

THE SANCTUARY

An open and affirming church where God is still speaking.

FEBRUARY 2026

FEBRUARY: RADICAL LOVE AND NEW LIGHT

This month, we continue to strengthen our relationships with each other, our worship leaders and our community. New this month, we will have two new spaces to grow in our faith:

The Still Speaking Circle, a lay led prayer group grounded in deep listening and compassion. A place to share what's on your heart and be held in quiet prayer.

The Spiritually Seeking Book Club, an interfaith gathering that explores concepts of everyday life and spirituality.

In this newsletter, you'll find reflections on our worship theme and practical ways to live it beyond Sunday, plus news from around ECUC.

See you in church.

BEYOND THE SANCTUARY

Ways We're Gathering This Month

✦ MONDAY, 2.9

Church Council Meeting
7:00 PM

✦ SUNDAY, 2.15

Still Speaking Circle
9:15 AM

✦ WEDNESDAY, 2.18

**Spiritually Seeking
Book Club**
6:00 PM

✦ WEDNESDAY, 2.18 & 25

**UCC Lenten Study &
Supper**
6:00 PM Supper
6:30 PM Discussion

AS ALWAYS...

Keep up with our news via our email announcements! If you do not receive our emails, please contact officeecucc@gmail.com. **As a reminder, nobody from our church will ever solicit money or gifts via email - if you receive a request that seems suspicious, please reach out to the office.**

WORSHIP CALENDAR

Sunday worship begins weekly at 10 AM. Childcare is available and Sunday School is in session weekly unless otherwise noted in the announcements.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1

Communion Sunday

Reverend Dr. Barb Wells

Liturgist: Holly Gould

Steward: Eric Kim

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8

Reverend Kathleen Remund

Liturgist: Mary Lou Behring

Steward: Tracy Tronnes

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15

Reverend Shelby Jeidy

Liturgist: Lynn Bates

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Reverend Shelby Jeidy

Liturgist: Connie Wiersma

Please note: Live streaming service has been postponed - please contact Krista Kim if you or someone you know relies on the live stream.

FEBRUARY THEME: RADICAL LOVE

From Director of Ministry & Education Jill Sanderson

What would it look like...and what might happen...if we offered Love as the answer to a world of peril? We say the words easily: *God is Love*. We teach them early: *Jesus called love the greatest of all our powers*.

And yet, so often we treat love as something fragile. We often treat love as a feeling that comes and goes, an emotion we fall into and fall out of, a soft idea reserved for safe spaces and easy relationships.

But the love Jesus embodied was never passive or fleeting.

It disrupted systems, crossed boundaries, restored dignity, and demanded courage. Love, in this vision, is not simply something we feel; *it is something we practice*. It is an orientation of the heart that shapes our choices, our relationships, our use of power, and our willingness to show up for one another. To live with radical love is to believe that love can still move the world. Love moves not through grand gestures alone, but through ordinary, daily acts of attention, courage, generosity, and care.

What might change in us, between us, and around us if love were not just our belief, but our response?

In February, our worship services will center on a practice of “Deep and Radical Love.” Together, we will reflect on what it means to love, as Jesus loved, fully, courageously, and without condition. Scripture is filled with stories of those considered untouchable. These were people living at the edges of, or even outside of, the community. Jesus reached toward these people. This month we’ll listen for how that same call speaks to us today. Who are the “untouchables” in our world or in our neighborhoods? Who are the “untouchables” in our own hearts? *What would it look like for our church to be a place where love is practiced so deeply that no one is left outside its reach?*

May February be a time when we let God's love stretch our hearts wider, deeper, and braver than ever before.

UCC LENTEN STUDY: “OUTGROW”

Led by Moderator Krista Kim, this continuing education opportunity will explore a daily devotional to guide us through the days of Lent, Maundy Thursday, Palm Sunday, and Easter. Each day includes a scripture reading, reflection and prayer, from the first day of Lent through Easter Sunday.

The group will meet at 6 PM for a soup supper followed by discussion at 6:30. Beginning on February 18 and meeting February 25, March 4, 11, 18 and 25 this six week study will invite you into the discipline of Lent, a season in which life's trials do not relent but neither does our growth in the Spirit.

If you are interested in attending in this offering, please find the signup sheet in the sanctuary, contact the office or reach out to Krista Kim. This is an in-person gathering, but all sessions do not be committed to for participation. If you'd like to provide a pot of soup for a gathering, let Krista know!

More details and announcements about this educational opportunity will be forthcoming in your weekly email announcements - stay tuned.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

In February, our children will explore what it means to practice deep, radical love.

Through stories, play, art, and hands-on activities, children will learn that God's love comes close to us and is experienced through kindness, listening, sharing, and caring for one another.

Each week, we will focus on a different way love shows up:

- **God's Upside-Down Love:** Children will explore the idea that God doesn't measure importance by fame, power, or titles. Instead, God values gentle hearts, kindness, and everyday acts of love. (Things children are already very good at)
- **Being "Salt" in the World:** Using taste tests, stories, and art, children will learn that small actions can make a big difference. Just like salt brings out flavor, loving actions help make the world better.
- **Learning to Listen:** As we approach Lent, children will practice slowing down and listening to their bodies, to one another, and to the world around them. Through games, sound activities, and calming crafts, they'll discover that listening itself is an act of love.
- **Wilderness Adventure & Abundant Grace:** To begin Lent, children will go on a "wilderness adventure," learning that even when things feel unfamiliar or uncertain, there can be enough when people share and help one another. Together, they'll read *Stone Soup*, make soup as a class, and discover how abundance is created through community.

Throughout the month, children will engage in storytelling and picture books, cooperative games, simple crafts and sensory activities. All of our activities are practices designed to help them notice their feelings and care for others.

✨ In our church, our goal is to help children experience faith as something safe, relational, and active. We're grateful to partner with you as your children grow in love, curiosity, and a sense of belonging. ✨

TRY THIS AT HOME: PRAYER PROMPTS FOR RADICAL LOVE

Listening for Love that Changes Us

These prompts are designed to help us reflect on how Christ-shaped love shows up in our daily lives. Consider incorporating these reflections during your prayer practice to help us notice where love is needed most, and how we are called to respond with courage and care.

Show me where you are inviting me to love beyond safety

✨ *Help me notice where I resist - and meet me there with grace.*

Open my eyes to those I have learned to overlook

✨ *Teach me to see them as you do.*

When my capacity for love feels worn thin, meet me with rest instead of guilt.

✨ *Renew what has grown tired in me.*

Thank you for the people who have shown me your love in unexpected ways.

✨ *Let their kindness continue to shape how I show up in the world.*

ONLINE GIVING

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BIRTHDAYS

- 5 Aubrey Dominguez
- 7 Leia Maves
- 7 Logan Campbell
- 15 Gracey Ninmer
- 21 Lizzy Gould
- 28 Jill Sanderson
- 29 Hillary Reilly

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...

MARCH: WALKING WITH JESUS

Our worship services next month will center around the season of Lent, with our theme *"Walking with Jesus, Following in Faith."* We will explore parables of growth and grace; and reflect on resilience as well as explore how to incorporate spiritual practices in everyday life.

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
Ministry/Education: Jill Sanderson
Vice-Moderator/Treasurer: Tracy Tronnes
Worship Life: Mary Lou Behring
Trustees: Bruce Morris

CONTACT

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ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE HOURS:
Fridays from 11 AM to 1 PM

*Please note: Our member and leadership contact information is kept private from documents viewable by the general public. If you are a member and would like to get in touch with a member of leadership, please contact the office.



CHURCH COUNCIL

Monday, December 8 2025

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

PRESENT: Rev. Tiff, Krista Kim, Tracy Tronnes, Jill Sanderson, Matt Theis, Mary Lou Behring and Kathleen Matson, via zoom. Krista called the meeting to order. Took a time of reflection for the past two years that we had the opportunity to have Rev. Tiff Bates be our interim pastor. Now we are fortunate to have Tiff and Lynn join our church and be part of our church family following his retirement. The minutes from the last meeting were reviewed. Jill made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Tracy seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

TREASURERS REOPRT: Tracy shared an explanation of our balance sheet. She gave us all an idea of how the budget is prepared each year. We are looking forward to a prosperous year moving forward with more pledges than last year.

TRUSTEES: Matt Theis was representing trustees. There were not enough in attendance for a quorum. He stated that when they meet again, they will move forward with our new safety plans.

WORSHIP LIFE: The new advent candles are now on the advent ring. Thank you, Kathleen, for ordering them! Communion will remain the first Sunday of each month. We are looking for a couple new people to join our team.

DIECRTOR OF MINISTRY EDUACATION: Jill compiled a job description for “The Director of Ministry”. After the new year she stated she would like to have a workshop to re-group and share ideas for the coming year. Thinking of a Q & A with Rachel Bauman. Maybe after the Annual meeting as Rachel will be here that day. On Dec. 21 after the children’s program Rachel Bauman will be here to release Tiff from his contract and interim time with us. There will be a reception to follow.

COMMUNICATION/KATHLEEN: The poinsettia order will be in the bulletin next week. Our Christmas ad in the Edgerton Reporter has been taken care of. Flyers have been sent to all the churches in town about our Dec. 20th “Sounds of Peace “concert. Mary Lou will provide refreshments.

OLD BUSINESS: Weather Alert Sundays were discussed. The call chain and social media posts seemed to have worked well. Computer updates are in progress.

NEW BUSINESS: After a short discussion the Annual meeting has been planned for Sunday Jan. 25, following worship. Jill has written an Advent book for our children and with the help of Kathleen they were able to get it printed. There are 2 versions. One is a bigger hard covered book that is around \$40 a book. She would like to gift each family a hard covered book at Christmas. Smaller soft covered versions will also be available for anyone else that would like to purchase one. Mary Lou made a motion to purchase these books for each family not to exceed \$500.00. Tracy seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

We all took a moment to reflect on the Advent season and talk about our hopes during this sacred time.

Meeting adjourned, respectfully submitted
Mary Lou Behring