

THE SANCTUARY

FEBRUARY 2025

FEBRUARY: GOD IS LOVE

At ECUCC, we believe that God is love, and that love is the foundation of all we do. Rooted in that unconditional, ever-present love, our mission is to embody grace and compassion in our community and beyond. We seek to reflect Christ's love through acts of kindness, worship, and service, building a welcoming and inclusive environment where all are invited to experience the transformative power of God's love.

NOTES FROM THE OFFICE

- As spring approaches, we will be renewing the front window space of the fellowship hall with a warm pop of color! Anybody who would like to lend a hand is invited to join us on Thursday, February 6 beginning at 10 AM. If you would like to donate to the supplies fund, please let the office know.
- There will be an informational meeting with those interested in confirmation on March 12 at 6:30 PM. Kids in 6th grade and up are encouraged to attend with their loved ones. There will be more information to follow in next month's newsletter.
- Church council is exploring avenues to begin accepting digital offerings, and hopes to have a viable option available in the coming weeks.
- We will be working on updating our member lists and records in the upcoming month. Please keep an eye on your email inbox to confirm your/your family's listing and manage your communication preferences!

Office hours are Thursdays from 10 AM to 12 PM. If unforeseen circumstances arise, an email will be sent to the congregation with notice of closure.

CALENDAR

Worship with us every Sunday at 10 AM

2/2 - Communion Sunday

2/5 - Choir Practice: 6 PM

2/9 - Music Sunday

**Pantomime workshop to follow*

2/10 - Church Council: 7 PM

2/15 - Women's Fellowship

12 - 3 PM

2/16 - Stories & Skits Sunday

2/19 - Centering Prayer Worship

6:30 PM

2/21 - Parents Night Out

5 - 8 PM

2/22 - Coldest Night of the Year

Walk for ECO: 4:30 PM

2/23 - Worship with Guest

Pastor Reverend Barb Wells

**Bible Study with Pastor Tiff:*

Wednesdays

2/12, 2/19, 2/26

4:30 and 6 PM

LITURGISTS

2/2 - Bavery/Thies Family

2/9 - Reilly Family

2/16 - Connie Wiersma

2/23 - Julie Norland

SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sunday School lessons for February will focus on the themes of “God is Love” and “Jesus the Storyteller”. We will explore these themes with stories, music and crafts. The children will be creating care packages to deliver to the residents at Swifthaven.

Parents are invited to bring their children to church for a “Parent’s Night Out - Kid’s Party!” on Friday, February 21 from 5 - 8 PM. There will be food, popcorn, movies and fun! Two adults will be present to care for the kids - please reach out to Jill Sanderson if you would like your children to attend!

BIBLE STUDY *The Parables of Jesus* WITH PASTOR TIFF Wednesdays at 4:30 and 6 PM

February 12th: *Parable of the Sower*, Matthew 13:1-9, Mark 4:1-9, Luke 8:5-10 (The parable is explained in Matthew 13:18-23, Mark 4:13-20, Luke 8:11-15)

February 19th: *Parable of the Good Samaritan*, Luke 10:25-37

February 26th: *Parable of the Talents*, Matthew 25:14-30



Please sign up in advance on the registration sheet in the back of the sanctuary or email Pastor Tiff at: revtiffbates@gmail.com

FROM AROUND THE UCC

The Southwest Wisconsin Association has announced it’s spring meeting, “*Imagining the Future: A Conversation with the Southwest Association and Conference Minister, Rev. Franz Rigert*” about the proposed structural changes to the conference.

The meeting will take place **March 1st at McFarland UCC** located at 5710 Anthony St. in McFarland from 9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Lunch will be provided. The cost is \$20 per person to register. There is a free virtual option available from 10 AM - 11 AM.

Deadline to register is February 20th. Register at [this link](#) or contact the office for more information.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- 2/5 - Aubrey Dominguez
- 2/7 - Leia Maves
- Logan Campbell
- 2/21 - Lizzy Gould
- 2/28 - Jill Sanderson
- 2/29 - Hillary Reilly

FELLOWSHIP TREATS

- 2/2 - Linda Cutting
- 2/9 - N/A
- 2/16 - Lynn Bates
- 2/23 - N/A

Thank you to all who bring in treats! Please use the signup sheet in the sanctuary to contribute.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Last month, ECUCC facilitated a wonderful and warm gathering of women for fellowship, food, and to explore how sacred self-care can sustain us through the winter months. Attendees also created prayer beads and explored the practice of journaling.



Another gathering will take place on Saturday, February 15 from 12 - 3 PM: *Galentine's Day: Exploring the 5 Love Languages*. Lunch will be provided! If you attended the January gathering, you are encouraged to bring your journal. There is no cost to attend, but a free will offering may be made. Please RSVP to Jill Sanderson via email, phone/text, or on the corresponding Facebook event.



“So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.”

1 JOHN 4:16

CENTERING PRAYER SERVICE WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19 6:30 PM

Centering Prayer Service is a lay-led, abbreviated service that aims to support our congregation in their centering prayer practice. Every third Wednesday of the month, you are invited to the sanctuary to sit in the quiet presence of God. This alternative service will include guided prayer prompts, a brief reading, meditative music, and time for silent reflection.

Questions about centering prayer service may be directed to the office.



Edgerton Outreach
serving those in need

SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 22
4:00 PM

1 MILE WALK FOR
VETERAN HOUSING

Join Team ECUCC as we walk to benefit Edgerton Community Outreach's veteran's housing project. To register as a walker, please reach out to Team Captain Kathleen Matson at officeecucc@gmail.com.

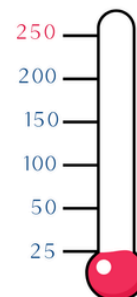


PLEASE SEE YOUR UPCOMING
EMAIL ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR
DETAILS ON HOW TO DONATE

WHY WE WALK:

- We walk through the cold and dark in February to declare our concern for people who have no home and take shelter in nooks and crannies.
- We walk for those whose days are a battle to house and feed their families and whose nights are filled with fear and frustration.
- We walk for those driven from home by violence and abuse. And we walk for people overwhelmed by isolation, guilt, and despair.
- We walk humbly, realizing that anyone can lose their footing and then lose everything else.

Help us reach our goal!!



Edgerton Congregational UCC
114 N. Henry Street
Edgerton, WI 53534

FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR TIFF

BY INTERIM MINISTER REVEREND TIFF BATES

Storytelling in the Bible

One form of communication that has been around for as long as people have gathered in groups is telling stories. Scholars believe that most of what was written in the Old Testament and certainly much of the New Testament started out as an oral stage before arriving in written form. People love to tell stories about their families, life in their community and to communicate important information. I believe that one of the best gifts God has given humankind is to remember and tell stories to one another. I think it is safe to say that the Bible is just one big story book from start to finish. Frankly, stories might be the best way to share thoughts and ideas that are alive in our brains. I remember reading stories to our young children and after one or two times through the book the kids could tell me the story. Maybe not word for word but they could remember the characters and the basic outline of the story. Good stories help us to pass along important information, new ideas, and values and feelings. Thus, the Bible stories are maybe the best way God teaches how to live in peace with our neighbors and to see how God has touched the lives of our ancestors.

During the month of February, you will have the opportunity to see two of the many ways that stories can be presented. What's even better, you can participate in learning and actually be a storyteller. I will be offering a three-week class on the Parables of Jesus. My hunch is that you probably can recite several of them from memory. One of my professors from seminary shared with us several times that the best chance in the gospels to hear the voice of Jesus is reading the parables. I agree. By studying the parables, it is like sitting on the hillside listening to the historical Jesus. The class will be held on Wednesdays beginning February 12. See the article in this newsletter for details. Not to worry, there won't be any homework. I hope you will come and join the group.

The second form of storytelling coming to our congregation is pantomime or as I like to call it: silent storytelling. Since my college days I have performed pantomime skits to small and large groups, people of all ages, sharing both fun and serious stories. The parables show up in many of my skits. I am planning on presenting several skits in worship on Sunday, February 16th. I would love to have some help so we can add more characters to the presentation. I am planning on having a Pantomime workshop on Sunday, February 9th, after worship. Adults and children age 6 and older if accompanied by an adult. We will learn a couple simple skits for the February 16th service. You do not need to be a gymnast or super athlete. You can participate where you feel comfortable. Please feel free to contact me if you want more information. I invite you to attend these two opportunities to learn more and share your pantomime skills.

- *Pastor Tiff*

FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

CHURCH MODERATOR, KRISTA KIM

ECUCC Member Spotlight is a new initiative designed to help us get to know each other better. This month, we chatted with Krista Kim: Moderator, Musician, Singer, and Sheep Herder Extraordinaire.

Family and Church Life

Eric and I moved with 3 little children to Edgerton in 2004, a few days before Christmas. We enjoyed the Methodist Church that Christmas Eve! Soon after that, I discovered there was a Congregational UCC in town and since then, I knew this was our church home. I was raised in the UCC, both my father and brother serving long tenures as UCC pastors. My mother maintained the church youth music program that was filled not only with music, but warmth and acceptance, organization and snacks. After choir practice she would let the kids play "battle ball" and once in awhile she'd play too!



My brother currently works as the WI Conference Minister. Our growing up was more focused on God's inclusivity of all creatures rather than on talking about Christianity. We were taught to be curious and in awe of the life of Jesus and integrate compassion and critical thinking into our everyday existence. We were taught that God is bigger than one religion. My dad delighted in having people of different faiths and cultures in our lives and never once did he suggest that persons of other faiths (Judaism, Islam, etc.) should be changed or converted. He celebrated this and taught us the historical roots and connections of these great religions.

In the first decade of our lives here in Edgerton, I enjoyed the days of creating and organizing and teaching Sunday School in this church (following the footsteps of many others and they know who they are!). Some of you may not know that I also worked here at the church! As a mom, it was important to me that our children be introduced to God, God's love and the steadfast love of a church community. Eric has remained by my side throughout our years at church, understanding full well that church was in my DNA. He and I agree that our lives here in Edgerton would not at all be complete without our years of friendship here at the little church on Henry Street. We have been loved and accepted at this church and for this we are thankful.

Outside of Church

My early years found me working in human services as Eric and I lived for 10 years in the Racine/Kenosha area. I worked directly with the welfare program (used to be called AFDC/W2) and taught life skills to struggling families and individuals who were incarcerated. This prompted me to pursue additional education and I earned a master's degree in counseling from UW-Whitewater where I still work in the Counselor Education Program. I am in charge of the day-to-day operations of our training clinic that offers free counseling to students and community members in the academic semester.

Our Life Now

Our kids have grown. Little Nadia is in her 3rd year at the University of MN and plans to be a teacher. Lewis cooks and manages the kitchen in a burger boutique (Valley Burger) in Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls. David runs his own lawn/landscape company and has a home in Elkhorn - soon to be married to Kylie Robinson this fall. Eric has retired from all those years of coaching and organizing soccer in Edgerton - good memories! He continues to be a referee during soccer seasons, both high school and college levels. And I am grateful for our home and that Eric is a built in handy-man. He can work on the house projects while I get to play in my garden and enjoy tending to flowers.



Thank you for reading! If you would like to receive our newsletters delivered to your home address, please email officecucc@gmail.com

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Moderator: Krista Kim - rigertkim@gmail.com
Interim Pastor: Tiff Bates - revtiffbates@gmail.com
Ministry/Education: Jill Sanderson - jillesanderson@gmail.com
Vice-Moderator/Treasurer: Tracy Tronnes - tntronnes@nylumber.com
Worship Life: Mary Lou Behring - hairchair@yahoo.com
Trustees: Bruce Morris - brucem929@gmail.com

CONTACT

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Church Council Minutes

December 9, 2024

PRESENT: Rev. Tiff, Krista Kim, Bruce Morris, Jill Sanderson, Tracy Troness, Todd Campbell, Mary Lou Behring and Kathleen Matson/via Zoom.

Krista called the meeting to order. Tiff read Psalm 96 out of a book called Psalms Now. The minutes from the last meeting were reviewed. Bruce made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Tracy seconded it. Minutes were approved.

MINISTERS REPORT: Tiff said that he feels we have accomplished a lot in the last month. He is planning some vacation time. Dec. 29-Jan 4, 2025. Jan. 6-10th. Jan 19th will be his Sunday off. The pageant is coming along for Sunday the 15th, with practice and party to be held on Saturday the 14th from 9:00-12:00. A music Sunday is planned for Dec. 22, with a practice being held on Tue. the 17th at 6:00p.m. Sunday Dec. 29th will be a Christmas carol Sunday while Tiff is off. The annual meeting will be held on Jan. 26, 2025 in the sanctuary with ample refreshments to follow.

ADMINISTRATOR/COMMUNICATIONS: Barbara Wells will be our guest pastor for the Blue Christmas service on Sat. Dec. 21 at 4:30. Jill will see Diane Everson about our Christmas schedule for the Edgerton Reporter. The poinsettias will come from K&W greenhouse for a cost of \$20. Kathleen will deliver them to save us a fee. Office hours will remain on Thur. mornings from 10-12. In the new year Kathleen will create a document with all the information we need for inspections. (boiler, elevator, fire). If there is any urgent news for Kathleen, feel free to send it to her personal email.

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION MINISTRY/JILL: Jill is planning two evenings for "Parents Night Out" Parents may drop the children off and Jill and her sons will care for them for a couple hours so parents can go out. The dates are Jan. 17 and Feb. 21 from 5-8. A book study will take place on Monday Jan. 20 at 6:30p.m. The book is called "Learning to Walk in the Dark". Jill purchased these for \$5.00 each. You can get your book ahead of time from Jill. This is a one-night commitment. Saturday Jan. 25 a Women's winter worship is being held from 12-3 in fellowship hall. This will be opened to the community. Tiff will lead a four-week bible study on the Parables in Feb. Jill will have a Parable workshop for the children on a Saturday as they will study the parables in Sunday school in Feb. The Methodist will join us in a Lenten book study. The book is called "When the World Breaks" This is a study of the Beatitudes. Jill will lead worship on March 2nd, Transformation Sunday. A discussion was held to purchase a 55 in TV for streaming in the Sanctuary. Jill will proceed to pick it up. Jill asked permission to paint the study area in fellowship hall. The council approved.

WORSHIP LIFE: The candles for Christmas Eve. are being prepared. A gift will be taken to each of our shut-ins for Christmas.

(continued)

TRUSTEES: The budget committee was formed and has the budget ready for approval. We will be purchasing lapel mics for Jill and Tiff for better clarity.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Things are going well. There is a 21% increase in pledges for 2025. A motion was made to split Christmas eve. non designated offering between the Christmas fund for retired UCC pastors and the church. The motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS: Tiff will start a confirmation class for youth 6th grade and up after the first of the year.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Lou Behring.