

Parish News • Friday, December 3, 2021

Greetings from Pastor Craig!

Wow ~ I'm still trying to decompress following my week-long trip down to Sioux Falls over Thanksgiving to see my family. It was a wonderful, whirlwind visit that could not have been improved upon.

They are a family of four – my son Christopher (an Anglican pastor), daughter-in-law Meg (a pharmacist at Avera Behavioral Health hospital), fifth-grade granddaughter Jordan, and second grade grandson Isaac. Their schedules are the flurry of events that seem to be the norm for families today. Sunday evening, I mentioned how well I thought they managed all the moving parts in their life during my time there, seeing that it included a school vacation, the Thanksgiving holiday, Isaac's eighth birthday, and one of the infusions Isaac receives every 14 days. They looked at one another and said: "This is pretty much how it is for us all the time."

It seems so very different from my childhood, as I remember it anyway. I admire my family for their communication, flexibility, and adaptability on the fly. They have the capacity to form friendships, create family moments, keep up with the demands of school and other activities, and still carve out time for church in the swirl that is life nowadays, at least where they live.

And now we're into December, which means certain things at school, home, and in our community. It's also a unique time of year at church, where beginning with Christmas Eve we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, who is so very many things to us. The Christ Child is:

- The Light of the World, which the darkness cannot overcome.
- Immanuel, which means "God is with us."
- The Son of God.
- The Messiah, which means God's Chosen One.
- The Savior of the World.
- The Word made Flesh, which means all God's fullness was pleased to dwell in the human person of Jesus – to create, to reveal, to inspire and sustain, and to redeem.

But between now and Christmas Eve all of our scripture readings, sermons, and some of the hymns will be about preparing for Jesus' birth and not his birth itself. The people living at the time of Jesus waited centuries for the Messiah's birth. They were only able to recognize Jesus when he did arrive because prophets had carefully prepared them in advance of his coming and they were receptive to the prophet's message.

Even though Jesus has been "on the scene," so to speak, for two thousand years the same preparation remains necessary, only in our case it's to

- Recognize who Jesus is and what he is like, so that we know what we are to look for.
- Distinguish between our life with God, where it isn't about what we do for God but what God does for us; and the areas of our life where our efforts matter in making things happen.
- Let go of our habits when they get in the way of Jesus fully entering our life.

Here's Something for the Boys and Girls this Week: The color of the cloth paraments on the pulpit, organ, and altar is blue, which means we're in the church season of Advent. Advent means the "coming" or "arrival" of God.

There are two important things to learn when we're waiting for something to happen. They are what to do when we're waiting and how to be prepared.

It might be fun if you asked your parents or grandparents these two questions.

- When you are waiting for something that you are really looking forward to, what do you do in order to be patient?
- What do you do to be prepared for something while you're waiting for it?

Item #1: Our church has reluctantly gone back to a "people should wear masks" policy, and only after careful consideration. The world-wide and local situation with the virus is shifting so rapidly that no-one is really quite sure where we're at presently, where we're headed, and what it all means.

As our Administrative Council deliberated last Saturday (November 27th) during a specially-called Zoom meeting we felt it was essential to develop a policy that could be adjusted as we go. Our criteria are and will be recommendations, first from the CDC (Center for Disease Controls and Prevention) and then our Governor's office.

We believe this eliminates personal preferences from our decision making and which way political winds are blowing at any given time. The minutes to our Zoom meeting and a corresponding Face Mask notice are attached.

I know this is deeply disappointing to many of you. It is to us as well; it feels like a step back and a wet blanket on the joy we've felt during our recent worship services. Our goal always is for services to be as worshipful and life-forming as possible, whether via Facebook Live or in-person with as few restrictions as we feel are safely possible.

As always, we'll keep you updated as often as is necessary.

Item #2: A reminder: The Ely Community Resource Giving Tree gifts are due at the church by Sunday, December 5th. You may place them under the small Christmas tree by the bulletin board in the rear of the church. Thank you for your response!

Item #3: Our poinsettia order is now up to twenty-nine plants. Thank you for your tremendous response! They are slated to arrive at church Friday, December 17, so they will be adorning our sanctuary for three worship services – December 19th, Christmas Eve, and December 26th.

You may take yours home at any time following those services or make arrangements to come by the church during a weekday to pick yours up.

I'm attaching a preliminary listing of who purchased poinsettias and who they are in honor or memory of to the email version of Parish News. This is for purposes of proof-reading the insert that will be in the bulletin later this month. I've done my best to compile the list correctly, but I'm sure there are errors. It's also possible I may have left someone off the list. If you see an error that pertains to you please reply to

sandpointhabes@gmail.com with the correction so we'll have an accurate list when we go to press. Thank you.

Item #4: There is a sign-up list for the United Methodist Women's Christmas Luncheon at the GEL, which will be on Monday, December 13th at Noon. Each person will order off the menu. Sign-up at the church or call Jeanne Tomlinson at 218-235-8479. The deadline to sign up is Sunday, December 5th.

Item #5: Our Prayer Wall for this week is attached.

Finally, a Song of Joy from the Book of Luke, Chapter One:

The first chapter of Luke is the account of two women unexpectedly becoming pregnant, both with a son who would play a central role in the salvation of the world.

- Elizabeth, a woman who is unable to bear children and is beyond childbearing years.
- Mary, a young, unmarried woman.

An angel comes separately announcing these improbable, even miraculous, births. An unnamed angel to Zechariah, Elizabeth's husband, with the message of the birth of a baby who will be John the Baptist. Six months later the angel Gabriel comes to Mary announcing Jesus' upcoming birth.

A song is sung associated with each birth. Mary sings praise to God as she and Elizabeth visit together before either child is born, and she and Elizabeth are talking together in astonishment at what God has done in their lives on behalf of all people. When John is born, Zechariah gives voice to God's provision for God's people. I've included here this second song.

Note: When you have a few quiet moments sit down and read the entire chapter (Luke 1:1 – 80).

Zechariah's Prophecy

⁶⁷ And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying,

⁶⁸ "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people,

⁶⁹ and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David,

⁷⁰ as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,

⁷¹ that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all who hate us;

⁷² to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant,

⁷³ the oath which he swore to our father Abraham, ⁷⁴ to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear,

⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.

⁷⁶ And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

⁷⁷ to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins,

⁷⁸ through the tender mercy of our God, when the day shall dawn upon^[a] us from on high

⁷⁹ to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

With warm regards,

Pastor Craig

The Ely United Methodist Church

Prayer Wall

December 3, 2021

This is a guide for prayer this week. The *Prayer Wall* is a reminder of those needing prayers during devotional times. Thank you for dedicating some of your personal prayer time to lift up these requests.

1 John 5: 14-15 (NIV)



“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know he hears us – we know that we have what we asked of him.”

We lift up the following in prayer...

- **Eric St. Martin & family** – Own’s of Ely Liquor, their home burned down and thankfully all inside escaped safely..
- **John Huntbatch family & friends** – Tom passed away last week. Pray for comfort & peace for the family & friends.
- **Tom Hamilton** – Tom is facing surgery at Mayo to remove blood clots. Pray for him and his wife, Karen.
- **Mike & Gail Haney** – Mike has been falling. Please keep the family in your prayers.
- **Pastor Paul Koehler** – Pastor Paul of First Lutheran church in Motley is hospitalized with COVID.
- **Gary Schimp family & friends** – Father of Linda Hane’s friend, Dawn, passed away from COVID.
- **Heidi Hanson’s daughter, Dorshann** – Just had knee replacement surgery. Pray for comfort and healing.
- **Lucy Diesslin’s brother, Lorne** – Is having gall bladder surgery. Pray for comfort and quick recovery
- **Mildred Koschak’s daughters, Phyllis & Betty** – Both have had recent surgeries. Pray for comfort and healing.
- **Nancy Markwardt’s brother, Red** – Has stage 4 cancer and is now in great pain with kidney stones.
- **Emma Smrekar Update** – Carolyn Fendt’s granddaughter & high school senior received her last chemo treatment for stomach cancer on June 11th & was believed to be cancer free. Her cancer has returned, pray for effective treatments and comfort.
- **Carrie Jackson Yost** – Daughter of Ann & Terry Jackson of Winton diagnosed with a rare form of aggressive breast cancer.
- **Julie Puzel family & friends** – Julie passed away at Carefree Living. She was 100, was kind & had a great sense of humor.
- **Jeanne Nelson** – Jeanne fell and broke her pelvis (hip). Pray for comfort and healing.
- **Jim Herberg family & friends** – **Update:** Janet Rasmussen’s brother Jim passed away. Pray for comfort for family & friends.
- **Dave Rue** – Keith’s brother was hit in the eye with a pressurized hose damaging his iris, eyelid & pupil. **Update:** Surgery to Dave’s eye to relieve pressure & remove the lens went well. Prognosis for full recovery after inserting a new lens looks good.
- **All the residents and staff at Ely Carefree Living where there are reported 5 cases of COVID**
- **All essential health care workers exposed to the COVID-19 virus and the Delta variant**

We include all the United Methodist Churches and Pastors, both active and retired, in our MN UMC Annual Conference as we work in extraordinary ways to keep our congregations and communities free from infection by the COVID-19 virus.

Prayer requests are compiled from our church prayer chain, from our Sunday morning church congregation using the prayer request forms located in the pew welcome pads, and the North Star District Prayer List. Prayer requests will remain on the Prayer Wall through four weeks unless removed earlier because the prayer is known to be no longer necessary. People may ask that prayers be renewed on the list for subsequent 4-week periods. The Prayer Wall is finalized each Thursday for the Sunday morning service.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL – MINUTES

Saturday November 27, 2021 – Special Issue meeting via Zoom

Call To Order: Chair Dan Johnson called the meeting to order at 3:08 PM.

Attendees (7): Rich Floyd, Craig Haberman, Dan Johnson, Margie & Mark Olson, Jay & Jeanne Tomlinson. Lucy Diesslin had submitted comments via email and Linda Hane had done the same via a phone call.

Opening: Pastor Craig opened the meeting with a prayer. **SPECIAL MEETING BUSINESS**

Response to recent spike in local COVID cases: To focus our discussion, Pastor Craig pointed out 3 areas that we need to address: (1) overall continuing policy; (2) informing the congregation of our current policy; (3) mechanics/logistics/signage.

1. **Overall policy:** After some discussion, we all agreed that our masking policy should always be consistent with CDC / governor policies.
2. **Informing congregation:** Announcement idea: “In view of the recent spike of COVID cases in our area, we feel our church needs to respond in return to a policy of asking all to wear masks during in-person worship and church meetings. We have always tried to keep our church guidelines in sync with CDC / governor recommendations. As the CDC is now recommending that ALL persons wear masks indoors and other high-transmission areas, we ask that all persons attending our in-person worship please wear a mask. Persons who are not comfortable with this are encouraged to make use of our Facebook Live broadcast. For those who do not have internet capability, our church basement will be set up for watching the service on a large screen TV while sitting at tables that provide proper social distance.”
3. **Mechanics/Logistics:** We agreed that all congregants should remain masked throughout the worship service with the exception of those leading specific parts of the worship. While at the front of the church they will be unmasked for that part but masked all other times. For example, the liturgist while reading at the podium; the pastor while in front speaking; the choir while singing introit/anthem/benediction in the choir area. Communion will return to the individual cups. We will still need to decide on other worship details, such as offering.

Signage suggestions:

In view of the current high-incident rate of COVID cases in our area -MASKS ARE HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

-MASKS ARE REQUESTED

-PLEASE WEAR A MASK

Meeting adjourned at 3:45

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne Tomlinson, Ad Council Secretary

Ely United Methodist Church Poinsettia List - 2021

Person	In Memory of
Bonnie Bergland and family	Charles Bergland, Sevan and Doris Bergland, Albert and Irene Schorfleide, and grandson Mason DeRosier
Mike and Kathy Brandau	Lloyd Brandau – Mike’s Dad
Mike and Kathy Brandau	John Leonas – Kathy Dad
Mike and Kathy Brandau	Derek Dean – Mike and Kathy’s Nephew
Vicki Podominich	Dad, Mother, Nephew
Paula and Nick Mattila	Grandson Noah
Norm and Donna Rusco	Parents and Grandson
Vicki Wagner	Elmer and Inga Knudston
Vicki Wagner	Richard and Laurette Remhardt
Janice Tessier	Lee Tessier
Patty and Bryan Rusco	Sister Debra Barich and Mother Bonnie
Lucy and Butch Diesslin	Our Parents
Lucy Diesslin	Sister Ruth and Sister-In-Law Ella
Jay and Jeanne Tomlinson	Our Parents
Jeanne Tomlinson	Sister Kathleen
Evelyn Wallender	Husband Ernie and Son Joe
Kathy and Sue Nelson	Our Parents
Pat Olson	Sister Barbara
Pat Olson	Nephew Roger
Bob and Pat Olson	Grandson Cody
Craig Haberman	Father Dwight and Mother Barbara
Carolyn Fendt	Husband Wally Fendt and Son Tom Smith
Gary and Dayle Felder	In Honor of Marshall and Heather Monthei
The Aldrich Family	Doug and Violet Aldrich, Parents and Grandparents
The Luthens Family	Doug Aldrich – Brother and Uncle
Rod and Tootsie Loe Family	Our Parents
The Udovich Family	MaryAnn Udovich and Dale McDougall

