

# Congregational Clarion

AMERY CONGREGATIONAL UCC

Let US WelCome  
February

AND take every  
chance to SHOW  
Love to all We  
Meet.

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God  
is love,

AND WHOEVER  
ABIDES IN LOVE  
ABIDES IN GOD,  
AND GOD  
ABIDES IN HIM.

1 JOHN 4:16, ESV

## BEGINNING OUR JOURNEY TOWARD CHRIST'S RESURRECTION (Logos, Mythos, Alpha, Omega)

This year's Lenten journey begins on Ash Wednesday, February 17 and ends on Easter, April 4. Our Lenten study is being planned as of this writing and more information will be in your future email and Sunday announcements.

Meanwhile, included in this article are a few thoughts to consider moving toward Lent... How are we, rational, early 21st Century, intelligent, scientifically inclined folks supposed to understand the resurrection of Christ? How do we, as Christians, live into the "greatest story ever told?" I'm sure many of you have asked yourself, or been asked by your kids or friends how you do it.

One way to think about our faith stories is by understanding that our modern world relies on logos rather than mythos. <sup>1</sup>Logos language includes facts, data, evidence, and precise descriptions. Rob Bell describes how "logos language and thinking got us medicine, got us airplanes. . . For the past three hundred years we have had an explosion of logos language. . . But the problem is, there are whole dimensions of our existence that require a different way of thinking."

Bell rightly says, "The Bible is mostly written in mythos language. . . Good religion traffics in mythos. . . Mythos language is "more than

literally true". . . Evolutionary science does an excellent job of explaining why I don't have a tail. It just doesn't do so well explaining why I find that interesting!" We need mythos language to express the more-than-factual meaning of experiences like falling in love, grief, and death.

Good religion, art, poetry, and myth point us to the deeper levels of truth that logos can't fully explain. This is why most (not all) of my sermons rely on both poetic mythos language and logos logic... My experience tells me that our modern/post-modern minds need (scientific/didactic) logos to feel comfortable in our contemporary world combined with (spiritual/poetic) mythos to go beyond the "truth."

So, to put our mythos hats on for a moment...<sup>2</sup>For The Franciscan philosopher and Doctor of the Church, St. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio (1217-1274), the perfection of God and God's creation is quite simply a full circle, and to be perfect the circle must and will complete itself. The beginning and the ending of a circle is the same... Alpha and Omega are the same. The lynchpin holding it all in unity is the "Christ Mystery," or the essential unity of matter and spirit, humanity and divinity. The Christ Mystery—the crucified and resurrected Christ—becomes the visible template for the pattern of all creation. Christ reveals the necessary cycle of loss and renewal that keeps all things

(Continued on page 8)

# FEBRUARY



02/02 Virginia Ormsby	02/10 Ashley Emerson
02/02 Kaylee Burstad	02/10 David Bowman
02/02 Sarah Stalhiem	02/14 Samantha Emerson
02/04 Roger Waterman	02/16 Matt Cree
02/04 Madison Rondeau	02/22 Gavin Koch
02/05 Gene Pribnow	02/22 Gage Koch
02/06 Pete Hanson	02/24 Sandy Morris
02/07 Colleen Foxwell	02/25 Bonnie Springer
02/10 Kendal Moore	02/26 Grady O'Rourke

With Valentine's Day on people's minds, February is a big month for flowers. But, oddly enough, the red rose is not February's birth month flower!

The February birth month flowers are the violet and the primrose.

## THE VIOLET

Violets signify watchfulness, loyalty, and faithfulness.

Give a violet to someone to let them know you'll always be there for them!



## THE PRIMROSE

The other February birth flower is the primrose. Primroses are colorful perennials of European origin that are not actually related to the rose. Among the first to bloom as winter retreats, they'll multiply each year if given a little shade and moist (but not soggy) soil.



# MEMBERS AND



Friendship Warms  
the Heart

## Golden Age Manor

220 Scholl Street  
Amery, WI 54001  
(715) 268-7107  
Dave Waterman

## Evergreen Village

611 Harriman Avenue  
(715) 268-6640  
Marian Peterson  
Gussie Fennern

## Christian Community Home

2650 65th Ave  
Osceola, WI 54020  
Evelyn Halverson Rm. 217

## Memory Care

215 Birch St. W  
Amery, WI 54001  
Jeanne Murphy  
Sylvia Utter  
Bob Holms

## Baldwin Care Center

650 Birch St.  
Baldwin, WI 54002  
Mary Monson Apt. 27

## Riverbend

475 Golfview Lane  
715.268.9949  
Beth Sorensen

# from your YOUTH MINISTER



## Wednesdays:

**Wednesday February 3rd** – Homework & Hangout, Pizza and tailgating party and Souper Bowl of Caring football game. **Please bring a non-perishable food item to donate to the Amery Food Pantry.** Please note: Our evening will conclude at 7:00pm.

**Wednesday February 10th** – Homework & Hangout, Dinner and Youth Group. Please note: Our evening will conclude at 7:00pm.

**Wednesday February 17th** – Homework & Hangout, Dinner and Youth Group. Ash Wednesday. Please note: Our evening will conclude at 7:00pm.

**Wednesday February 24th** – Homework & Hangout, Dinner and Youth Group. Please note: Our evening will conclude at 7:00pm.

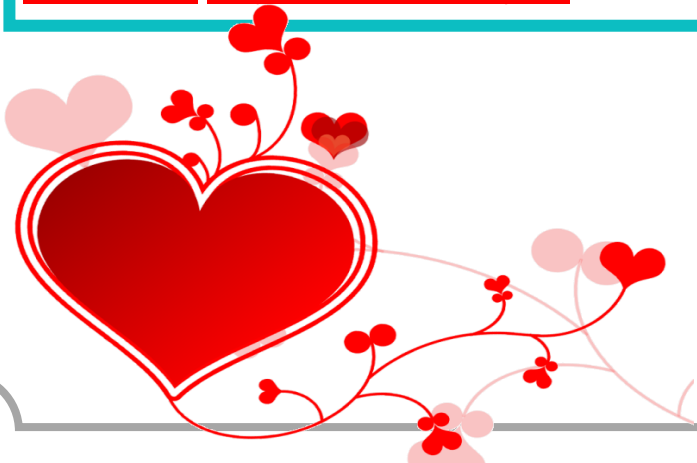
**As a reminder: If your child has a fever, is not feeling well or has been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, please have them stay home. Thank you.**

**Monday, February 1st:** Camp Wapo registration begins. Please log on to [www.lakewapo.org](http://www.lakewapo.org) to register. Or contact Charlotte for more details. The Youth camp for Congo kids will be July 11– July 16.

**Saturday, February 13th:** Ruby's Pantry Morning of Service. Please be at the AmTec parking lot (near the bus garage) at 7am to help serve. Parent pick up time will be at 10:30am. Please contact Charlotte if you need a ride!

**Sunday, February 14th:** Mission Team 2021 Zoom meeting at 9am for all L-4 Confirmation students and older who are going on the 2021 mission trip. Please contact Charlotte for the Zoom password.

**Sunday, February 28th:** Camp Wapo registration ends.



## Youth Director Contact Information:

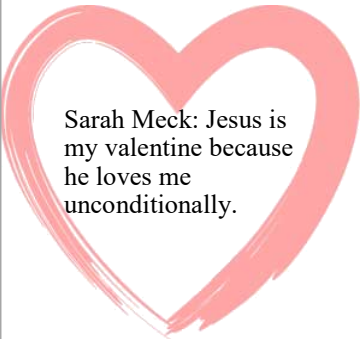
**Charlotte Gillen**

715.268.7390; ext. 12


715.338.6929 (cell)

[Youth.ameryucc@gmail.com](mailto:Youth.ameryucc@gmail.com)


# Youth Group kids tell us why Jesus IS their valentine



Sarah Meck: Jesus is my valentine because he loves me unconditionally.



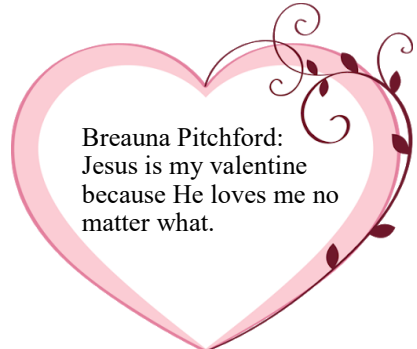
Tye Severson: Jesus gave me life.




Will you be Mine?

Love, Jesus

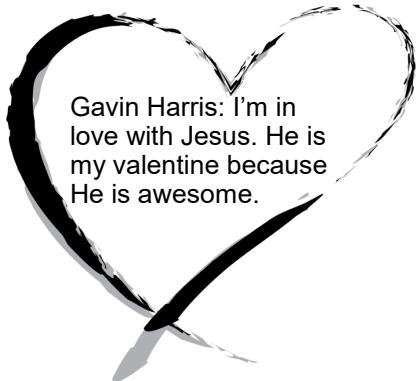
John 3:16



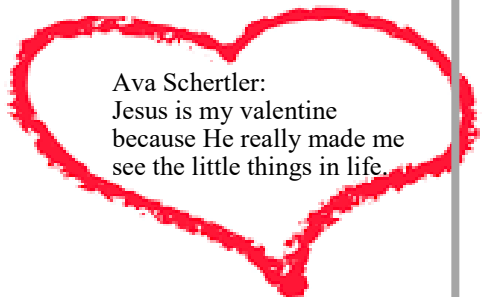
Breauna Pitchford: Jesus is my valentine because He loves me no matter what.



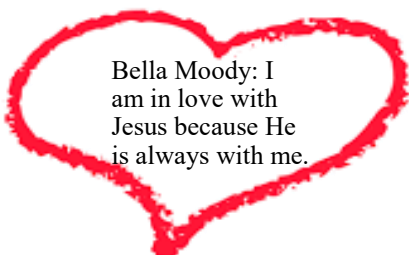
Megan Meck: He's the one I love the most.



Gavin Harris: I'm in love with Jesus. He is my valentine because He is awesome.



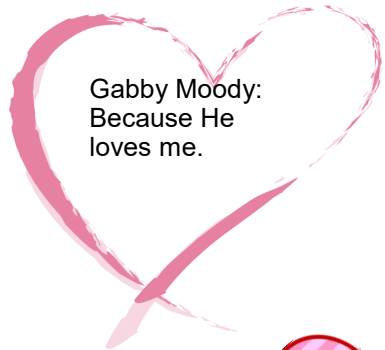
Ava Schertler: Jesus is my valentine because He really made me see the little things in life.



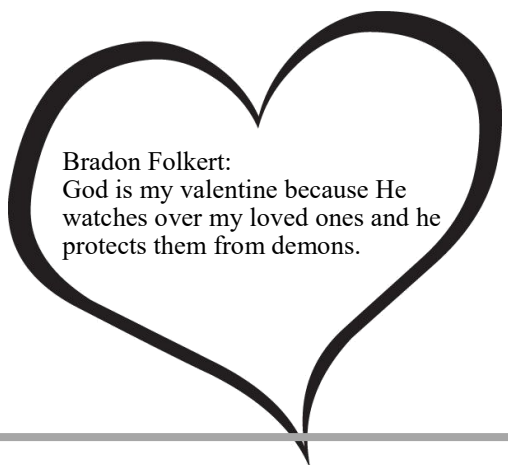
Bella Moody: I am in love with Jesus because He is always with me.



Be My Valentine



Gabby Moody: Because He loves me.

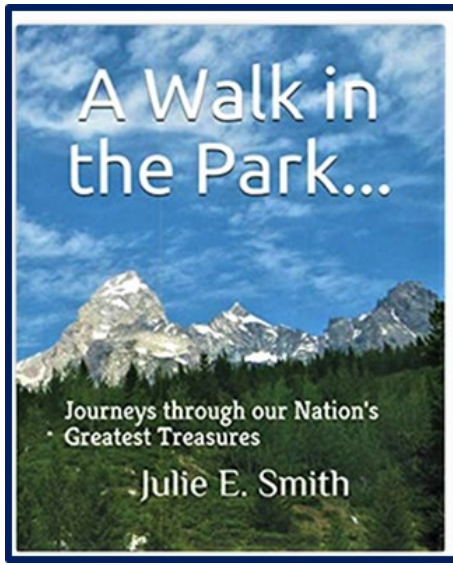


Bradon Folkert: God is my valentine because He watches over my loved ones and he protects them from demons.





## From the Writer's Corner.....



With a little encouragement from our dear friend Rae...I am writing to tell you today about the completion of my latest book. It has been about a four year process involving research, cussing at my computer, cussing at formatting troubles and battling with my own issues of self-esteem. (...will anybody read this....Really?) Yet, it hasn't been all blood, sweat and tears, because after all, I took many great trips to the Parks and I have been able to do what I absolutely LOVE: **to write** about my experiences. So Yes..... I guess it has been a Labor of Love.

When I chose the title for my book: **"A Walk in the Park...Journeys through our Nation's Greatest Treasures"** I was highlighting the fact that our National Parks truly are a treasure for Americans. One of my goals in writing this is to encourage people to discover all that the National Park Service has to offer. Many don't realize that you don't have to travel all the way west to see some incredible NPS sites, we have several close by. In St. Croix Falls is a great site discussing the beauty and history of the St. Croix River. Also the

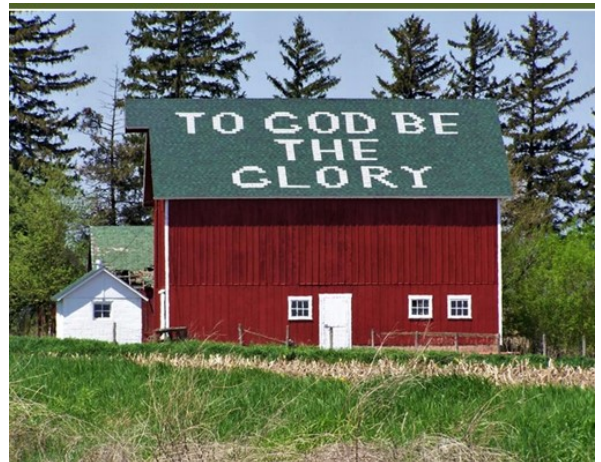
Apostle Islands in Bayfield is only about a 3 hour drive. So my hope is that people can take a little time to appreciate the beauty of a park or site and perhaps they may learn something new about this beautiful country of ours.

Further reflection on my title made me realize that these "Greatest Treasures" were of God FIRST; created by him in unique beauty...not "belonging" to America. He is letting us enjoy them with the hopes that we will also treasure them and conserve them wisely. **To God Be The Glory.** As a writer, I just describe the beauty before me; it is God who is given the Glory and I just came afterwards to enjoy what lies before me. I am reminded of a landmark in the Midwest that speaks to this reminder for us.

Scott's cousin, who lives in northern Illinois, lives near this amazing barn. I remember driving by it and being inspired. I did not know until recently the story behind it. It is wonderful that it has stood proudly with its message pointing to the heavens for over 40 years. It was just recently re-shingled. The barn is on Highway 20 between Freeport and Rockford, Illinois.

If you are interested in purchasing a copy of my book, you can buy it directly from Amazon. Remember that there are several books with "A Walk in the Park" in the title, so if you use the entire title including the "Journeys through our Nation's Greatest Treasures", then you will find it. Another

option available: I have several copies of my own and can get one to you. I had fun writing it and am happy to share with friends. Thanks for all your interest and support in my writing endeavors.



### From Amazon:

#### **A Walk in the Park.... Journeys through our Nation's Greatest Treasures**

This book provides a collection of adventures and photographs detailing a wonderful love of our extensive National Park Service. The NPS is Parks of course, but also includes monuments, protected lakeshores, historical sites and forested lands. This is not meant to be a complete guidebook of the entire system, but provides highlights of many of our Parks and places of interest that are operated by the National Park Service. The author's hope is that perusing through this book will encourage others to get out and enjoy the parks as well.

*From the Church Lady: I ordered the Kindle format because I am impatient and wanted to start reading Julie's book right away. I was hooked by the informative introduction and fascinated by the beautiful writing and interesting facts in each chapter. Not only did I enjoy Julie's book from start to finish, but I was pleased to be able to support our local author.*



This picture of Abby loving on a cow has nothing to do with this article.

## Ways To Love Your Church

Can our church be your valentine this year? As we start a new year we think about the many things we hope to accomplish and the ministries we want to continue. We've been able to be together through virtual activities, phone calls, and even social distanced youth group! This is all possible because we have support from our members and church friends. So this month could give us your love? How can you do this? First and foremost, keep us in your prayers. Pray for one another as we stay safely distanced, pray for our staff, and pray for our ministries. Secondly, stay involved. Call a friend from church or call many, write a card to someone, participate in virtual coffee hour after watching the service on Sundays, you could even make a meal for the youth on a Wednesday night. Lastly, love us with financial support. We know this past year has been tough for many but we ask that you help us continue our work in Christ. No gift is too small, or maybe is you don't have a need for your stimulus check consider using part of it as gift to stimulate our church. Remember your gift can be given via eGiving, automatically through your financial institution, or mailing it to the church. We would LOVE to start out our year in a positive way! So, will you be our valentine?

**With lots of love in Christ, The Congregational Giving Committee**

### NOTES OF GRATITUDE FOR OUR OWN SECRET SANTA

Before Christmas, Rev. Schumacher received a \$1000 check by an anonymous member to be divided by four different families in need. These are the notes returned to us by those families who, as you can read, are eternally grateful. I am too. Blessings to our Secret Santa... and our Beloved Community,  
Rev. Garth Schumacher

Thank ~~you~~ you very much.  
This helped out so much you will never know  
My kids will be so grateful

Thank you so much for helping me & my family

There are not adequate words to express how grateful our tiny family is for your generous gift this Christmas season. It will allow me to give my daughter a beautiful gift and meal to share that would not otherwise be possible, as well as give gifts to a friend who is also struggling to find the means to get gifts for his 3 little ones this year. Your kindness

will never be forgotten and I hope that once I finish school we will have the means to do the same going forward. I'm grateful for the amazing community and neighbors we have in this area at this difficult time in our lives.  
Thank you again!

## Council Meeting: January 12, 2021 (Zoom Meeting)

**ATTENDANCE:** Pastor Garth Schumacher, Sheldon Betzold: Moderator, Sandy Morris: Clerk, Richard Wooldridge: Financial Secretary, Charlotte Gillen: Youth Director, Barry Tulkki: Diaconate, Chad Leonard: Trustees, Abby Betzold: Congregational Giving, Shanon Hayes: Mission and Social Concerns, Rae Wooldridge: Congregational Giving, Julie Smith: Recording Secretary

Pastor Garth opened the meeting with prayer at 6:03 pm.

The Minutes from the previous Council Meeting were discussed and approved.

**TREASURER:** Virginia was not present, but Richard Wooldridge, Financial Secretary presented an overview of the financial report. He said that \$13,000 was moved from General Reserves to the operations budget. This allows us to start 2021 with a balanced budget. The budget was voted on and approved.

**CLERK:** Sandy presented the Clerk's report. She stated there were no changes in membership. The current membership role is at 168.

**YOUTH:** Char reported that the Wednesday Youth group continued to meet via Zoom during the month of December, averaging 3 to 5 kids participating. Now that the Youth group has returned to in-person meeting, the attendance is up to about 12. Our Youth group has been following the Amery Public Schools in terms of closures and reconvening.

**TRUSTEES:** Chad reported on the recent work of the Trustees. He said they have been receiving quotes for work on replacing the kitchen floor. Also, the Trustees hope to develop a sub-committee for purposes of financial planning. They hope to make better use of our sources to help the needs of the church.

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:** Char stated that she no longer chairs the Christian Education program. Sheldon stated that hopefully a member on that board would be able to attend Council Meetings in the future. Char stated that the committee did help to coordinate a successful Children's Christmas program.

**DIACONATE:** Barry Tulkki stated that his committee did not meet this month.

**CONGREGATIONAL GIVING:** Abby said that the Congregational Giving Committee will be meeting again soon. She hopes to organize with the committee an additional fund raising campaign to "jump start" 2021.

**MISSION AND SOCIAL CONCERNS:** Shanon reported her committee had sent out "Veterans of the Cross" letters for the Christmas time fund drive. The fund is created for retired clergy or members in need.

**PASTOR REPORT:** Pastor Garth said the installation service of new officers and committee members will take place January 17. He also stated that we need to continue discussions and form a committee if we are interested in having our church receive the designation "*Open & Affirming*". This is a designation given by the leadership of the UCC church. It is a program that provides ways of welcoming the LGBTQ community.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Our traditional spring "Walleye Dinner" has been postponed in light of the current situation with COVID restrictions.

Discussions were held on how we can gradually proceed to return to in-person worship services. We realize that some people do not have access to internet service and are not able to watch the Facebook services. We would like to allow a few people at a time to come and watch the service on the TV in fellowship hall. Rae has volunteered to coordinate this effort, as she is in contact with many members who would benefit from this. Please reach out to Rae if you do not have internet access and would like to participate in this program. Audience members will not be in the main sanctuary; rather they will be social-distancing and watching on a TV in fellowship hall.

Another discussion about resuming in-person services was about **Outdoor Worship**. Ideas were brought forth about possibly creating a more permanent outdoor structure in the green space. This would help to make outdoor services more enjoyable and something we could do even beyond Covid restrictions time. It was speculated that we might be able to start Outdoor Worship in April or May.

**Sheldon said the next Council Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 9 at 6:00pm**

Meeting was adjourned at 7:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Julie E. Smith, Recording Secretary



(Continued from page 1)

moving toward ever further life. The death and birth of every star and atom is this same pattern of loss and renewal, yet this pattern is invariably hidden, denied, or avoided, and therefore must be revealed by Jesus—through his passion, death, and resurrection.

So... when someone asks you how you can 'believe' in the resurrection of Christ you might be able to say, "I have faith that the mystery of Christ's resurrection is beyond logical (logos) truth. Indeed it is written in the birth and death of the stars." And, you wouldn't be wrong.

Let's have a blessed Lenten journey toward our own resurrection in Christ.

Rev. Garth Schumacher

<sup>1</sup> Richard Rohr, *Hierarchy of Truths: Jesus' Use of Scripture*

<sup>2</sup> Richard Rohr, *Eager to Love: The Alternative Way of Francis of Assisi*



### Drive Thru' Chili Luncheon

At Redeemer Lutheran Church  
600 Keller Avenue South ~ Amery  
February 10<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm

Chili, Crackers, Garlic Bread and Dessert

**\*Free Will Offering\***

Warm your Heart and Help our Community

Proceeds will go to the Amery Food Pantry



Sponsored by Redeemer's Ladies Aid  
Partial funding provided by Thrivent Financial

## Journey to PROM

*First Annual Prom Apparel Drive*

*Journey Church is looking for donations of:*

- New or gently-used prom dresses or formal dresses
- Tuxedos or suits
- Bow ties or ties
- Dress shoes for men and women
- New or gently-used jewelry
- New makeup

*Donations can be dropped off at:*

Journey Church  
131 Broadway Street E. Amery, WI 54001  
Tue-Fri, 8am-3pm OR Sunday mornings, 9am-11:30am

Please direct questions to Jen in the church office:  
E-mail: [office@journeychurch.city](mailto:office@journeychurch.city) | Phone: 715-268-2223

Donations will be taken now through March. Please spread the word. We would like to offer a Prom Boutique for students that cannot afford the price of prom.

\* If possible please have your gently-used items dry cleaned before dropping them off. This will help keep costs low

Journey CHURCH

ANNISSEAU

We have partnered with Amanda Fisk from Annisseau Custom Design & Tailoring for alterations. Check her out on Facebook [www.facebook.com/annisseau/](http://www.facebook.com/annisseau/)