

Parish News • Friday, January 7, 2022

Greetings from Pastor Craig!

Happy New Year – 2022 is upon us! I'm not sure I quite got accustomed to writing or typing 2021 during the past twelve months, so I have to pause for several seconds to think before inserting the year 2022 into any written communication. Or saying it out loud for that matter. If I were to be honest it's probably my age which is responsible - I'll be 66 before too long. However, I'll happily say that it's the ongoing disorientation of the pandemic that's responsible for my momentary confusion!

Cold weather descended upon Ely as 2021 was drawing to a close and it looks as though it's going to stay with us through the middle of next week. Yesterday I saw a male Pine Grosbeak out the window at the parsonage. His feathers were all fluffed up and as he sat on a branch, he looked just like one of us when we hunch our shoulders up against the cold.

We've had several snowfalls with light, fluffy snow. Because the spruce trees around the parsonage are protected from the wind, the snow sitting on the branches is about six inches deep. Much prettier than the snow on the sidewalks still waiting to be shoveled!

I hope you and your family had a wonderful Christmas and I wish each of you a blessed 2022. My Sioux Falls family was here from Tuesday evening, December 28, through Sunday morning, January 2. We had a simply lovely time, despite the cold weather.

We cancelled a hike we had planned to Kawishiwi Falls, but did go skiing at Giant's Ridge on the warmest of days when they were here and enjoyed ourselves thoroughly. We went dogsledding on one of the coldest days, but were bundled up for the couple hours we were outside. As we're often reminded, staying warm in winter is all about wearing the right kind of clothing. Although I marvel to see those people who walk around with no hat and jackets unzipped. They must have anti-freeze running in their veins!

I am grateful for all of you who participated in our Advent/Christmas Eve services, whether in-person or online. I do believe our congregation experienced both the anticipation of Christ's birth and the joy of his coming. Yes, there is darkness in the world, and pain, and suffering. There is no explaining away these realities however much we try. Among all of this, however, I cherish and hold tightly to what we proclaim at Christmas.

"The light shines in the darkness and
the darkness has not overcome it."

“Be not afraid, for behold I bring you
good news of a great joy,
which will come to all the people.”

“Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth, peace to those
whom God favors.”

“They will name him Emmanuel,
which means ‘God is with us.’”

I want to pass along my heartfelt thanks to each of you for your expressions of Christmas cheer and for the gift of Amazon and Zup’s gift cards from the congregation. Your warmth and encouragement mean a lot to me, whether as a person or as a pastor – and often those two overlap. My family is a deep well of love and belonging for me, but they are a long way from Ely even in these days of cell phone and internet. So, thank you.

According to anecdotes I’ve heard, Covid-19 is galloping once again through our school and community. A number of people in our congregation have become infected. So please pray these infections are mild and with swift and full recoveries. Also join us online for worship if you choose not to venture out.

Like all of us I’m trying to find the balance between being cautious/safe and not letting Covid-19 define my life.

Item #1: You’ve probably notice that our lovely Christmas decorations are still adorning our sanctuary. We’re going to take them down tomorrow (Saturday, January 8th) at 10:00. Several of us will also run over to Pioneer and Sibley apartments to take down the Christmas trees our church puts up in the lobbies of those buildings. Please join us if you’re able.

Item #2: The minutes for the December Administrative Council meeting are attached.

Item #3: Our Prayer Wall for this week is attached.

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Movement, made it a practice to have his pastors lead their congregations in a Covenant Service at the beginning of each New Year. In doing so Methodist congregations were committing themselves to God in the year ahead. Here is an adaptation of the Wesleyan Covenant Prayer.

We are no longer our own, but yours.
Put us to what you will,
rank us with whom you will;
put us to doing, put us to suffering;

let us be employed for you,
or laid aside for you,
exalted for you, or brought low for you;
let us be full, let us be empty,
let us have things,
let us have nothing:
We freely and wholeheartedly yield all things
to your pleasure and disposal.
And now, glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
You are ours and we are yours. So be it.
And the covenant now made on earth,
let it be ratified in heaven.
Amen.

Enjoy the snow! Stay warm!

God's peace be with you.

Pastor Craig

The Ely United Methodist Church

Prayer Wall

January 7, 2022

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.

Philippians 4: 6 (NIV)



“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”

We lift up the following in prayer...

- **Ann Levar** – Ann is fading, so please pray for her and for her family.
- **Glenn Biebl** – Glenn is now on hospice and his time is near. Pray for his peaceful passing and for his family.
- **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 and is now life threatening.
- **Jim Elinquist** – Jim tested positive for COVID. Pray for healing and full recovery.
- **Ray Marsnik, Bob Baier & Ryan Reid** – All received serious injuries in the same auto accidents that killed Pat Marsnik and are hospitalized. Pray for healing, comfort and peace.
- **Pat Marsnik family & friends** – Ray Marsnik’s wife, Pat was killed in a car accident. Pray for comfort for him & his family.
- **Parker & Lucas** – Katie Korzenowski’s friend’s sons: baby Parker in neonatal unit with seizures and 13 year old Lucas suffered a stroke and is in the ICU. Pray for healing and full recoveries.
- **Mary Wilcox family & friends** – Mary passed away in November. Jim & Mary were long time summer visitors in our church.
- **Bob Lassi family & friends** – Bob passed away recently. Pray for comfort and peace for his family and friends.
- **Greg Mosier family & friends** – Greg passed away recently. Pray for comfort and peace for his family and friends.
- **Joan and Jim Nicholas** – Joan fell and broke her hip. It’s a complicated fracture and she won’t be able to put any wait on it for a month. She remains hospitalized with acute renal failure and paralytic ileus. Pray for healing and a full recovery.
- **George Amitrano family & friends** – George passed away. Pray for comfort and peace for his family and friends.
- **Devon Luthen’s good friend** – Devon’s good friend has learned her breast cancer has returned. Please pray for Devon’s good friend. (No name needed.)
- **Mike and Gail Haney family** – Mike is facing end of life struggles.
- **Laurie Frederickson Herman family** – The family is grieving over the loss of Laurie’s mother. Pray for comfort.
- **Mike Koski’s family & friends** – Mike passed away recently from his battle with COVID.
- **Randy Propp family** – The family is grieving over the loss of Randy’s mother. Pray for comfort for the family & friends.
- **Tootsie Loe’s family & friends** – Pray for comfort & peace for the family & friends of Tootsie Loe who recently passed away.
- **All essential health care workers exposed to the COVID-19 virus and the Delta & Omicron variants**

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.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL – MINUTES

Wednesday, December 15, 2021 at Ely United Methodist Church

Call To Order: Chair Dan Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:25 PM.

Attendees (8): Craig Haberman, Linda Hane, Don Iverson, Dan Johnson, Mark Olson, Donna Rusco, Jay & Jeanne Tomlinson.

Opening: Pastor Craig spoke briefly about Psalm 86 how prayers show the reliability of God and the recognition of need for God by the supplicant. He then opened with prayer.

Minutes: The November 17 and 27, 2021 Ad Council minutes, as previously distributed via *Parish News*, were approved. Motion to approve by Linda Hane; second by Mark Olson.

Treasurer's Report: Mark Olson presented the November 2021 Treasurer's report. The current account balances are: General Fund \$37,616.95; Memorial Fund \$10,078.56; Building Fund \$7,059.04. Jeanne Tomlinson moved that we accept the Treasurer's reports as submitted, second by Linda Hane. Motion passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Trustees:** Mark Olson relayed that they are currently looking into the basement flooring replacement.
- **Worship:** Linda Hane reported that Advent activities are going well. Pastor Craig reported that he'll be posting a new Liturgist sign-up list for the first few months of 2022.
- **Outreach:** Jay reported the apartment trees have been put up in Pioneer, Sibley and Zenith. Once again there is only one tree in Pioneer at the ground floor. He also reported that all the trees are in pretty bad shape.
- **Visioning:** Rich Floyd had sent in the following report: The Visioning Committee met on December 9. The main discussion concerned the upcoming documentary movie/study *I'll Push You*, which is about a man in a wheelchair being pushed by his friend across rugged terrain for 500 miles in northern Spain. The movie highlights the meaning of friendship, generosity and vulnerability. Contingent upon agreement of Keith and Sheri, the discussion leaders, we will have two showings of the movie, one on Sunday, January 9 at 1:00 p.m. and the other on the following Sunday at the same time. There will be one discussion period on each of the following Mondays at 7:00 p.m. A sign-up sheet will be made available in the overflow room.
- **UMW:** Jeanne Tomlinson reported that the UMW Christmas Luncheon at the Grand Ely Lodge went very well with 27 women attending.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **New Year's greeting letter to all FISH addresses:** This letter will go out in early January. Pastor Craig will work on the greeting and news portion and Jeanne will work on the part about the ways to stay connected.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Benevolence Fund:** Pastor Craig reported that he'd had some conversations with the other ministers in town to learn more about handling ad hoc requests for help. Our church has had a petty cash fund to handle such requests but it is not used very often. It was thought that Ely

churches who are interested could perhaps work together to coordinate distribution. He said Tim Cook from the Ely Gospel Tabernacle is very knowledgeable and experienced in this area. Jay Tomlinson suggested that since we probably won't be doing the Gift of Giving again that perhaps we could have a couple special offerings each year for folks to donate monies to this fund. Pastor Craig will talk to Tim Cook to get more specifics ideas about how to proceed.

2. **KoWaKan Adventure (ministry of Camp Minnesota):** Pastor Craig reported that the UMC Annual Conference owns and provides basic staffing for this church camp that is off old Fernberg Trail but only during the busiest part of the season. They are asking for volunteers to help serve as camp "greeter/host" during the non-busy part of the season. It was felt there are probably several persons from our church who might be interested in this but need more information. Pastor Craig will work on getting more details of what would be required.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Mark pointed out several **Christmas Cards** had been received and were posted on the main bulletin board.

Items of Information

1. **Next Ad Council meeting:** Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 7 PM.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM with a group recitation of *The Lord's Prayer*.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne Tomlinson, Ad Council Secretary