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Worship/Live Stream 10:30 am  
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Permit No. 1



"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light. On those living in a pitch-dark land, light has dawned."

Isaiah 9:3, CEB

Dear EFUMC family,

As we step into a new calendar year, the glow of Advent candles may feel like it's fading behind us. Christmas trees come down, routines resume, and the world's weariness does not magically disappear on January 1. And yet, the church dares to say that the light has not gone out. In fact, January invites us to ask a different question: How do we carry the light of Christ into the year ahead?

The season of Epiphany helps us do just that. The word epiphany comes from the Greek epiphaneia, meaning "manifestation," "appearance," or "revelation." Epiphany reminds us that God's light is not meant to stay hidden within a stable, a sanctuary, or a specific season. It is revealed—again and again—in the world, in ordinary lives, and through people like you and me.

On Epiphany Sunday, January 4, you will receive a star word—a single word offered as a prayerful companion for the year ahead. A star word is not a goal to achieve or a task to complete, but an invitation to pay attention. Like the star that guided the magi, it may lead you in surprising directions. I invite you to hold your word gently, listen for it in prayer, and notice how God might be revealing something new through it in 2026.

The following Sunday, January 11, we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord, hearing Luke's account of Jesus standing in the waters and receiving a powerful affirmation: "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." Before Jesus teaches, heals, or calls disciples, he is named beloved. This feast reminds us that our baptism comes before our busyness. We carry Christ's light not because we have earned it, but because we, too, are God's beloved.

In the weeks that follow, Scripture will widen our vision. Isaiah speaks of light breaking into places of deep darkness and of God's servant called to bring hope beyond familiar boundaries. Alongside these readings, we hear Jesus calling ordinary people to become fishers of people—to live in ways that draw others toward life, healing, and hope.

So how might we carry Christ's light into the new year? Perhaps it looks like creating space for prayer and rest in a weary world. Perhaps it looks like practicing kindness when cynicism feels easier. Perhaps it looks like paying attention to those who are overlooked, or trusting that your small acts of faithfulness matter more than you know.

Advent asked us, "How does a weary world rejoice?" Epiphany answers: by letting Christ's light be revealed through us—one step, one word, one act of love at a time.

May this new year be a season of holy noticing, deep belonging, and brave light-bearing.

Con cariño,  
Pastor Sarah

## January Dates To Put In Your Calendar

- January 1st - Jan. 5th Office Will Be Closed
- January 5th- 1:00 p.m. Bag beans and rice, prep and freeze chicken
- January 15th 1:00 p.m. Prepare grocery bag
- January 17th: 8:30 a.m. Food Distribution day
- January 19th-Martin Luther King Day-Office will be closed



## Thank You for Supporting the Pastor's Discretionary Fund

I am deeply grateful for your faithful generosity and the many ways you support the ministry of our church. Because of your giving, the Pastor's Discretionary Fund has been used this year to care for our neighbors in tangible, meaningful ways.

Through this fund, we have been able to assist individuals and families facing urgent financial need by helping cover utility bills during difficult seasons. Your giving has helped young families get back on their feet after unexpected job loss, a young woman find safety from a domestic violence situation, and provided children with clothes for back-to-school.

We also assembled school supply bags for our Back-to-School Service of Blessing. The remaining supplies were donated to De Zavala Elementary, extending our care into the wider community.

The Discretionary Fund has also supported ministries that nurture dignity, connection, and joy. It helped fund our Campus Ministry Cooking Club, where students learn how to prepare affordable, nutritious meals—building both practical skills and community around the table. In addition, these funds made possible shared celebrations like Trunk or Treat and Friendsgiving with the Hub, creating spaces of welcome, hospitality, and belonging for all ages.

Your generosity ensures that when needs arise—whether financial, relational, or spiritual—our church is able to respond with compassion and care. The Pastor's Discretionary Fund is one way your giving becomes a direct expression of Christ's love, meeting people where they are and reminding them they are not alone.

Thank you for trusting the church with your gifts and for being partners in this ministry of care. Together, we are living out our calling to love our neighbors and reflect God's grace in our community.

Grace and peace,  
Pastor Sarah

## What's up with the HUB?

January brings a fresh start at the Hub of Prosperity, and we're grateful to begin another year as part of the EFUMC family. It is truly special to grow alongside such a supportive and caring community, and we look forward to all the blessings and opportunities this new year will bring. We're excited to kick off 2026 with a Women in Agriculture Panel on January 10th, featuring four remarkable women who have made meaningful strides in the agriculture world. Their stories and experiences are sure to inspire gardeners and learners of all kinds. Thank you for walking with us into a new year. Your prayers, kindness, and encouragement mean so much.

Happy Holidays!  
- Maria



## Food Pantry

A big thank you to everyone who participated in the Christmas Carnival. A fun time was had by all. All was approximately 25 EFUMC members and 125 children and adults from the community. I hope to have a a picture presentation ready soon.

