

ELY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

"The Little Church With the Big Heart"

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Parish News

February 17, 2023

A Note from Pastor Craig

Registration for Minnesota United Methodist Camps is Open and Brochures are Available

Church camp is a wonderful experience for boys and girls.

It is an opportunity to make new friends and grow in faith in a relaxed setting.

Campers engage in activities to make new skills, share Christ in song and worship, and build a faith foundation - all in a carefully supervised environment.

There are a wide variety of camps at the two United Methodist Camps in Minnesota this summer.

Brochures are available at the back of the church or check at www.campminnesota.org.

Our church will financially assist any campers to ensure boys and girls are able to attend.

Chris Urbas will also have brochures available during Sunday school.

Greetings! I opened my digital copy of the Minneapolis Star-Tribune this morning, to find the announcement in the sports section, that Zoe Devine, a senior at Ely High School, had won the state girl's individual cross-country title at Giant's Ridge the day before. For those of you who don't follow high school cross-country skiing in Minnesota closely, there is only one class which encompasses all sizes of schools. This means Zoe is the top high school girls cross-country skier in the entire state this year. Congratulations, Zoe!

Boys and girls participate enthusiastically in the cross country ski team here in town, as they do in all activities at the school. And adults throw their whole-hearted support behind these athletes and programs.

A day or two earlier, I arrived at the church one afternoon to find Hayden Weidemann shoveling our sidewalks. Hayden, an elementary school student from our church, had taken it upon himself to sign up to shovel the sidewalks in February. Thank you Hayden!

Wednesday this week our United Methodist Women (UMW) voted to send \$1000 to the Boundary Waters Care Center here in town, which is facing dire financial straits.

Thursday, I received an email sent to a wide number of individuals and churches in our community detailing an upcoming project this summer at Veterans on the Lake Resort just east of Winton on the Fernberg Trail. The wide ranging project, called *Healing Mural Project*, is centered around painting a large mural, but might also include the making of a documentary film. The purpose of the project is to aid in healing for veterans who are experiencing PTSD and Moral Injury. (The email is a request of churches to provide meals for the participating veterans on March 25th.)

These are but four items, among many happening here in town year-round, which involve people of all ages. There are children/youth participating in sports and other programs, volunteers coaching these teams, tutors reading or helping students with homework at school, and others participating in all kinds of service organizations here in town.

Books and newspaper articles are written about the importance of small communities. Movies about communities pull at our heartstrings. But here in Ely we see what it actually looks like on the ground! I'm grateful our church is a vibrant part of the Ely community. Thank you!

Pastor Craig

Ash Wednesday Service - February 22 p.m.

7:00

In the past, I've read some lovely lines in a poem by Wendell Berry as he watched small birds, but was unable to find them this week. They are about how these birds flit here and there, bringing him delight by their beauty, their movements, and their songs. And how along the way they don't seem preoccupied by their relatively short lives, nor by how quickly their life can be over if they are nabbed by a predator.

We humans, on the other hand, are preoccupied with death, doing everything in our power both to push it out of our minds and to delay it as long as possible. This seems only to have grown as the length of our average lifespan has increased and our lives have become more comfortable.

I did find lines in a poem, however, where Berry describes the manner in which some animals prey on others. Here are the final five lines of a fourteen line poem:

Small creatures die because
larger creatures are hungry.
How superior to this
human confusion of greed
and creed, blood and fire.

Sin and death; these two realities, come to all sons and daughters of God created in the God's image and given the gifts of consciousness and free will. Once born, we don't have a choice about this.

The Ash Wednesday service impresses this deeply upon us both in the words we speak and our actions. You and I are confronted by the knowledge that we will all die and that our lives are spotted by our sins. "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return" and "Repent and believe in the Gospel" are the phrases we will hear as we receive the mark of the ashes. From this there is no escape.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, which is 40 days long, not counting Sundays. The 40 days reminds us of the 40 years the Israelites spent in the wilderness and the 40 days Jesus was tempted by Satan.

Lent ends with the resurrection of Jesus, which announces that sin and death have been defeated.

Two special services during Lent

Our church is holding two special services during Lent; Ash Wednesday and a Holy Week Service combining our commemoration of Jesus' Last Supper and Jesus' arrest, crucifixion, and death. Our four confirmands will assist in leading both services.

The Ash Wednesday service is Wednesday, February 22nd at 7:00 p.m. and the Holy Week service is Thursday, April 6th at 7:00 p.m. We will take Holy Communion at the Holy Week service.

The Ely United Methodist Church

Prayer Wall

February 17, 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.



John 6: 27 & 34 (NIV)

"Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his (or her) life?... Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

We lift up the following in prayer...

- **Bob and Vicki Beech family and friends** – Bob passed away this passed February 10th.
- **Don Ingerson** – Don has been diagnosed with bladder cancer. Pray for successful treatment.
- **Cole Martin** – Paula and Nick Mattila's grandson, Cole ho is a college student, is having migraines. He was diagnosed with arterial stenoses (narrowing of the arteries) and is receiving high blood pressure treatments.
- **Kevin Lawler** – Kevin is Jay and Jeanne Tomlinson's neighbor and is having knee replacement surgery this week. Pray for a quick recovery.
- **Zeke Urbas** – Zeke is having cancer scans this week and will see a urologist. Pray for good outcomes.
- **Steve Piragis** – Steve had a stroke while in Costa Rica. He is expected to make a full recovery.
- **Pat Olson** – Pat injured her knee.
- **Red Nied's family & Friends** – Nancy Markwardt's brother, Red, succumbed this past week after a long battle with prostate cancer.
- **Kris Wittenbe4rg** – Lisa Porthan's mother, Kris, had successful breast cancer surgery this week. Pray for her healing and for Lisa's dad who still needs your prayers as he struggles with Parkinson's.
- **Jason King** – Jason, Lucy Diesslin's cousin who had suffered a brain aneurysm, has finally been released from the hospital after 150 days. He'll be continuing his rehab from home. Pray for his continued recovery.
- **Linda Williams family & friends** – **Update: Linda passed away on Monday, January 30th.** Linda has been at the Boundary Waters Care Center for the last few years & she has weakened significantly in the last few weeks.
- **Delores Hujanen** – Delores fell attending her husband's funeral breaking her ankle requiring surgery to implant a steel plate and pins to help with her healing.
- **Don & Marge Markwardt** – **Update: Don is back home and is recovering. Marge has back fracture(s) and has great pain. Pray for their quick healing and recovery.** Don has had a pacemaker inserted and Marge is having back issues.
- **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.