

THE SANCTUARY

MARCH 2025

MARCH: THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Lent is a season of deep spiritual reflection and preparation, marked by a journey that mirrors Jesus' time in the wilderness. It invites us to turn inward, seeking renewal and a closer relationship with God.

As we move toward the joy of Easter, let us embody a journey of humility and inner reflection that reminds us of the power of Christ's love and sacrifice.

NOTES FROM THE OFFICE

- Thank you to everyone who donated to Team ECUCC at the Coldest Night of the Year fundraiser to benefit Edgerton Community Outreach! Thanks to the caring folks in our greater community, ECO was able to raise the necessary funds to complete their Veterans Housing Project initiative.
- ECUCC will be fulfilling Meals on Wheels delivery from March 10 - 23. There are no weekend deliveries. Contact Jill Sanderson or find the signup sheet in the sanctuary to volunteer.

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

3/2 - Transfiguration Sunday

3/5 - Ash Wednesday worship
service @ United Methodist
Church - 7 PM

3/9 - Music Sunday

*Rehearsal 9:30 AM

3/10 - Church Council - 7 PM

3/12 - Youth Confirmation
Meeting - 6:30 PM

3/30 - Education Committee
Meeting

Time TBD

Lenten Book Study:

March 2, 9, 16 @ 11:15 AM

LITURGISTS

3/2 - Tracy Tronnes

3/9 - Tammy Campbell

3/16 - Holly Gould

3/23 - Mary Lou Behring

3/30 - Jim McLouth

LENTEN BOOK STUDY

March 2, 9 & 16

11:15 am

This book study will explore Pastor Jason Miller's re-examination of the Beatitudes - eight paradoxes found in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. *When the World Breaks* is about what happens when the fundamental picture we had relied on - our sense of how everything holds together - falls apart, and points to a whole new way to find hope in the midst of suffering.

Contact Director of Ministry Education Jill Sanderson at jillesanderson@gmail.com for more information.



MARCH LENTEN CALENDAR

Wednesday, March 5 - 7 PM: Ash Wednesday Service

Hosted by United Methodist Church, Pastor Dan Whitford Preaching
Optional: Imposition of Ashes at the end of the service

Sunday, March 9 10:00 a.m. First Sunday in Lent - Special Music Sunday

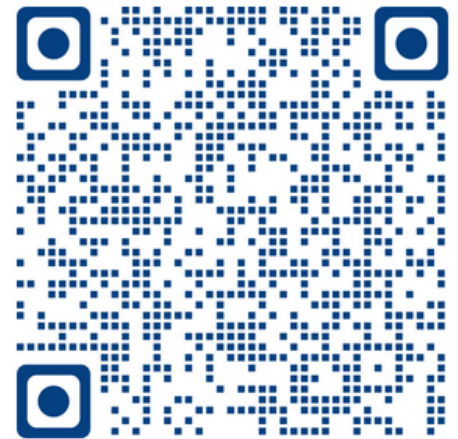
“Walking with Jesus”: Travel with Jesus on his journey to the cross



MISSION OPPORTUNITY: SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE

Sleep in Heavenly Peace welcomes volunteers to participate in the next Bed Build on April 5, from 9 AM to 2:30 PM.

The build is indoors and no woodworking experience is required! Help build beds for youth without a bed of their own by signing up to volunteer by emailing tera.meyer@shpbeds.org or using this QR code.



SPRING CONFIRMATION CLASS

ECUCC is offering a church sponsored confirmation class to youth completing 7th grade this year and up. We would like to invite youth and at least one parent or guardian to attend a planning meeting on Wednesday night, March 12th, at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Pastor Tiff and Jill Sanderson will lead the conversation as we explore what might work best for both parents and youth. Please contact either Jill or Pastor Tiff to let us know if you plan on attending. Our goal is to provide a fun and learning environment for the youth build a faith foundation through the love and grace of Jesus Christ!

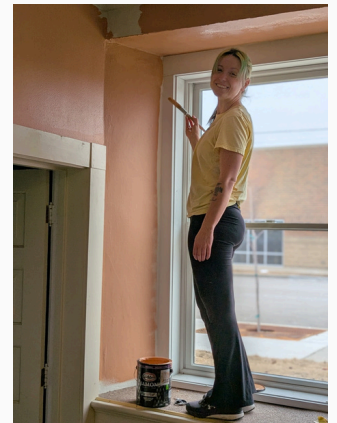
Any questions or input from families about the confirmation journey are encouraged to contact Jill or Pastor Tiff.

One last note: Youth are welcomed to participate whether or not their families are church members at the Congregational Church.

“This is my Son, whom I love.
Listen to Him”
MATTHEW 17:5

THANK YOU!

Pastor Tiff, Jill Sanderson, Josephine Navarro and Kathleen Matson worked through February to revitalize and transform the seating area in our fellowship hall and create a warm, welcoming space for all to gather. We are looking forward to gathering in our new space this spring!



FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR TIFF

BY INTERIM MINISTER REVEREND TIFF BATES

The Times They Are A-Changing

In 1964 Bob Dylan released the song “The Times They Are a Changing”. It was spot on for all that was going on in the United States and the world at that time. For those of us who were around back then it was a time of dramatic changes and many disruptions of everyday life. 1969 was the year I graduated from High School and then moved from Connecticut to Peoria, Illinois to attend Bradley, University. I had never seen so much flat land in my life. Change is one constant human life.

The month of March announces several major changes that come every year. In the natural world March is the first month of Spring even though it often snows during the basketball tournament. But eventually the snow does melt, the days get warmer, and the plants and animals wake up from their winter nap. Many years ago, I was walking behind the church I worked at and came upon a community of snowbells surrounded by piles of snow. It was early March and there were these courageous dainty flowers announcing to the world that Spring was on the way. There are many other harbingers of Spring that let us know that the times they are a changing. Don't put your snow shovels away quite yet but keep your eyes open for new life to flourish in your back yard.

In the world of religion and spirituality, March is the month when the story of Jesus goes from a ministry of hope to daily challenges and threats. Much like Advent prepares the church for Christmas, Lent is a season of challenges and trials for Jesus. The scripture lessons for Ash Wednesday instruct the faith community to clear our hearts and minds to make room for the Son of God. Psalm 51 paints the picture clearly: “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.”

Consider Lent to be the season of Spring cleaning of the soul. During Lent we walk with Jesus through the tough times and even death. Only then can we really understand the full meaning of Easter and the joy of new life.

- *Pastor Tiff*

FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

MARY LOU AND GARY BEHRING

We spoke with Mary Lou over the phone during the Behrings' time in Florida. The conversation was edited for length and clarity.

We are lifelong residents of Edgerton, and have five children between us. Rachel, Renee, Robin, Jeff and Sara. We have been blessed with ten grandkids! All of our children live in the area, except for Rachel, Bize and Briggs who live in Florida. Rachel is currently looking for a job close to us and we are prayerful they will relocate here in the near future. I am a hairdresser and Gary is retired from his career as a maintenance mechanic at Blue Scope Buildings.

I have been at ECUCC for 49 years, and we consider the church an extension of our family. Our children were baptized in this church, so it was important to us to raise them in church life here. I have served on committees and church council for many years, currently I am the head of the Worship Life Team and Gary is active in the peanut fellowship group.

We love the UCC denomination because it is very community-oriented, which is a very important part of our faith - spreading the love of God to the community through ministry. It's important to us to spread our church's message through acts of service - we volunteer for Meals on Wheels delivery and enjoy supporting Edgerton Outreach's various initiatives through the church. We want everyone in our community to know that they are cared for, loved, and welcomed by our church.

Both Gary and I were on the committee for helping obtain Open and Affirming status within the greater UCC for our congregation. We spent a year educating the congregation on Open and Affirming values, which was quite an eye-opening experience. It really solidified that one of our values as a church body is not just "talking the talk", but "walking the walk" as well.

One of the most meaningful examples of God working in our lives was when our grandson Jaxson was born. He was a "micro-preemie", born at 23 weeks. It was a scary time for our family, and our church showed up for us. Everyone prayed so hard; from purchasing gas cards to get to the hospital, to childcare for Jaxson's sister Emma, to making casseroles - we felt God worked through us all.

We have so many fond memories of the church throughout the years; from working on a habitat for humanity house to church camps. Being active and involved in church life taught our children the importance of helping others wherever it was needed; and to use their talents to serve others.

Overall, ECUCC feels like family to us, and we hope that through our ministry in the community, it continues to grow - in membership, finances and visibility in the community. We put our hope in the church to spread love and inclusivity; and pray our sanctuary continues to be a place of welcoming to everybody in Edgerton.



A BLESSING FOR THE BEGINNING OF LENT

by Kate Bowler

Blessed are you, ready to open yourself to a new joy, a doorway that until now has been hidden. Blessed are you who discipline yourself, with time, intention, and hope, anticipating God to show up in your discomfort. Trusting that when we need God, God promises to be there. God, give me courage, give me strength, give me hunger for You. Let this set time of less be a chance for more of You. Let this fast be an entrance into the discernment I desire, the divine presence I'm longing for, and the hope to will what You will, oh God, to be who You've called me to be.

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- March 5 Eric Kim
- March 5 David Kim
- March 12 Mary Hays
- March 12 Brent Reilly
- March 15 Drake Smerchek
- March 16 Adley Tronnes
- March 19 Ruth Webb
- March 22 Cammi Gould
- March 23 Andres Dominguez

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

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