

ELY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

"The Little Church With the Big Heart"

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Parish News

January 13, 2023

A Note from Pastor Craig

Pasty Set-Up

As previously announced, we swing back into pasty-making mode on Monday and Tuesday (January 16 and 17).

How this all works is in our DNA. While each of us have our "typical" spots, we also move occasionally to other jobs as necessary.

There is some set-up, which happens on Sunday after lunch. Jay and Jeanne typically do this with occasional help from some of the rest of us

They will be gone on the 15th only (present on Monday and Tuesday). Dan Johnson, Pam Turnbull, and I will be here, but we may need one or two others.

If you're available would you check-in with Dan at church on Sunday to see if any additional help is necessary? Thank you!

Greetings half-way through the first month of a new year! I hope 2023 is off to a good start for you. I went to the Holiday Band Concert at the school last night, which had been rescheduled from December because of bad weather. That and my Christmas tree being up until Saturday, it still feels a little bit like the Christmas season for me, but time has moved on, hasn't it?

"Living his (or her) best life," is one of the phrases my family uses about each other when we share a picture or video of one of us doing something we truly enjoy. For instance, when we were skiing over Christmas my daughter-in-law from Sioux Falls would pass along a video of my fun-loving grandson Isaac skiing, saying "Issac living his best life."

On Christmas Eve, we welcomed Jesus into the world and into our hearts again. Now, as we pivot into Epiphany, we pay attention to who Jesus, and thus God, is revealed to be for the world and for each of us. Why? Because being a Christian is more than something we are in name only, more than an activity we participate in on Sunday morning. Being a follower of Jesus is our core identity; it's at the very center of who we are.

In the early 2000's Swedish researchers used Carbon-14 dating to study tissue renewal in the human body. They found cells in our body replace themselves at different rates depending on the type of cell. For instance, colon cells replace themselves every three to five days, but muscle and fat cells can take up to 70 years to renew. The *average age* of all cells in our body is between seven to ten years.

<https://science.howstuffworks.com/life/cellular-microscopic/does-body-really-replace-seven-years.htm>

Why did I include the last paragraph? Because our personal "faith formation," sometimes called "discipleship," is this very same process, only in relationship with God. The Apostle Paul says: "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day." (II Corinthians 4:16 RSV)

The late Dallas Willard had a gift for putting this into a variety of short snippets. Here are a few from his book *The Divine Discovery*: "Living interactively with God." "Fully entering into the kingdom of the heavens."

"Having a kingdom heart." "Making a pilgrimage into the heart and life of God." "Having confidence in God in every dimension of our real life." "Living Godward." "Moment-to-moment existence as a holy calling and appointment with God." Well, you get the idea.

There are spiritual disciplines, which assist us in living this sort of life day by day. "Bitter and sweet," the women's study our church is doing is one example. I'll be mentioning others between now and Easter. God is with each of us moment by moment as we grow in faith, hope, and love. Have a blessed rest of January and beyond!

Pastor Craig

“Bitter and Sweet” Women’s Study Begins

Join the women of our church for “A Journey into Easter” Bible Study, by Tsh Oxenreider. The study will kick-off with a light lunch following worship on Sunday, February 19th. You will receive your book at that time, in advance of Ash Wednesday (February 22nd) when the daily readings begin.

The first class meeting for discussion is on Tuesday, February 28th from 6:15 - 8:00. Meetings will follow on Tuesdays, March 7th and 14th; Wednesday, March 22nd; Tuesday, March 28th; Tuesdays, April 4th and 11th. Easter Sunday is April 9th.

You may also attend via Zoom if you can’t be there in person.

Sign up at church between January 15th and January 29th. We will order books for anyone who doesn’t have one. The books are provided thanks to an educational memorial given in Tootsie Loe’s name.

Call Patty Rusco, Margie Olson, Sheri Rue, or Pam Turnbull if you can’t attend the kick-off on Sunday, February 29th and will make sure you get a book.

We hope to see all the women at our church for this inspirational study.

Thank you from Pastor Craig

Christmas 2022 was my fifth Christmas as your pastor, following the thirty-one Christmases you spent with Pastor Dana. Each year becomes additionally special, as I become a little more familiar with the Ely community, the church, and all of you. My hope and prayer is that together we grow in our love for God, for one another, and for the town of Ely as each new year rolls around. And that we grow in our appreciation and acceptance of ourselves, as Jesus also asks us to.

Thank you for the many ways you support me and the ministry of the church - when I arrived in town, as we unexpectedly entered the pandemic, and now as we emerge into whatever it is that comes next. It truly takes each and every one of us letting our light shine in order for our church to become the “Little Church with the Big Heart.”

And a hearty thank you, to the congregation for your Christmas gift of a Zups’ and Amazon gift card, and for your other Christmas greetings, cards, and goodies. They brought me Christmas cheer!

The Ely United Methodist Church

Prayer Wall

January 13, 2023

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.

Isaiah 40: 28 (NIV)



"Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God... He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom."

We lift up the following in prayer...

- **Mary Taylor – Update: Mary is back home and feeling better.** Mary is recovering in the hospital for a health issue.
- **Don & Marge Markwardt – Update: Don is back home and recovering.** Don has had a pacemaker inserted and Marge is having back issues. Don had a cardiac valve procedure done on Tuesday.
- **Sandra's family & friends** – Linda Hane's friend, Caroline Hammond, lost her daughter, Sandra, from a heart attack leaving work. Please pray for comfort and peace for Sandra's family and friends.
- **Laureen** – Kathy & Steve Nelson's son-in-law's (Rob) aunt, Laureen, had cancerous brain tumor surgery.
- **Kevin Laine** – Carol Laine's son, Kevin, is having hip replacement surgery. Pray for healing and comfort.
- **Jeff & Kelly Close** – Sheri Rue's brother, Jeff, struggling with his health. Pray for strength and peace.
- **Ropey – Update: Ropey's health is weakening.** Ropey is now in Aurora and in fragile health. Margie Olson's brother, Ropey, is on hospice care and is in the hospital. Pray for comfort.
- **The Russia / Ukraine conflict** – Pray for a world-wide lasting resolution, safety of the people, and peace.
- **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.