Congregation Comments & questions:

1. How do we compare to other local church minister salaries? Response: some Lutheran churches pay more like West Immanuel.
2. Why was the pulpit removed? Response: Pulpit was interfering with the broadcasting of the worship services. Centering the pulpit would interfere with communion. The pulpit is currently stored on the south end of the fellowship hall.
3. A Search Committee member indicated they would appreciate input from the congregation as it relates to what they feel is important in a minister for our congregation. Another member of the congregation is concerned that if you voice your opinion, will it make a difference. Response: it is good to voice opinions because then the concern is shared. Constructive comments/criticism is good. A member of the congregation brought up the concern that the committee needs to search for someone who will connect with the youth. The kids who have been attending youth activities that Pastor Garth is involved in do connect well with him. Another member mentioned another quality of our interim minister and potential new minister should be they will be active in the community.
4. If the Interim minister isn't working out is there another way? Response: There is always another way. There are 9 members on the search committee who represent our congregation. There has been discussion on other options including: lay ministers, pulpit supply and changing interim ministers. The committee has potential interviews in the works and encourage all members pray for the search committee and potential candidate interviews.
5. Do we need an active Pastor Parish Committee? Response: Dave Bowman, Chad Leonard & Sheldon Betzold meet regularly with Pastor Garth.
6. How could we try to make Pastor Garth work better for us? Response: We need to speak up and let him know what our needs are. This is our church. The UCC doesn't dictate to us, but they do recommend how they view different things. We do have new people coming through our doors. We all need to be friendly greeters to make them feel welcomed if we want our membership to grow.

Motion was made, 2nd to adjourn at 11:40. Unanimous decision.

Submitted by: Sherry Monson

(Best Practices Continued from page 1)

growth, pastoral care, local mission, making sense of the world and connecting with God. Have a pastor who is especially adept at shaping the culture of the congregation. It is the pastor that keeps prodding churches to focus upon the practices of beliefs and relationships rather than the 'crisis-of-the-moment.' Have significant acknowledged input from the UCC Association and Conference in our lives through pastoral search and resources for mission and ministry. Have worship services that emphasize the participation, joy and community. For instance, worship is fun and usually centered on music and sharing of joys and concerns. Sharing is personal and deep, laughter abounded. Are finding ways of adopting new people into the tribe and find ways of enabling new people to adopt old members of the 'tribe'. ('Adoption' is a two-way street.) Have a strong sense of (personal) mission. For instance... Christian Education is seen as a mission of the church and not a structure of the

church. Mobilize effective resources to support appropriate ministries. What do our endowments offer to help us in today's ministries?? Eat well together. Communal meals bring us together, nurturing sharing and building community. What ways do you see us reflected in these "best practices" and where might we improve? If we want growth, what ways will we need to enhance? These "Best Practices" point to a future congregation that through our life together, provides opportunities for participants to find meaning and understanding for our lives and connect us with one another and God... Loving one another. Blessings,
Rev. Garth Schumacher
(message based on UCC article from: <http://michaelhmontgomery.com/papers/bestpractices.pdf>)

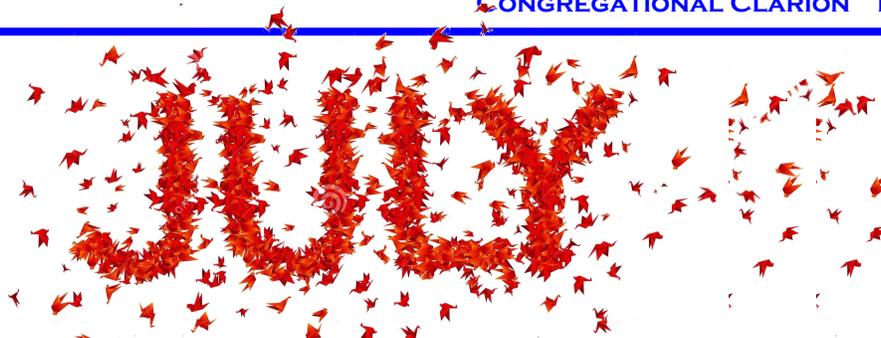
Pastor Garth Schumacher On Unpaid Leave in August

Because of financial concern, it was decided that Rev. Schumacher would take off the month of August without pay. He will still receive his health and life insurance policies, but not his salary and other business expenses. Rev. Schumacher offered this solution as a way to allay some of our leadership's concerns about fiduciary responsibilities. We'll be trying this as an experiment and see how it goes!



POT LUCKS ARE BACK!

Join us on July 31st directly after the Sunday worship service. Everybody is invited. If you don't like to cook, bring chips, raw vegetables, a jar of pickles, or just your appetites. For those of you who are new, or those who just need a friendly reminder, your church lady loves any lemon dessert. (Was that too brazen?)



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 Church Clean - Leonard Mission Trip 10:00am Sunday Worship - Mission Team Send-off service	27 Office Closed Mission Trip 6:30pm Boy Scouts	28 Mission Trip 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	29 Mission Trip 10:00am Bible Study 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	30 Mission Trip 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	1 Mission Trip 9:00am - 1:00pm Office Open	2 Mission Trip
3 Church Clean - Monson/Ormsby/Morris 10:00am Communion 10:00am Sunday Worship - Mission Team Return Service	4 Office Closed Independence Day	5 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 6:00pm Diaconate Meeting	6 7:30am - 3:00pm Youth Whirleyball and service project 10:00am Bible Study 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	7 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	8 9:00am - 1:00pm Office Open	9
10 Church Clean - Dusek 10:00am Sunday Worship	11 Office Closed 6:30pm Boy Scouts	12 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 6:00pm Council Meeting	13 10:00am Bible Study 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 1:30pm - 2:30pm Garth - AMC	14 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	15 9:00am - 1:00pm Office Open	16
17 Church Clean - Betzold 8:30am Trustee Meeting 10:00am Sunday Worship 11:15am Congregational Giving Mtg.	18 Office Closed 6:30pm Boy Scouts	19 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	20 Youth Service Project and Movie Time TBD 10:00am Bible Study 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 2:00pm - 3:00pm Garth - Evergreen	21 8:15am Ministerium 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	22 9:00am - 1:00pm Office Open	23
24 Church Clean - Bowman/Anderson/Bevington 10:00am Sunday Worship	25 Office Closed 6:30pm Boy Scouts	26 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	27 10:00am Bible Study 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	28 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	29 9:00am - 1:00pm Office Open	30
31 Church Clean - Leonard 10:00am Sunday Worship 11:00am Pot Luck	1 Office Closed 6:30pm Boy Scouts	2 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 6:00pm Diaconate Meeting	3 10:00am Bible Study 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 7:00pm Christian Education Mtg.	4 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	5 9:00am - 1:00pm Office Open	6

Church Office Hours

Monday Closed
Tuesday 10am - 2 pm
Wednesday 10am - 2 pm
Thursday 10am - 2 pm
Friday 9am - 1 pm

