

THE SANCTUARY

JANUARY 2026

JANUARY: THE GUIDING LIGHT OF CHRIST

From Director of Ministry & Education Jill Sanderson

As we move into January, we enter the season of Epiphany, a time when the church remembers how God's light first began to spread through the world. This month, our worship centers on the theme Guiding Light: The Light of Christ, reminding us that God comes close to us not as a distant mystery but as light we can walk by, share, and reflect. It is a light alive in our everyday lives.

The stories we hear in worship this month trace what happens when God's light meets the world. The Magi follow a star and find themselves traveling another road. Jesus' baptism reveals the light of God's love resting on him and, through him, on all of us. The psalmist bursts into song because the light of God's goodness fills his heart. And when Jesus calls his first disciples to leave their nets and follow, that same light gathers a new community of people who will carry God's love into every corner of the world.

In this season, we are reminded that faith is not only about seeing the light but also about following it. Each of us is invited to be a reflection of Christ's light in our homes, workplaces, and community. As we move through the cold and dark of winter, may this month remind us that the light still shines, guiding us toward hope, compassion, and belonging.

CALENDAR

*Sunday worship
begins weekly
at 10 AM!*

• JANUARY 12

Church Council
7 PM

• JANUARY 25

Annual Meeting
11 AM

**Childcare is
available and
Sunday School is in
session weekly
unless otherwise
noted in the
announcements.*

TRY THIS AT HOME – A PRACTICE OF PRESENCE FOR EPIPHANY

This is a simple prayer practice you're invited to explore in your own way. There's no right or wrong—just an opportunity to notice and reflect.

A "star word" is a guiding word you receive at Epiphany to help you notice God's light through the year. Star words will be passed out on Epiphany Sunday, but if you are unable to be with us - choose a word that feels grounding, curious, or hopeful. Notice when it shows up in your thoughts, conversations, or prayers. This word is not a resolution but an invitation —something to return to and live with throughout the year.

- Place your word somewhere you'll see it—on your phone, your mirror, or your desk. When you notice it, pause and take a breath - allowing it to gently re-center you.
- When you feel rushed or uncertain, return to your word.
- Remember your word often, seeking the ways God might be moving through the meanings and definitions the word contains.

WORSHIP LEADERS & VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

Thank you to all of our volunteers!

✦ JANUARY 4 – COMMUNION SUNDAY

Rev. Dr. Barb Wells

Liturgist: Kathleen Matson

Steward: Mary Lou Behring

✦ JANUARY 11

Rev. Kathleen Remund

Liturgist/Steward: Tracy Tronnes

✦ JANUARY 18

Rev. Shelby Jeidy

Liturgist: Julie Norland

Steward: Kathleen Matson

✦ JANUARY 25

Rev. Rachel Bauman

Liturgist: Tammy Campbell

Steward: Krista Kim

✦ FEBRUARY 1 – COMMUNION SUNDAY

Rev. Dr. Barb Wells

Liturgist: Holly Gould

Steward: *volunteer needed*

✦ FEBRUARY 8

Rev. Kathleen Remund

Liturgist: Mary Lou Behring

Steward: Tracy Tronnes

✦ FEBRUARY 15

Rev. Shelby Jeidy

Liturgist: Lynn Bates

Steward: *volunteer needed*

✦ FEBRUARY 22

Rev. Shelby Jeidy

Liturgist: Connie Wiersma

Steward: Krista Kim

NOTES FROM THE MODERATOR

A big thank you to Tiff and Lynn for guiding us through the past two years. And thank you to everyone who participated in the play and in the loving farewell to Tiff in his role as interim pastor.

The next council meeting is January 12 at 7pm. Church members are welcome and encouraged to attend. It's a great time to ask questions and find out more about the ongoing work of the church. Additionally, the Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 25, 2026 following worship. Associate Conference Minister Rev. Rachel Bauman will be present and able to answer questions as well as share insight on the lay-led leadership model and our search for a settled pastor.

Should there be an urgent/emergency need for pastoral services, please contact Kathleen in the office or Krista Kim (Moderator) at 608.322.4421 so that we can procure those services as needed.

See you in church!

Krista Kim

ECUCC Moderator

NOTES FROM THE OFFICE

•Church leadership has announced that Facebook streaming will be suspended while more reliable and effective technological options are explored. If you or someone you know relies on the service stream, please reach out to Moderator Krista Kim.

•Effective this month, office hours will be Fridays from 11 AM to 1 PM unless otherwise advertised in the announcements. The office can be reached remotely throughout the week via officeecucc@gmail.com

•The liturgist schedule has been updated through July. The schedule will be sent to all liturgists before the end of the month, and is currently posted in the sanctuary entrance. We are so grateful for all the readers that donate their time assisting our worship services!

SUNDAY SCHOOL

In January, our Sunday School program will explore what it means to live in the light of Christ. Each week connects to our worship service theme and helps children explore how God's light guides, comforts, and calls us in different ways.

JANUARY 4

We begin the month with Another Road, where the children will hear how God's light leads us to new paths and unexpected beginnings.

JANUARY 11

On Baptism of Christ Sunday, they will reflect on what it feels like to be surrounded by God's love, just like water that holds and renews us when we swim or bathe.

JANUARY 18

The following week, Bursting Into Song, will celebrate the joy that comes when God's light fills our hearts, reminding us that music and praise can help us express our faith.

JANUARY 25

Finally, in Fishing for People, the children will learn how Jesus calls us to share that light by casting our nets wide to include all people in love and kindness.

Throughout the month, the children will paint, sing, create, and share as they discover that God's light is not only something we follow - but something we carry with us into the world.

RASCAL'S ADVENT ADVENTURE

This book is designed to be read like an Advent calendar: one story for each day of Advent. Each day brings Rascal to a new friend, a new lesson, and a new spark of the wonder that leads him closer to Bethlehem.



SOFT COVER - 8X6

\$25

HARD COVER - 11X15

\$50



To order your copy of Rascal's Advent Adventure, please find an order form on the back table in the sanctuary and return to the office, or contact Jill Sanderson before January 26, 2026. When using check or Zelle, please put "Rascal" in the memo line.

THIS EPIPHANY, WE
REMEMBER THAT
CHRIST'S LIGHT IS FOR
THE WHOLE WORLD—
AND SO IS OUR LOVE.

MAY THE NEW YEAR BE
SHAPED BY ENDURING
HOPE, EXTRAVAGANT
WELCOME, AND PEACE
FOR ALL.

IN GRATITUDE: JOYOUS HEARTS AND HELPING HANDS



Thanks to all choir members, musicians, play participants and volunteers who shared their time, love, and talent this Christmas season!

A NOTE FROM PASTOR TIFF BATES

I want to begin by thanking the congregation for the gift certificate to K&W Greenery in Janesville. We will have fun picking out a plant or plants from their wide selection nursery stock. I also want to express our appreciation for all the support we have received from the congregation these past two years. This has been a time of transformation from one style of pastoral leadership to a model that includes more congregational participation. I believe that you have the right group of leaders in place to move from the old to the new.

As we all know, change is not easy and there is always a tendency to want to return to the old ways of doing things. However, we are not the only faith community called by God to imagine new ways to do ministry. With the support of our Wisconsin Conference staff, the Edgerton Congregational UCC Church is exploring a new model that provides new and different leaders for Sunday worship. I applaud your church leaders for their hard work and imagination to plan a new pathway for the spiritual growth of the members of the church.

My hope is that you will welcome the weekly preachers and give them the same support you gave me. Blessings to you in the New Year and the new adventures that lay ahead. May the love of God and the Spirit of the living Christ guide you in the days ahead.

Peace,

Tiff

ONLINE GIVING

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BIRTHDAYS

6 Tammy Campbell
14 Briggs Bynum
18 Bize Bynum
19 Rachel Bynum
21 Mary Lou Behring
24 Krista Kim
27 Fareed Haque

PRAYERS

If you have a prayer request, you're invited to share it with us. Requests may be submitted via the church office, during Sunday worship, or a prayer request form located in the sanctuary.

Prayers can be included beyond our worship service in newsletters and announcements upon request so we can lift one another up in prayer as a faith community.

In the event of a need for urgent pastoral care, Moderator Krista Kim or the church office are equipped to facilitate communication with former Interim Pastor Tiff Bates.

"Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you."

-St. Augustine

LOOKING AHEAD...

FEBRUARY

Our worship services next month will center around "Deep and Radical Love." We will reflect on what it means to love how Jesus did: fully, courageously, and without condition. Church Council will meet on Monday, February 9 at 7 PM.

Thank you for reading! If you would like your newsletters delivered to your home address, please reach out to officeecucc@gmail.com

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Moderator: Krista Kim - rigertkim@gmail.com

Ministry/Education: Jill Sanderson - jillesanderson@gmail.com

Vice-Moderator/Treasurer: Tracty 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

Monday, November 10 2025

PRESENT: Rev. Tiff, Krista Kim, Jill Sanderson, Tracy Tronnes, Matt Theis, Kathleen Matson (via phone) and Mary Lou Behring.

Krista called the meeting to order. The minutes from the last meeting were brought up for approval. Jill made a motion to them accept as written; Tracy seconded it. The minutes were approved.

MINISTERS REPORT: Tiff has enjoyed all our guest and lay people who have been leading worship. He and Lynn had a good trip out east. Confirmation class is going well. The worship Life team will get readers for the 4 weeks of Advent. Choir has been changed from Nov. 16 to the 23rd due to the Stewardship celebration following service. Tiff stated that we have a very active schedule the next few months:

Nov.13: Set up for Spaghetti Jazz for Jams

Nov. 14 Spaghetti and Jazz 5:00-8:00 pm

Nov. 16: Stewardship celebration/Chili lunch following worship

Nov. 23 choir practice following worship

Nov. 30 Advent begins/Hanging of the green

Dec. 20: Sounds of Peace, An Interfaith Celebration 4:00 pm

Dec. 20: Children's program practice 9:00 am

Dec. 21: Children's program during worship

Dec. 28: Christmas sing/Krista

COMMUNICATIONS/ADMIN: Kathleen shared she will be taking some time off but will be around to do all that needs doing. She appreciates people communicating well.

TRUSTEES: Matt stated the computers are being checked for security. Thoughts of painting the sanctuary along with samples were brought up. Jim McLouth has resigned from Trustees.

TREASURERS REPORT: Tracy stated we are on budget and bills are being paid.

MODERATOR: Krista shared how we have been so blessed with all our attendance and guest pastors and the spirit among us!! So much reassurance for our future. Tiff closed with a prayer.

Respectfully, Mary Lou Behring