

ELY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

"The Little Church With the Big Heart"

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Parish News

February 9, 2024

Two Items

Journeys with the Messiah:

Our church hosted a six week study last fall focusing on viewing photos of Jesus in present-day settings.

The purpose of the study is to stoke our imaginations so we will picture Jesus in our life and experience his transforming presence.

The six sessions last fall were well attended and included thought-provoking conversations.

Our spring series of the same study is again on Tuesday evenings at 6:00, between February 6th and March 12th.

We'll consider the photos "Life Savior" (#15) and "Makeover" (#16) this week at our meeting this week - February 13th. We hope you're able to attend.

Easter Lilies: Easter Lilies are available for people to purchase in memory of loved ones.

The cost is \$16.00. The deadline to sign-up is Sunday, February 25th.

There is a sign-up list and envelope for checks or cash in the rear of the church.

People can take home the lily they purchase following the Easter Sunday worship service.

A Note from Pastor Craig

The church season of Epiphany ends this Sunday with our observance of "The Transfiguration of the Lord." This celebration is the exclamation point to the Epiphany season, which began with the Coming of the Wise Men to Bethlehem to worship Jesus.

During Epiphany we traverse a journey, which begin at a house in Bethlehem and ends on a mountain in Galilee. We give thanks each step of the way, recognizing God can draw us from however far we are from God in our lives to the feet of Jesus. What's more, in following Jesus, we embrace God's Beloved Son, who continues in the footsteps of Moses and Elijah.

On Ash Wednesday we enter the church season of Lent, which leads us step by step to the Cross, the very heart of our faith, assuring us God is present with us in up close in every moment. And that God works through all things to accomplish God's purposes.

This recognition is both heartening and sobering. Heartening to know our world belongs to God and not to Satan - the adversary, the evil one. Sobering because sin, evil, and death are so woven into the fabric of the lives of individuals and societies that it's only by Christ taking on the full weight of all that is against life can the powers of darkness be overcome.

Sound overly complicated? Maybe I should have limited myself to the nine words we repeat in unison each time we take Communion.

Christ has died, Christ is Risen, Christ will come again!

Our Ash Wednesday service will be a little different this year - quieter, simpler. There will short Scripture readings, short single verse hymns repeated several time, and the imposition of ashes on our foreheads.

The service is a sobering reminder that sin and death is part and parcel of each of our lives. Yet, we also recognize that Lent ends on Easter when we rejoice that God has overcome both in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. I hope you are able to attend the Ash Wednesday Service, February 14th at 7:00 p.m. God is with you. Pastor Craig

Dynamite Prayer Article referencing Ely United Methodist Church

The Minnesota Annual Conference has highlighted a United Methodist Church in Minnesota each week during the Dynamite Prayer Initiative. Christa Meland, the Annual Conference Director of Communications, emailed me (Pastor Craig) last week to inquire if she could tell our church's Dynamite Prayer Initiative story. I said "sure," and the two paragraph story below is the result of our email exchange.

In December, Ely UMC member Sheri Rue approached her pastor, Rev. Craig Haberman, and Ad Council chair about the Dynamite Prayer Initiative. She thought it could be an opportunity for the congregation to participate in both spiritual growth and outreach, and they agreed. Ely UMC ordered 250 books, the most of any local church across the area, and distributed them at church, to homes, and by mail, not only to active members but also to summer visitors, those who hadn't been to church for a while, and everyone else in the congregational database. Leaders enthusiastically encouraged participation by individuals and small groups as an opportunity for them to deepen their faith in Christ and their prayer life.

"People's response to our outreach exceeded our expectations," said Haberman. "People who attend church regularly eagerly picked up their book. The people from our congregation we don't see very often expressed their appreciation for us thinking about them and delivering them a book." He even received a grateful phone call from someone who grew up in Ely and has since moved to the Twin Cities metro area. The Dynamite Prayer Initiative also aligns with another emerging priority for the church: encouraging lay people to pray at meetings. "Our congregation is a praying congregation," Haberman said. "We're seeking to make this more visible and widespread. I'm certain the Dynamite Prayer initiative will assist us."

Rule of Christ Follow-up

The Rule of Christ workshops our church hosted Sunday, January 21st, were a huge success. John Mueller Nowell presented two workshops, which thirty people attended. Much of the time he stuck to the outline listed in the handouts he provided, but several times went "off script." He also put attendees to work, splitting us up into groups to discuss questions he posed.

Pastor Nowell's evaluation of the workshop was uniformly positive, with one observation: *"This congregation does not have a solid, useable mission statement."* His feedback serves to reinforce the recent decision of our Ad Council to put updating our existing mission statement on our agenda. Our PPRC (Pastor Parish Relations Committee) will also be putting procedures together to incorporate the Rule of Christ in our ongoing life as a church. Watch for future information on both these agenda items.

Thank you to all who attended! And to Jay Tomlinson for making soup and Sheri Rue/Cathy Aldrich for organizing the many details, printing off materials, and setting up beforehand!

The Ely United Methodist Church

Prayer Wall

February 9, 2024

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...

- **Nancy Hinzmann** – Peggy Koschak asked for prayers for her sister-in-law, Nancy Hinzmann, who had a biopsy on her jaw and is waiting results. Please pray for favorable results.
- **Ray Vessel & his wife** – Linda Hane asked for prayers for Ray and his wife both of whom have COVID. Pray for healing and a quick recovery.
- **Lily Tedrick** – Deanie Kuehl reported that Lily fell and is currently on crutches. Pray for her quick recovery.
- **Lisa Porthan's father & mother** – Lisa's mom & dad are struggling with the progression of his Parkinson's.
- **Shakopee community and families of the car accidents** – Two horrendous car accidents left a daughter dead and the second accident left a son, Evan, in critical condition. Pray for the families, community and for Evan to heal and recover.
- **LaVerne Lindholm** – **Update: LaVerne is doing well after hip surgery and will rehab in Duluth.** LaVerne fell and broke her hip. She's in Duluth pending decisions on surgery and rehab. Please pray for successful surgery and her hip to heal quickly.
- **Jeep LaTourell's family and friends** – **Update: Jeep passed away. Please pray for peace and comfort for his family and friends.** Pray for Jeep LaTourell who is hospitalized with health issues.
- **Keith Rue** – Keith is having problems with his Achilles tendon.
- **Julie and Cory** – Kathy Nelson's cousins are trying to buy a home in Florida within driving distance of her parents, Lee and Doris. Please pray that they find a suitable home soon.
- **Judy Long's family and friends** – **Update: Cheryl Nelson's mother, Judy Long, passed away.** Cheryl Nelson's mother, Judy Long, had a serious diabetic incident and is hospitalized. Cheryl is Judy's caregiver.
- **Hayes Urbas** – Chris Urbas asked for prayers for Hayes who had his tonsils & adenoids removed this week.
- **Teri** – **Update: Teri is back home recovering from a stroke caused by COVID complications. She is having a difficult time with anxiety. Please keep Teri in your prayers.** Carol Laine's daughter, Teri, is hospitalized with COVID and has had a stroke.
- **Robbie Zbacnik's family and friends** – Tom Zbacnik just lost his wife, Robbie. Pray for comfort & peace.
- **Karen** – Karen is the daughter of a friend of Cathy Aldrich and has been diagnosed with lymphoma.
- **The Russia / Ukraine conflict • Political Unrest in Africa • The Military, Humanitarian & Political Crisis in the Middle East** – Pray for a world-wide lasting resolution, safety of the people, and peace.

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.

