

AMHERST COMMUNITY CHURCH

USER'S MANUAL

We strive to follow Jesus, reflecting God's
love, serving and welcoming all

77 WASHINGTON Highway

SNYDER, NY 14226

716-834-9700

www.amherstcommunitychurch.org

like us on [Facebook](#)

WHO WE ARE

Amherst Community Church is affiliated with the United Church of Christ since 1961. It started as a community church on January 18, 1915.

UCC recognizes 2 sacraments: communion and baptism. Communion is open to all.

Would you like to get married at ACC? Or have a baby dedication at ACC? We enjoy these celebrations and also adult baptisms. If you would like to schedule or have more questions, please contact the Pastor at 716-834-9700

United Church of Christ

- Believes in infant-baptism
- Recognizes Christ as the head of the Church.
- The pastor is a member of the congregation.

We are an Open and Affirming (ONA)* church and have been since 1987. We are one of the first churches to be so recognized. Our paperwork was processed the same day as the first UCC church.

"No matter where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!"

We strive to make our Christian faith relevant in our families and in our daily lives.

Please join us for fellowship after Sunday service in the Community Room.

*Open and Affirming (ONA) is the United Church of Christ's (UCC) designation for congregations, campus ministries, and other bodies in the UCC which make a public covenant of welcome into their full life and ministry to persons of all sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expression.

OUR BUILDING

We are handicap accessible. There is an elevator near the main entrance off the parking lot. A wheelchair is available if needed. Two sections of the sanctuary have been adjusted to accommodate wheelchairs or people with mobility issues.

The First Floor houses:

- Amherst Community Church Child Care Center

The Second Floor houses:

- Church office
- Sanctuary
- Minister's office
- Community Room
- Fellowship Hall
- Library
- Kitchen
- Choir room and the music director's office
- Crèche/Nursery
- A small meeting room AKA the Rainbow Room
- Columbarium

The Third Floor houses:

- The Upper Room
- Christian Education Director's office
- Balcony over the sanctuary
- Several Sunday School/multipurpose Rooms

THE MEETING ROOMS IN THE CHURCH

The Community Room: Located on the Second Floor

This well-used room is next to the Fellowship Hall and the kitchen. It's where the Sunday Coffee Hour is usually held. It can accommodate up to 120 (just chairs) and 100 (with tables) people for meetings, programs and other activities.

The Fellowship Hall: Located on the Second Floor

Adjacent to the Community Room is the Fellowship Hall, our church's original sanctuary until 1950. It can accommodate up to 200 (just chairs) and 120 (with tables) people for meetings, lectures, programs and dinners. It also has been the site of numerous stage productions. The church has 150 chairs available for use.

The Library: Located on the Second Floor

The room can hold about 12 people. Books can be borrowed from this room.

The Small Meeting Room (Rainbow Room) Located on the Second Floor

It seats 6 to 8 people comfortably. It is next to Fellowship Hall.

The Upper Room: Located on the Third Floor

It is a meeting room that can accommodate up to 25 people comfortably. It is at the far end of the hall near the balcony overlooking Fellowship Hall.

Note: For an exact location of the rooms, please check the floor plans at end of the manual.

GIVING TO THE CHURCH

Stewardship Campaigns

There is a stewardship campaign every fall where parishioners can pledge their intended giving for the following year.

Special Collections

We participate in two special offerings: Christmas Fund and One Great Hour of Sharing Fund run by UCC and also from time to time we collect special offerings for other charitable organizations.

Special Assistance Fund

The Special Assistance Fund is a discretionary fund used to help church members in time of need at the discretion of the Pastor and, if necessary, the Council President. This is replenished through parishioner's donations. For those who use the offering envelopes there are envelopes to give in January, April, July and October.

GOVERNANCE

BYLAWS

A set of by-laws outlines what constitutes membership, the function of the Council, the officers of the church, the Boards, Ministerial Relations Committee, Stewardship and Trustees.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

There are a minimum of 2 congregational meetings each year. All church members are invited to attend and vote at these meetings. Others (non-members) can attend but they are not able to vote.

1. The Annual Meeting is held on the second Sunday in February for the adoption of the annual budget, to receive annual reports from the Minister(s) and Staff, Council, Boards and Committees and any other business properly brought before the meeting.
2. The Church Organizational Meeting is held on the first Sunday in May for the election of Council members and other positions as specified in the Bylaws and any other business properly brought before the meeting.

THE CHURCH COUNCIL

The Council is elected by the congregation, and is the planning and policy making body of Amherst Community Church. Its organization is spelled out in the By-Laws, and is made up of a President, Vice-President elected by the Council from its body, Clerk, Treasurer, 2 representatives from each of the five Boards (Inreach, Outreach, Education, Child Care and Building), and 6 at-large members. Also sitting on the Council as a non-voting member is the Minister. Members are elected for one-year terms (Clerk and Vice-President), two-year terms (President, Treasurer and Board members) or three-year terms (at-large members/Trustees). All members are installed the first Sunday in June.

The Council meets on the first Monday nine months of the year and one other time in the summer to address current and long-term issues, concerns of the congregation, and reviews the activities of all Boards and Committees involved in the governance of Amherst Community Church.

Serving on the Council is a very respected and rewarding experience!

BUILDING BOARD

The Building Board consists of volunteers from the congregation who oversee and make decisions regarding the physical plant. The Building Board's responsibilities include maintenance of the building and grounds of the church, the supervision of the custodial staff, the construction and maintenance of the Columbarium, and they act as a liaison with the Child Care Center regarding custodial and maintenance concerns. It oversees the use of our building by outside groups.

CHILD CARE BOARD

The Child Care Board is primarily responsible for devising and implementing policy for the Amherst Community Church Child Care Center (ACCCCC) which is located on the lower floor of Amherst Community Church. The members of the Child Care Board should be evenly comprised of volunteer parents from the center and volunteer church members. ACCCCC is a day care center assisting approximately 150 families in Western New York. The Child Care Board is also charged with fund-raising and marketing for the center. In addition, there are several UPK classes in the center through Amherst Central School District.

For more information call the Child Care Center at 834-9701 or see their web page at <https://www.amherstcommunitychildcare.org/>.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION BOARD

The Christian Education Board is presently comprised of volunteer church members who are responsible for making decisions about the Christian education that is provided for the entire church. The Board helps the Director of Christian Education and Community Engagement plan, guide, and oversee the educational activities offered to the congregation – from the youngest in the crèche through adulthood. It is involved with selecting curriculum and planning activities for the children. The members help generate ideas for the Youth Groups, look at providing fellowship opportunities for families, and encourage each other to take on leadership

roles. The Christian Education Board is also responsible for the church library of over 3,000 books.

Throughout the year, the Christian Education Board assists the Director of Christian Education and Community Engagement coordinate the Pre-Lenten Pancake Breakfast, Easter Egg Hunt and FIG LEAF (**F**un, **I**nter-**G**enerational **L**earning **E**ating **a**nd **F**ellowship) and other events. They are always open to having others join the Board and share ideas with them.

Sunday School is held during the church service. There is a Children's time in the service then the youth go to their class.

This board has led ACC participation in the Home Again project through Journey's End Refugee services. For this, the entire church pulls together everything that a new refugee family needs to furnish an apartment. Youth and adults work together to clean and set up an apartment.

INREACH BOARD

The work of the Inreach Board is to serve and support the church family, welcome and foster new members and guests, further relationships among members and friends of the church and encourage spiritual growth through worship, music and fellowship.

They are responsible for finding greeters, ushers and liturgists (Sunday scripture readers), and providing "Coffee Hour" fellowship time following worship.

Concern and care for members of the congregation during times of illness or other urgent circumstances might be tended to by the Inreach Board as needed, or as requested by the Council. A representative of the Inreach Board may assist the Clerk in updating and maintaining the Membership Rolls, if needed.

Employing and evaluating the Director of Music is the responsibility of the Inreach Board.

OUTREACH BOARD

Outreach is sharing our congregation's time, treasure and talents with the world outside the walls of the church. The Outreach Board seeks the active involvement of our church members in making the world a better place through the use of our time, our money, and what we do. We facilitate and raise awareness of the special offerings of the United Church of Christ.

The Outreach Board is responsible for making decisions regarding the financial support of organizations and mission projects as well as initiating projects utilizing individual's time and talent. We support the denomination with which we are affiliated: the United Church of Christ as well as the local cluster of UCC and CC (DC) churches, Western New York Churches in Covenant.

We continue to seek new ways to uphold our congregation's and denomination's commitments to do God's work on earth spreading Jesus' message of social justice and love.

All 5 of the Boards generally meet monthly and would welcome your participation.

MINISTERIAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The Ministerial Relations Committee is an advisory and consultative group that promotes good communication between the minister and the congregation. It is a sounding board for the minister as well as conduit for concerns and comments that the congregation may wish to convey. It is a confidential committee that acts as a liaison between the minister(s) and the congregation. The annual goals and objectives of the Ministerial Staff are reviewed annually, and compensation is recommended.

The committee is composed of 6 people – 4 elected by the congregation and 2 appointed by the Council. Three members of the committee form one-third of a Search Committee when necessary.

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

The Endowment Committee oversees the Endowment Fund, consider long term strategies to preserve and increase the principal of the fund and review and set investment policy for the fund. The committee consists of at least a Chair and three trustees. The membership may be increased by the Council at its discretion. At least four times a year the Committee reports the status of the Endowment Fund to the Council, and reports the status of the fund, including all activity, to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting.

AD HOC COMMITTEES

From time to time committees are formed to further the work of the church. These may be annually such as in the case of the Stewardship Committee or the Nominating Committee or they may be longer term but limited in their scope and dissolved once the goal is accomplished such as the Restoration Committee.

MUSICAL OPPORTUNITIES

Amherst Community Church has an excellent music program which is open for all to join. The music program is directed by Diane Poe Schroeder.

The Chancel Choir meets Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings before church. They are part of the worship service from September to June. During the summer months, individuals volunteer and provide special music in lieu of the choir.

Handbell Choir meets before choir rehearsal on Thursdays and plays several times a year during the worship service.

Come and join a wonderful, growing, exciting music program here at ACC!

SMALL GROUP STUDIES

Various small group studies are organized throughout the year. They may focus on current readings in contemporary religious thought or be based on a book or section of the Bible. These groups meet throughout the year as advertised in the bulletin and FOCUS. If you have ideas for programs, please feel free to be in touch with the church staff.

KNITTER'S GROUP

Knitters and crocheters meet weekly to make items to be provided to local charities. While doing this, they provide fellowship and support to each other. They are willing to teach anyone how to knit or crochet.