

Parish News • Friday, January 21, 2022

Greetings from Pastor Craig!

It's snowing as I draft these words on Tuesday morning and the view while walking to church reminds me so much of winter in northern Minnesota. Then temperatures will drop down to double digits below zero between now (Tuesday) and the middle of next week, which, again, is just like every winter I've known in the north country.

I saw someone blowing snow as I was walking to church this morning. Another driveway had tracks across it where the homeowner had ventured out on foot before the driveway was cleared of snow. Looking out the office window just now, I saw a car lurching, spinning, and sliding down a snow-covered alley trying to make it to 3rd Avenue. In half an hour or so I'll bundle up to stay warm on the walk home.

Large and small plywood boxes appeared in Whiteside Park last week and were filled with snow by city workers. Yesterday as I drove by the park, I saw the plywood frames had been removed and placed in other locations to be refilled there. Packed cubes of snow now stand ready to be fashioned into snow sculptures for our 2022 Ely Winter Festival.

This winter is just like every other winter in so many respects, isn't it? And yet with the Omicron Surge and year three of Covid-19 looming, it also feels really different to me. Which got me thinking about Rip Van Winkle.

Do you remember this short story by Washington Irving? Rip Van Winkle, a genial if unmotivated man, living in upstate New York just before the Revolutionary War, comes upon some odd characters while out on one of his idle rambles. Joining in on their mountain party, he drinks some of their ale and falls into a deep slumber. Upon waking up, he thinks it's the next morning, but twenty years have passed. When Van Winkle returns to his village, he comes upon much that is unrecognizable to him.

If Rip Van Winkle were to have awakened this week after twenty years asleep in Ely rather than in the pre-Revolutionary Catskill Mountains, his first thought would probably be that everything was pretty much the same, other than cars and some buildings looking different.

But that would change before too long when he noticed people wearing masks in stores. Although fully acquainted before falling asleep with the kind of technology we're using (video cameras, cell phones, and computers), he would nevertheless be puzzled by people attending meetings or worship services via online platforms. If Rip Van Winkle were part of our church, he would feel both disoriented and completely at home.

This is the world we're living in right now. Families, businesses, schools, medical systems, churches, and organizations of all sorts are learning to be resilient and to adapt on the fly. Trying to balance safety and keep life as "normal" as possible at the same time, whatever that means.

During the past two years, we've started *Parish News*, moved our worship service outdoors for the summer of 2020, began Zoom meetings and Bible Study, and initiated live-streaming our worship services.

Each of these innovations has been important, even necessary, for our church to keep our "Little Church with a Big Heart" flame alive. Even as we try to return to in-person gatherings as much as possible I don't see us leaving any of these options behind. I think we're becoming a "both/and" congregation.

It also seems to me we're on the cusp of considering a second round of adaptations to enhance what we're already doing. Not change simply for the sake of change, but for ways to keep our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ vital, through worship, education, outreach, and fellowship.

For instance, in Item #1 below you'll read of something we're going to try in order to provide a way for people in our congregation with internet access to have fellowship with one another through organized activities on Zoom.

We're also in the process of considering how technology upgrades can improve our worship service and education programs, both for in-person gatherings and people connecting with us at home. Watch for more information on this in weeks to come.

Item #1: On Monday, February 7, at 6:30 p.m., the Visioning Committee is sponsoring an online group activity that promises to be both fun and interesting. It will give us a chance to socialize in a safe environment--your own home. The activity will be conducted on Zoom, an easy-to-use application on your computer, smart phone, or tablet. If you don't already have Zoom installed, all you have to do is download the application by clicking on this link <https://zoom.us/support/download> and following the instructions for installing it. As we approach the time of the activity, I will send a link to join. The activity is intended to offer a welcomed break from the isolation we've all endured to one extent or another over the past 2 years. Please join us. The more the merrier.

Item #2: *Parish News* is another way we seek to stay connected. Eighty-seven of you receive this via email and another dozen via U.S. mail. The email edition comes out each Friday when I'm in town. The U.S mail copies are dropped off at the Ely post office the same day.

People can request to be added to our Google Group by emailing elyumc.elymn@gmail.com. All emails are sent as a blind carbon-copy so your email address remains private.

We also archive all editions of *Parish News* and audio recordings of Pastor Craig's sermons on our church website – www.elyumc.org. *Parish News* editions can be located at "About Us>*Parish News*" and Sermons at "About Us>Sermons."

Each week I attach *Parish News* to this message as a Word Document in the event that's your preferred way to read online content.

Item #3: Our United Methodist Women has decided to cancel the February session of pasty-making. Those of you who are callers; would you please pass the word? Our next scheduled pasty-making will be April 19, 2022, with veggie prep and dough ball making on April 18.

Item #4: Maybe you are one of those folks who live-stream our services at home. You would also like to sing or simply follow along with the words of the hymns, but don't have the technology to watch the service and view the words/music to the hymns that we post on Facebook at the same time.

If so, you're in luck because we're inviting you to borrow a hymnal from the church. There are a handful of hymnals on a shelf to the right of the door that goes into the upstairs bathroom. There will be a clipboard nearby for you to sign one out.

Note: We'll want you to return the hymnal for Christmas Eve services when we need all our hymnals when our church is filled. You could then check it out again.

Item #5: Our church has a Benevolence Fund that assists people in need of gasoline or food. The fund needs to be replenished, so the Administrative Council voted for our church to take a special offering on Sunday, February 13th.

We will divide the money we receive in half and use these amounts to purchase \$25 gift cards to Zup's and local gas stations. Pastor Craig will administer the Benevolence Fund.

We'll have a separate offering plate at the rear of the church on February 13th. Those of you worshipping at home may send your donation to the church, earmarking it for the Benevolence Fund.

Item #6: Please find attached our Prayer Wall for this week and minutes for both the January United Methodist Women and Administrative Council meetings.

Some of the most joyful words for me at Christmas and throughout the year are these words from the Gospel of John. "The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:5) Jesus is God's light shining in the world.

What we read in Psalm 36:9 goes even one step further. It says that God also provides the light by which we see. I've pasted in the entire Psalm, but pay special attention to verse 9.

Psalm 36

¹ Sin whispers to the wicked, deep within their hearts.^[a]

They have no fear of God at all.

² In their blind conceit,

they cannot see how wicked they really are.

³ Everything they say is crooked and deceitful.

They refuse to act wisely or do good.

⁴ They lie awake at night, hatching sinful plots.

Their actions are never good.

They make no attempt to turn from evil.

⁵ Your unfailing love, O LORD, is as vast as the heavens;

your faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds.

⁶ Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains,

your justice like the ocean depths.

You care for people and animals alike, O LORD.

⁷ How precious is your unfailing love, O God!

All humanity finds shelter

in the shadow of your wings.

⁸ You feed them from the abundance of your own house,

letting them drink from your river of delights.

⁹ For you are the fountain of life,

the light by which we see.

¹⁰ Pour out your unfailing love on those who love you;

give justice to those with honest hearts.

¹¹ Don't let the proud trample me

or the wicked push me around.

¹² Look! Those who do evil have fallen!

They are thrown down, never to rise again.

God's peace be with you.

Pastor Craig

The Ely United Methodist Church

Prayer Wall

January 21, 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.

Psalm 17: 6 (NIV)



*“I call on you, O God, for you
will answer me; give ear to me
and hear my prayer.”*

We lift up the following in prayer...

- **Bob Lindholm** – Bob slipped and fell and severely bruised his ribs. Pray for comfort and healing.
- **Gary Tedrick** – Gary had back surgery this week and is in a lot of pain. Pray for comfort and healing.
- **Ginnie Nelson family members** – Multiple family members have contracted COVID. Pray for mild symptoms.
- **Carol & Jerry Norling** – Church members who moved to Duluth, Carol is battling lung cancer.
- **Frana Cherrico family & friends** – Frana, a part of old Ely’s history, has passed away recently.
- **Mark Olson** – Mark injured his knee and is unable to put weight on it. Pray for comfort and healing.
- **Emma Smrekar family & friends** – Carolyn Fendt’s granddaughter & high school senior passed away from cancer.
- **Linda Fryer family & friends** – **Update:** After emergency surgery & heart attack during surgery, Linda passed away.
- **Ina Hapala family & friends** – Irene Hatfield’s sister, Ina, passed away. Please pray for comfort for family & friends.
- **Nancy Kasa family & friends** – She is the sister of Susan Germek and Rich Floyd who recently passed away.
- **John Barich family & friends** – Patti Rusco’s dad is hospitalized with COVID and other complications.
- **Sandy (Barich) Thompson** – She is having breast cancer surgery January 21. Pray for a successful outcome.
- **Zeke Urbas** – Zeke will have his cancer check-up scans on January 25, please pray for clear scans.
- **Joan and Jim Nicholas** – **Update:** Joan is out of the hospital and in rehab within her senior village community for her fractured hip. Her complications with acute renal failure and paralytic ileus have cleared up. Thanks for all the prayers!
- **Brian Biebl** – Brian is having a tough time grieving for the recent loss of his father and his son one year ago.
- **Ann Levar family & friends** – **Update:** Ann passed away Peacefully. Pray for comfort her family and friends.
- **Glenn Biebl family & friends** – **Update:** Glenn passed away Peacefully. Pray for comfort his family and friends.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL – MINUTES Wednesday, January 19 at Ely United Methodist Church

Call To Order: Chair Jay Tomlinson called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

Attendees (8): Lucy Diesslin, Craig Haberman, Don Ingerson, Dan Johnson, Margie & Mark Olson, Jay & Jeanne Tomlinson.

Opening: Pastor Craig spoke briefly about what Rip Van Winkle’s reaction would have been if he’d been asleep 2 years ago and just woke up. All the changes that have happened – in our world & in our church. Outdoor services in the summer, having a weekly electronic newsletter, broadcasting our service with a special camera & Facebook, having meetings with Zoom. He feels our church is doing well as we continue to look at more possible changes. He then opened with prayer.

Minutes: The December 15, 2021 Annual Conference and Ad Council minutes, as previously distributed via *Parish News*, were approved. Motion to approve by Lucy Diesslin; second by Mark Olson.

Treasurer’s Report: Mark Olson presented the December 2021 Treasurer’s report and pointed out the very generous receipts of over \$15,000. He also noted that we were under budget for 2021 by \$6,793.57 and had several categories where the actuals were very close to the budget figures. The current account balances are: General Fund \$43,999.15; Memorial Fund \$15,135.44; Building Fund \$7,109.94. Jeanne Tomlinson moved that we accept the Treasurer’s reports as submitted, second by Margie Olson. Motion passed. Jay Tomlinson moved that we discontinue tracking *Gift of Giving* funds separately since we will probably not be doing that project again. Second by Mark Olson. The current balance of \$7.81 will be moved to the *Undesignated* portion of the General Fund. Motion passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Trustees:** Margie Olson reported that they have started working on the basement flooring replacement. They are looking at flooring choices and are considering vinyl planking. Pieces of the current flooring have been sent in for testing to see if they contain asbestos. If not, the new flooring may be able to be placed on top of the current floor. Once an installer looks over our existing floor we will know more.
 - **Worship:** Dan Johnson reported that the committee had met the day before and discussed Christmas, Lent and Technology. For Christmas, the tree decorations were discussed. It was decided to purchase gold tinsel and red balls. It was also decided to get taller candles for the Advent wreath. They would also like to get a smaller Advent wreath for the Sunday School to help the children learn more about it. They decided the current Giving Tree needs to be replaced and they’ll be looking to get a “skinnier” one so that it takes up less room in the Annex. They also decided to keep the time for the *Hanging of the Greens* to right after church on the Sunday just before Advent which will be November 20 this year. For Lent we will again have Ash Wednesday and the combined Maundy Thursday/Good Friday services. Palm branches will need to be ordered for Palm Sunday and lilies for Easter. The Technology that was discussed was the need for an evaluation of our current sound system and an upgrade or replacement since our on-line viewers cannot hear the choir very well, nor any of the congregation during hymns or sharing times. Pastor Craig brought up the idea of loaning out our extra hymnals that are in the back of the church so that at-home viewers could have more easy access to the music. Although the hymns are posted on Facebook prior to the service, that is not easily available while watching
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the service. It was agreed that we could do this as long as we have a sign-up sheet so we know who to approach when we need them returned (such as for our Christmas Eve service).

- **Outreach:** Jay reported the apartment trees were picked up right after the sanctuary decorations were put away. He thanked Margie & Mark for taking care of two of them. He also reported that all the trees are in pretty bad shape and should be replaced. He recommended we just go with one tree in Pioneer as we have done these past two years instead of one for each floor as we had done prior to that.
- **Visioning:** Pastor Craig reported that Rich Floyd has developed a plan for an event on February 7 to allow for a congregation “meet & greet” with each other in smaller groups through Zoom to help people feel more connected. The *I’ll Push You* movie/study event is currently planned for March 27/28 and repeated on April 3/4.
- **UMW:** Lucy Diesslin reported that the February pasty making has been cancelled with April currently still planned. The UMW Friendship Dinner will be a buffet dinner at the GEL sometime in May.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **New Year’s greeting letter to all FISH addresses:** This letter is still a work in progress.
2. **Benevolence Fund:** Pastor Craig reported that there will be an informal arrangement between churches who are providing funds to people in need. He will probably check with Tim Cook when he is approached for funds before proceeding. After much discussion it was moved by Lucy Diesslin to hold a special offering on February 13 for a “Benevolence Fund” and we will use whatever is received to purchase Zup’s gift cards and the other half to purchase gift cards for a local gas station since money for food or gas are the two most common requests. Pastor Craig can then disburse gift cards to folks in need at his discretion. Second to the motion by Margie Olson. Motion passed.
3. **KoWaKan Adventure (ministry of Camp Minnesota):** Pastor Craig reported that he’d spoken with Mark Miller and they are still working out details for what would be involved in serving as hosts for the camp from June through mid-July. Pastor Craig has already had 3 people volunteer: Elton Brown and Vicki & Bob Beech.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Oil Candles for the Altar:** Jay reported that Cathy Aldrich had approached the church with the idea of replacing the current wax candles on the altar with oil ones which would always be the same height. She offered to cover the cost of purchasing the candles. It was felt a little bit more research is needed since we don’t know what the costs would be for oil canister replacements or if the current candle holders are a memorial gift.
2. **Technical Committee:** Pastor Craig reported that the primary focus will be the sound system (discussed above in the Worship Committee).
3. **Fellowship Hall TV replacement:** Jeanne Tomlinson moved that we purchase a replacement. It was undecided if we should get the same size or a smaller one. Jay offered to check out

possibilities and come back with pricing and size information at the next Ad Council meeting. Lucy Diesslin seconded the motion. Motion passed.

4. **Children's Bibles:** After some research to determine which Bible we would distribute, Pastor Craig has decided on the *New King's James Study Bible*. He'll order 15 books for children in

our congregation who are readers. They won't arrive until March. He hopes to set up a time in the summer to meet with the children and their parents to introduce the Bible to them.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Mark reported that we had received a Christmas thank you letter from our sponsored Children's International child. It's posted on the corner bulletin board in the Annex.

Items of Information

1. **Next Ad Council meeting:** Since Pastor Craig will be on vacation February 16-23, we will meet instead on Thursday, February 10, 2022 at 7:05 PM (following choir). The meeting adjourned at 8:30(?) PM with a group recitation of *The Lord's Prayer*.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne Tomlinson, Ad Council Secretary

The **UMW** at Ely United Methodist Church January 19, 2022 10-11:15 AM

President Lucy Diesslin opened the meeting at 10:04 AM with a prayer. We then had a unison reading of the UMW pledge. We had 5 people attending: Lucy Diesslin, Vicki Podominick, Margie Olson, Janice Tessier and Jeanne Tomlinson.

Minutes: The minutes from our November 17, 2021 meeting were read. Motion to approve by Vicki Podominick; second by Janice Tessier. Motion approved.

Treasurer's Report: There was no Treasurer's report but Lucy Diesslin reported that Dan Johnson had approached some UMW members earlier in the month to report that the current rolling pins are rusting inside due to having been immersed in water during cleanup time. (Janice commented that sometimes they were leaving small particles of rust on the dough during the roll-out process.) In order to get the pins in time for February pasties, Jeanne Tomlinson had moved that we allocate funds to purchase new ones and authorize Dan Johnson to proceed with ordering them. This was seconded by Beverly Johnson. Motion passed. Dan will submit a receipt to the treasurer for reimbursement.

Old Business

- **Christmas Luncheon:** We all agreed that the Christmas Luncheon at the Grand Ely Lodge on December 13 went very well with 27 women attending. It was nice to be in a separate room instead of the regular dining room.
- **Church Supplies:** Jeanne is still working on creating a list of supplies in order to take an inventory and then work with the committee to create a process for monitoring and purchasing. She'll be at the church on Saturday, January 22 between 10 & 11 AM working on completing the list and starting an inventory.
- **Basement large closets reorganization:** Jeanne Tomlinson reported that a time has not yet been scheduled and will probably be later in the year.

New Business

- **Lucy's resignation after May:** Lucy reported that she'll be resigning as President in the Spring when we should hold elections for President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.
- **Study book:** Lucy also made a suggestion that for our next study book we should order enough so each person could have a copy and read the scheduled chapter prior to the meeting instead of reading it during the meeting. We all agreed that would be a good idea. Our current study book has 4 more chapters so we won't need to get a new one until sometime next summer.

- **Friendship Dinner:** We discussed the idea of resuming our spring Friendship Dinner this May. This has been in our Fellowship Hall in the past and was catered by Northland Market. Since Zup's will not be providing catering service we discussed alternatives and decided that we should do a buffet dinner at the GEL with our usual arrangement of having each person pay \$10 and UMW covering the rest of the cost. No date was discussed.
- **Pasties in February:** Jeanne Tomlinson asked about whether we should do pasties in February with the current COVID spikes. The group agreed that we should cancel them and just do April. Hopefully things will have settled by that time. Jeanne will ask Pastor Craig to put in a notice in the *Parish News* and will also let the callers know.
- **Coming church expenses:** Margie Olson brought up the various expenses that the Ad Council will be discussing later, such as making improvements in our sound system and replacing the basement large-screen TV that was apparently "fried" during the mid- December thunder storm. She moved that UMW offer to contribute funds to these projects. Second by Janice Tessier. No specific amounts were mentioned. Motion passed. Margie also reported that the Trustees are proceeding with the basement floor replacement and have decided on vinyl planking. She showed us the pattern they were thinking of and we all liked it.

We adjourned the business meeting portion at 10:50 AM.

For our devotional study, we read Chapter 9 of our study book, *Attitude is Your Paint Brush - It Colors Every Situation*. This chapter was about having an "Attitude of Faith" that requires Trust, Risk and Work. Margie Olson led a brief discussion after the reading.

Our next regular meeting will be on Wednesday, February 16, 2022 at 10 AM.

Respectfully submitted, Jeanne Tomlinson Secretary