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Dear all,

**On December 20th, members are invited to join the Deacons in Christmas caroling at the homes of some of our older members.** We are meeting at the church at 4:00 and should be done by 6:00. Each family or singer should travel in their own car and wear their mask during the singing. We will also physically distance. The plan is to have members dress up as characters in the Nativity Story and sing a carol or two. Who would you like to be in the Nativity story? Let the office know if you need a

costume! To prepare, have some familiarity with "O Little Town of Bethlehem", "Silent Night", and "Away in the Manger".

**Our Christmas Eve Service will be on December 24th at 4:30.** It will be both on Facebook and in the parking lot. We will have a fire pit going. It will be a time of singing carols, telling the story, and reciting prayers. You are welcome to stay in the car, or join us outside especially in singing "Silent Night". Masks will be required and we will physically distance. Bring candles from your own house for the candle lighting and singing "Silent Night"!

Your ECUCC calendar, giving opportunities, and further announcements can be found below.

Blessings,  
-Pastor Lori

## Pastor's Notes: Christmas as Contemplation

And so, the Advent into Christmas season is upon us. How can we safely participate in the season in meaningful ways? The Advent into Christmas seasons break up the tedium of living in a pandemic but how to celebrate safely remains a challenge. As with all challenges, we have an opportunity; to return to the holiest of practices.

Advent is a time of waiting and expectation. One views the pain and suffering in the world and looks for the dawning of light to change that. In order to pay attention to these dynamics, it is helpful and maybe even necessary to have contemplative practices. Centering prayer leads to contemplation – a quiet knowing in the very essence of ourselves of God's presence in our lives. Without some of the external trappings of this season, we can turn our focus inward. This quiet time may allow for the birth of Christ to transform us in new ways.

Instead of thinking of what might get left out of this Advent into Christmas season, think of adding a special time for Centering Prayer. Centering Prayer is an ancient practice within the church. In Centering Prayer we begin with the same prayer daily, we empty our minds of other thoughts and are attentive to God's presence within.

Ruth Haley Barton offers this prayer for Advent:

Oh Holy God, open to me light for the darkness, courage for my fear, hope for my despair. O God of peace, open me to peace for my turmoil, joy for my sorrow, strength for my weakness. O generous God, open my heart to receive the gift of your presence.

Amen

If it seems impossible to spend twenty uninterrupted minutes in prayer, beginning with these words, then write them down and offer them up when you have a moment here and there. Over time and with practice the twenty minutes a day becomes space filled with gratitude.

It is our hope and expectation, regardless of the weather that we will have the opportunity to sing "Silent Night" together, outside under the stars. Look for the Christmas Eve Worship Announcement later in this Newsletter.

Blessings and Peace For this Holy Season,

Pastor Lori





**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

12/6 - WORSHIP 10:30

12/7 - DEACONS MEETING 6:30

12/13 - WORSHIP 10:30

12/14 - COUNCIL MEETING 7:00

12/20 - WORSHIP 10:30

12/21 - BLUE CHRISTMAS WORSHIP 7:00

12/24 - CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP 4:30

12/27 - WORSHIP 10:30



**Edgerton Gifts for Kids**  
**2020**

Gifts for Kids is an 100% volunteer-run organization committed to providing gifts and opportunities to the children of the Edgerton community and organizations that support them. All of your donations go directly to support the programs for the children within the Edgerton School District.

**EDGERTONGIFTSFORKIDS**

What are we doing for #GivingTuesday?

The United Church of Christ will be demonstrating our love of neighbor through our commitment to refugee resettlement. Your donation to our #GivingTuesday campaign will be used to address the plight of refugees and asylum seekers here in the U.S. and globally.

Through your #GivingTuesday donation, you welcome resettled refugees and asylum seekers to our cities, neighborhoods, and churches. Working with our partners:

- You furnish homes with blankets and cookware
- You accompany families to doctor's appointments and school enrollment - sometimes for the first time
- You share the joy that comes from landing employment or welcoming a baby in a new country.

In turn, resettled refugees enrich our communities with their talents, ideas and unlimited contributions.

This #GivingTuesday, our goal is \$75,000. With your donations, we will continue this work.

Text UCCGT to 41444.

**If you are able, giving is more important than ever in this tumultuous time. To support Gifts for Kids, you can view their flier with all the information [here](#) or go to their [web site](#).**



### **Sunday School Packets**

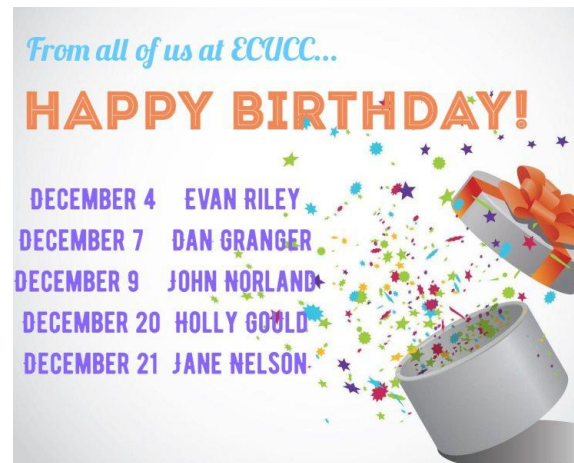
A big shout out to Kirsten Almo for putting together the packets for our "We Love God's Creation" family study guide. Extra packets are in the office. If you want something fun to do with your family during the holidays, come by and get some! December packets will be mailed and will include a "do it yourself" nativity. We will post a nativity story on Facebook to go with the activities in the packets.



We extend our deepest gratitude to  
Connie Wiersma, Holly Gould, and  
Connie Tronnes for their  
contributions to this year's  
stewardship campaign! We look  
forward to growing as a congregation  
and community over the coming  
year.



A big "Thank You" to Larry Beck, Eric  
Kim, Julie Norland, John Norland and  
the Matson family - Kathleen, Tyler,  
Delaney, and Max for serving our  
community by delivering Meals on  
Wheels recently. We're especially  
grateful for their willingness to help  
others during the pandemic. This is a  
no-contact task and is considered very  
safe. If you have a mask and an hour to  
spare, please consider volunteering!





## **ECUCC Church Council Meeting October 12, 2020**

1. Meeting called to order by Connie Wiersma at 7:04 pm. In attendance: Holly Gould, Connie Wiersma, Tracy Tronnes, Lynn (contributor) Bruce Morris and Lori Powell
2. Pastor Lori led us in a meditation and prayer.
3. Minutes were amended and approved from September with minimal changes to semantics. Tracy Tronnes moves to approve the minutes, seconded by Holly Gould.
4. Pastor Lori gave Pastoral Report
  - a. Administration:
    - i. Signed the WI council of Churches agreement to
    - ii. Will attend two workshops around racial justice coming up.
  - b. Worship:
    - i. Asks the Deacons to think about how we will worship for Christmas and Thanksgiving indoors.
  - c. Pastoral Care:
    - i. Lori wonders about the phone calls she gets from the Edgerton Oasis asking for money. She is being advised to contact local law enforcement about how to help without feeling cynical about the practice.
    - ii. Lori has been glad to have the survey as a talking point for making phone calls.
  - d. Christian Ed:
    - i. Kiera Riley's "Kids in Krafts" is in production. This runs for 4 Sundays.
- iii. Wondering if Lori could contact C and M Printing about developing a logo for the church.

- ii. 5-week curriculum starting called "We Love God's World" aimed at families.

#### 5. Old Business

- a. Mediation Meeting #2:
  - i. Joint Committee meeting on September 23 raised good discussion revolving around Worship, Mission and Outreach, Pastoral Care. We would like to invite all the people who were here for the mediation meeting to come back and generate ideas on a new statement of faith.
  - ii. Planning to invite Lorraine for a follow-up for October 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. Lori will be reaching out to her.
- b. PPP loan update: the request for forgiveness submitted, waiting for someone to ask for supporting paperwork.
- c. Updating the membership list will be reviewed by

Bruce for financial contributions. Tracy asks Lori to send us all an updated list again. Many questions about who should be on the list (active) and who should be considered inactive based on attendance and financial contributions.

#### 6. New Business:

- a. Nominating Committee: Connie will be contacting people this week
- b. Stewardship Committee: Lori is being guided toward the website for do-it-yourself stewardship material. Connie will talk to a couple people

#### 7. Committee Reports:

- a. Diaconate: nothing is known per Holly, but she will talk to the chair, Mary Lou.
- b. Christian Ed: Still trying to figure out an adult bible study. Pastor Lori wonders if just short passages/meditations for those who show up might be good.
- c. Trustees:
  - i. Trustees will put on hold asking for window donations. Instead



, the larger need exists in paying for the heating, electric, general expenses right now.

- ii. Bruce thinks attaching the form for monthly withdrawals for pledges would be a good idea to automatically deduct monies from account.
- iii. Touching base with Burns Service station to verify that they are still ready to plow during the winter. Trustees think they can handle the snow shoveling by sharing the load.
- iv. Progress being made on filling janitor and exploring volunteer landscaping opportunities.

d. Treasure's Report:

- i. Expenses, as stated above, are an issue. We are operating at a loss

currently. Pledges are appreciated!!

- ii. Pastor Lori lifts up the idea of a fundraiser to get cross-ventilation to be an option in our upper level to be able to have church during a pandemic. This would assist in continuing with the new windows so that opening them for cross-ventilation is an option. (A requirement of holding church during this time.)

Holly moves to adjourn at 8:12 pm, seconded by Tracy Tronnes.