

**Community Church of Boulder Junction**  
**PO Box 14, Boulder Junction, WI 54512**  
**715-385-2146 [www.commchbj.org](http://www.commchbj.org)**

The *Community Church of Boulder Junction* has, from its inception, served the entire Boulder Junction community and surrounding area. The need for a place to worship and to teach children the way of Jesus Christ inspired a dedicated group of Christians to begin this work. We are defined in our constitution as a non-denominational congregation. We are associate members of the Evangelical Covenant Church.

We acknowledge the Bible as the inspired word of God and the only perfect guide for our faith and conduct. The Sacrament of Holy Communion is open to all who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and is usually observed on the first Sunday of each month.



**Our Mission:** We are a Christian community of worship, welcoming and accepting all who seek to live in loving relationship with God and God's creation, accepting all God's children and guiding all on their spiritual journey through study, reflection, fellowship, and service to our neighbors at home and around the world.

**Our History:** The Community Church of Boulder Junction was founded in 1928. In the early years, in addition to Sunday School classes, worship services were held once a month, or more often, as visiting ministers were available. Our original building was dedicated in 1942. A parsonage was built in 1947. As the need arose, additions and renovations were carried out: in 1951 - Fellowship Hall, 1965 - offices and classrooms, 1970s - parsonage & church kitchen, 1986 - sanctuary renovation, 2000 - new parsonage, and 2017 - sanctuary renovation & office/meeting room addition.

We have had many pastors in our early years, part-timers at first, then full-time ministers as we grew. We were blessed to have two pastors who served over 20 years each. In contrast, between 2017 and 2021, four pastors, including three interims, served our church.

A more detailed version of our history can be found on our website, [www.commchbj.org](http://www.commchbj.org).

**Our Worship Style:** With members of many Christian backgrounds we affirm the Apostles and Nicene Creeds. We worship in a mostly traditional style. We hope our choir, which has not been together during the pandemic, will begin singing in the coming months. Many people in

our congregation share their musical gifts in worship. We also hope our dedicated bell choir will also return to offering music in worship.

**Congregational Life:** Our congregation, much like the population of the surrounding area, is not ethnically diverse. Our diversity comes from our many theological backgrounds, with members who grew up in congregations of many different denominations (many from Evangelical Covenant Church, Lutheran, and Catholic traditions). Our congregation includes some children and adults of all ages, but most of us are retired, reflecting the population of the region. We are people from many different walks of life and income levels.

Attendance at Sunday morning worship services at 9:30 varies with the seasons. Many area residents go south for the winter, so summer attendance numbers are higher. Coming out the COVID-19 pandemic this spring, attendance has been between 40 and 60 people. Winter attendance is almost entirely members, with a few guests attending when they're in the area enjoying our "Christmas card" scenery. Visitors to the area make up a larger percentage of those in worship during the summer tourist season. After the worship service, we enjoy fellowship together while enjoying coffee, goodies, and conversation.

Boulder Junction is a rural Northwoods town. Community Church members reside in a geographically large area. Most live in Boulder Junction, but many live in the surrounding communities within a twenty-five mile radius.

Prior to the pandemic, we had a vibrant youth program at our church. Along with strong leadership to the program, we also benefited from a school busing system that allowed area children to be dropped off in front of the church on Wednesday afternoons after school. This facilitated many children participating in our youth programs.

Some adult groups have typically met weekly - Sunday after worship, Monday evening, and Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings. Each group has a special character all its own.

**Recent Transition Time:** Near the end of 2019 the church began to be divided over a number of issues and this was exacerbated by Covid-19 as communication became more difficult. This ultimately resulted in the Pastor announcing his resignation effective October 30, 2020.

From December 2020 through August 2021, a strategic interim pastor was hired. At his invitation, a Transition Team was formed to provide guidance to the congregation through the interim time. The Transition Team was an invaluable resource of support and encouragement. Highlights from the transition at this point have been:

- *Household Interviews* with the pastor, which included eighty-three people and led to a summary report shared with the congregation in February 2021.
- *Conversation Groups*, which involved about sixty people, in March, April, and May. Group conversations focused on helping build relationship connections and foster empathetic listening. We discussed our shared beliefs, values, and how to disagree without division.

In our conflict magnified by pandemic restrictions, we have experienced brokenness in our relationships and ache in our hearts. We have begun to experience healing, hope, and movement forward. While we expect to continue to heal and learn from this difficult season, we trust God's Spirit to guide us into a hopeful future.

**Our Challenges and Opportunities:**

As we move past conflicts and emerge from this season of pandemic, we still face some challenges. The number of people in worship attendance dropped dramatically in the past 18 months (beginning in the winter of 2020). The attendance of our younger families with children seems the most noticeable loss. Along with fewer people participating, financial giving has also gone down significantly.

We are in a place for many new opportunities as we come back together from the pandemic. We do not expect to return to distant-past "glory days," but desire to grow together as a Christian community. We are enjoying returning to more social interaction and fellowship, and believe God is calling us to lean into deeper interpersonal relationships. This is also a time for us to recognize the richness of God's abundant gifts in the people and resources of our congregation. While our diverse church backgrounds highlight differences among us, this diversity is among our strongest attributes as a congregation.

**Pastoral Roles, Responsibilities, Relationships and Needs:** The pastor is the spiritual leader of the church. The Pastor has an administrative relationship with the Pastoral Relations Committee, as they will provide confidential feedback on his/her performance as a pastor. The Pastor has a spiritually and personal care focused relationship with the Department of Elders, with whom the Pastor can share personal and confidential requests for support and prayer. The pastor is a part of all facets of the church (congregation, departments, committees). The pastor will equip the congregation for its purpose to bring honor to God and to build up the body of Christ.

**Our Structure:** Our constitution and bylaws designate the congregational meeting as the final authority. The Church Council is responsible for "general administration," and meets monthly. Membership on the council is made up of four officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer) and all the members of the seven departments.

Department members and the Council Secretary and Treasurer are elected at the Annual Meeting; committee members are nominated by the Church Council Chair and voted on by the Church Council. The Council Chair and Vice Chair are elected by the members of the council. Each department elects its own chair.

Our Departments are:

- Elders, who share the responsibilities of meeting the spiritual needs of members with the pastor and supervise the pastor.

- Worship & Music, who assist the pastor in implementing worship services and supervise the Music Director and Organist.
- Missions, who express the congregation's love for God and his creation through giving.
- Stewardship of Finances, who are responsible for financial planning and reporting and supervise the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer.
- Christian Education, who take responsibility for providing instruction to children and Adults and supervise the CE Coordinator and Youth Director.
- Church Property, who arrange for caring and maintenance of church building and grounds and parsonage and supervise the Interior Custodian and Custodian of Buildings and Grounds.
- Personnel, who establish and maintain policies & procedures for all paid employees and supervise the Office Manager.

Committees are appointed by the Council Chair and approved by the Council and include:

- Nominating, who arrange for candidates for department elections in preparation of a ballot for the annual meeting.
- Pastoral Relations, who promote effective working relations between the pastor and the church.
- Fellowship, who coordinate the Coffee Hour following the Sunday service.
- Banner, who are responsible for designing new banners for the sanctuary.
- Beautification, who enhance the appearance of indoor and outdoor space.
- Library, who keep our collection of books and videos up to date and supervises checkout.
- Memorial, who track donations and expenses related to memorials in the name of a loved one.
- W.C.C., the Women of the Community Church, who have several interest groups who meet on their own schedules. They also manage the biggest fundraising event of the year, the Strawberry Social.
- Website, who manage the church's website.
- Newsletter, who manage the monthly church newsletter.
- Endowment, who manage the church endowment fund.
- Constitution & Bylaws, who explore ways to improve our governance structure.
- Pastoral Search, who is currently searching for a new pastor.

**Church Staff:** The following staff members are paid employees of the church and are supervised by one of the church departments. Each staff member must be of good character and have a genuine love for God and His Church.

- The **Pastor**, called at a congregational annual or special meeting, shall be duly ordained or licensed by a recognized Christian body or denomination with a Master of Divinity or equivalent degree.

- The **Treasurer** handles the financial matters of the church, developing an annual budget in coordination with the Stewardship Department. He/she is charged with maintaining accurate records regarding all income and expenses throughout the year, and reporting monthly to the Church Council.
- The **Office Manager** manages the Church Office and performs the various administrative support functions for the pastor, council, and departments as needed. The pastor is given first priority when scheduling work tasks.
- The **Organist** prepares and provides organ and piano music for the worship service each Sunday morning as well as other special services as determined by the pastor and the Department of Worship & Music .
- The **Music Director** selects the music and directs the adult choir at rehearsals for presentation on the first and third Sundays of each month throughout the year as well as special services as determined by the pastor and the Department of Worship & Music.
- The **Custodians** provide a neat/clean and a well-groomed facility for Sunday and weekday activities.
- The **Christian Education Coordinator & Youth Director** provide leadership for the educational activities and programs of the church. The primary focus is on the youth. These positions are not currently filled.

**Participation and Membership:** Membership is granted to those “having faith in Jesus Christ, as his or her personal Savior, having been baptized according to the Bible, and having resolved to live a life consistent with that faith.” Members can join by confession of faith, reaffirmation, or transfer.

Some who regularly participate in Community Church worship and activities are not members. We welcome them and appreciate their commitment to the Lord. Others are seasonal residents who have membership in a church in a different location and Associate Membership is available to them. Associate members can vote at the annual meeting and can serve as members of departments and committees.

**Our Ministries:** Many places in scripture tell us that we need to be doing God’s work in our community. His work can take shape in many different ways. We see God working through our church in the following ministries:

- The Community Food Pantry, with its own independent governing body and run by community volunteers, is located at the south end of our campus and serves our neighbors in need across western Vilas County. Food is distributed each Thursday. Many church members are involved with this ministry.

- W.C.C. (Women of the Community Church) is an umbrella group that encompasses several interest and service groups.
  - The Strawberry Social is the only fundraiser of the year. It is a huge event that involves the whole community. We raise several thousand dollars in this one-day event. The money raised help provide scholarships to our members and their children and help our youth with funding for their camping experience. We also designate some funds to other missions. (Due to the pandemic, the Strawberry Social was not held in 2020 or 2021).
  - Knitting Group: We gather the second Tuesday of each month to work on caps, scarves, slippers, mittens, and anything else that people might need. Items are collected and delivered to locations for distribution.
  - Blankets for At-Risk Babies & Lap Robes: We make and collect these items to take to hospitals.
  - Funeral Luncheons: We provide food for fellowship following funerals.
  - Kitchen Cleaning: We have a schedule for monthly cleaning of the kitchen.
  - Support is also provided to the Tri-County Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, Frederick Place (a homeless shelter) and World Vision.
- Caring Ministries, under the administration of the Department of Elders, gathers volunteers to respond to the needs of our church family and community. Requests for services are relayed to volunteers through the church office or pastor. They provide services such as:
  - visiting and delivering flowers to shut ins.
  - writing notes of encouragement.
  - medical transportation.
- The Missions Department is allocated 15% of the previous year's income to financially fund causes and organizations locally and around the world.
- W.O.W. (Wednesday on the Way) is our youth program, provided by the Christian Education staff with volunteer support. Boys to Christian men is a youth ministry developed to meet the needs of middle school aged boys within the congregation and as an outreach to the community, combining character lessons with interest activities (woodworking, photography). SOUL (Sounds of Unending Love) was the youth group for sixth grade and up, who met for Bible study, provided special music, and participated in monthly services from 2020 to early 2021.
- Confirmation instruction is provided for seventh and eighth graders taught by a blend of pastor and lay teachers. Confirmation has traditionally been done on Mother's Day.
- Partial funding of summer camp for community youth is an important part of our youth ministry. There is funding for both secular and non-secular camp experiences.
- Bible studies are an important part of our ministry. Sunday morning, Monday night, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings are the times of our regularly scheduled classes. (The Monday night and Thursday morning study groups have not met during the pandemic).

**Our Facilities:** The campus of the Community Church of Boulder Junction includes the Main building, the Annex building, the building which houses the Community Food Pantry, and a

storage building. The campus covers 2.5 acres and is located within the Town of Boulder Junction.

In the Main building, the sanctuary seats 180 people and was renovated in 2016. The renovation included updating the sanctuary to a more contemporary feel with flexible seating, adding a conference room and two offices for the youth and music directors. The Main building also includes a library/meeting room, pastor and office manager offices, nursery, fellowship hall, and kitchen.

The Annex building was the original parsonage and is located adjacent to the main building. It is currently vacant. The future of this building is under review.

The Community Food Pantry building is at the south end of the parking lot and assists people in the western half of Vilas County. The ministry is managed by community volunteers (including many church members). A free clothing section is also located in the building. The clothing ministry is managed by women of the church.

The current Parsonage is a large four bedroom home located on Airport Road in Boulder Junction. This home was built in 2000 by a local contractor and was financed by the congregation. It is a very nice home situated on a beautiful lot near Boulder Lake and within a two miles of the church.

**Our Finances:** We consider ourselves a financially healthy church. Our goal is to keep six to nine months of operating expenses in reserve. In 2016, we conducted a capital fund drive to finance renovations with a price tag of about \$250,000. We dug into our reserve funds for \$50,000 and had pledges of about \$200,000. The \$50,000 line of credit that we had available was not used. Pledges for the three-year program came in on schedule with 100% pledge fulfillment.

The table below summarizes our financial activity for the past 5 years.

Year	Income	Expenses	+/-
2020-21	\$176,485	\$210,060	(\$33,575)
2019-20	\$259,460	\$258,925	\$535
2018-19	\$265,100	\$251,750	\$13,350
2017-18	\$268,565	\$268,190	\$375
2016-17	\$267,075	\$214,215	\$52,860

**Our Pastoral Compensation Policy:** The pastor's salary is based on experience and years of service. A parsonage is provided to the pastor, with basic utilities paid for by the church. An annual equity stipend of \$3,000 helps to offset any potential home equity loss when using a

parsonage. Insurances provided include medical, dental, prescription drugs, term life, and accidental death & disability, long-term disability and an employee assistance program. Vacation is based on years past seminary graduation, beginning with two weeks for the first five years. An additional week is granted for every additional five years since graduation. Six weeks of vacation is granted after twenty-one years in service to the Community Church. A sabbatical leave of as much as four months is available every seven years.

**The Boulder Junction Community:** Our church building is located in a rural community nestled in the Northwoods. There are two other churches in our town, Lutheran and Catholic. The area is home to many retirees and is a vacation destination. Boulder Junction provides hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, skiing, snowshoeing, camping, biking, and other activities. The weather provides a wonderful four season experience!

Boulder Junction is buzzing every year starting on Memorial Day weekend, with the community flea markets on Tuesdays throughout the summer, a busy July 4<sup>th</sup> week, and the Musky Jamboree the first week in August. The small downtown area has many interesting stores, a grocery store, a gas station, some great restaurants and pubs, and a post office. We are excited to have fiber optic internet being installed in the next few months. Visit [www.boulderjct.org](http://www.boulderjct.org) for more information.

The children of Boulder Junction attend an elementary school ten miles to the North and high school twenty miles to the South. North Lakeland Elementary School serves 4K through 8th grade. It was established in 1970 as a consolidation of smaller community schools. The five townships the school serves include Boulder Junction, Manitowish Waters, Presque Isle, Winchester, and part of Land O' Lakes. The school prides itself on strong academics, and according to the state, it significantly exceeds expectations. The school has a low ratio of students-to-staff, a unique outdoor education program, and innovative use of class configuration and technology.

Lakeland Union High School located in Minocqua serves students grades 9-12 and has approximately 718 students from the surrounding communities. Its mission is to create a safe, stimulating environment where all students may acquire the knowledge, skills, and ability to pursue academic, vocational, and personal excellence.

One of the best features of Boulder Junction is the Community Center & Library, which moved into a beautiful new building in 2014. In addition to books and resources, the library offers the services of wireless internet, printing, and copying as well as children's reading programs. Visit [www.boulderjunctionlibrary.org](http://www.boulderjunctionlibrary.org) for more information.