

A Note from Pastor Craig

It was a gray, somber Monday (October 14) as I first wrote these words and the weather is identical as I'm proofreading them eight days later. At the time I first wrote, the delightful peak color we enjoyed this year was past, but the golden Tamarack trees and yellow poplars were still offering some autumn delight for the eyes. Now even that color is gone. It is now looking pretty bleak.

With the gloomy weather, I was entertained to see a mischievous Facebook post announce there were only nine Fridays until Christmas. For me the humor in this is how it pokes fun at our attempts to endure the long expanse of days between now and December 25th, even as it signals once more how very much Christmas means to us.

We're magnetically drawn to Christmas by the food, fun, family gatherings, music, community events, and presents; the warmth, luster, and liveliness of it all. Above and beyond our enjoyment of Christmas gatherings, of course, is the mystery of the events in a stable in a small town at the edge of the Roman Empire two thousand years ago. The birth of the Christ child in a manger is also the birth of the God's Word from eternity into time and from "out there" into each human heart.

So then, even in October, we begin picturing our Christmas Eve candlelight service, which someone has said "is not sentimental theater, but a symbolic representation of an everyday occurrence – "Christ being reborn in the hearts of all who would have him." (Reluctant Saint: A Life of St. Francis of Assisi by Donald Spoto. p. 186.)

The reason I mention this while it is still October: To invite you to participate in our Hanging of the Greens event on Sunday, November 24th after church. This time, when we put up Christmas decorations inside and outside the church building, upstairs and down, is our church's first stop on the way to the manger. It's an opportunity for you to catch a glimpse of what waits as the Sundays of Advent lead us to Christmas.

Here are a few details about Hanging of the Greens:

- There will be a meal following the worship service on Sunday, November 24th. The main course/side dishes will be provided, but you are invited to bring desserts.
- The Sunday School/Kid's Club families will set up in advance of the meal, help serve us, and clean up after the meal.
- Following the meal we will put up Christmas decorations. There will be leaders who will coordinate/guide the rest of us in working upstairs, downstairs, inside and outside.

We hope you will attend! Watch for additional details in Sunday bulletins and during announcement time in worship.

One other note: I have been making an audio recording of my Sunday morning sermons recently. If you are unable to attend worship on Sundays, but want to listen to the sermon, please contact me on the church landline or pastor email and I'll forward it along to you.

I hope you have a blessed November! Pastor Craig

**Contact Information and Office Hours
for November 2019**

Church Office: (218) 365-3355

Parsonage: (218) 365-3716

Email: elymethodist@elyumc.org Website: elyumc.org

Pastor Craig is planning to be in the church office from 9 AM to 11 AM on Tuesdays through Saturdays through most of November. He will be out of town Nov 27 through Dec 3.

**Don't miss our bi-annual
Church Fall Bazaar!!
Saturday, November 2, 2019
1:00 to 3:00 PM**

Bake Sale – including Cardamom Bread
Craft Sale – Wide Variety of handmade items
Coffee and desserts!

Come one ~ Come All!

**ALL-CHURCH POTLUCK
Sunday, November 10, 2019
immediately following the Worship Service**

Don't miss another wonderful opportunity to spend time in worship together and then spend some valuable and precious moments in fellowship together with a meal.

Bring a dish to share if you can – or just come and share in the food and fellowship. There's always plenty!

**THANKSGATHERING 2019
Sunday, November 18, 6:00 PM
At Ledgerock Community Church**

The theme this year for the annual Thanksgathering service will be "Emmanuel, God With Us". Come share in this special Thanksgiving worship service.

Singers from the various churches and community are invited to sing in the Thanksgathering Choir under the direction of Sue Germek. Many of the participants have been at the Thanksgathering before as part of the growing family and new participants are always welcome to join in. There will be special choir practices on Monday Nov 18, and Thursday Nov 21 from 6 to 8 PM at the Ledgerock Church.

At the conclusion of the program, a basket will be located in the foyer in which a Free Will Offering may be made for the Ely Food Shelf for those who would like to make a donation.

Folks of all ages and walks of life are invited to attend. There is a special Children's Story Time that has become a regular part of Thanksgathering. A nursery room is provided, however, it will not be manned. The building is handicap friendly with an elevator. Ushers will be available to help in any way they can.

Following the program, join together downstairs in the Fellowship Hall for continued fellowship and refreshments.

**Final Year of the
Reach-Renew-Rejoice
Annual Conference 5 Year Campaign**

“Reach-Renew-Rejoice” is the special 5 Year Campaign Drive set up by our Annual Conference in 2015 to nurture the growth of the United Methodist Church here in the Minnesota Annual Conference. For our first year, we pledged to raise \$2,020, which we accomplished. For the next three years, we set a goal of raising \$1,000 each year and we managed to surpass that goal each time – keeping the amount raised over the goal to start the fund out for the next year. For this last year, we once again set our goal at raising \$1,000 but have only raised \$170.25 so far. With the last year of the campaign drawing to a close, we would like to see if we can at least get closer to our goal.

This month or next, please consider dropping off a donation in the basket under the Reach-Renew-Rejoice poster on the left side of the sanctuary (as you face the altar area) or writing & bringing/sending a check written to the **Ely United Methodist Church** with a memo entry of **Reach-Renew-Rejoice** or “R3”.

If you’d like to learn more about what the Minnesota Conference has been doing with these funds, please check out following website:

www.minnesotaumc.org/newsdetail/reach-renew-rejoice-5-year-progress-12125380

Introducing Special

**Small Group Sessions
Beginning November 10th
Following the All Church Potluck**

The Visioning Committee felt there was a great deal more to offer our congregation from the 2019 Annual Conference. A special series of small group sessions is planned to expand on the topics presented at the Conference.

Topics include *The 2020 General Conference/Lydia Scarves; The Way Forward; Evangelism for non-evangelists (2 sessions); UMC seeks to eliminate Racism; Assimilating New Members/Community Outreach and Witness.*

In order to offer our congregation maximum opportunities to participate, each session will be offered on a Sunday at 1:00 PM, Monday at 3:30 PM, and on Tuesday evening at 6:30 PM. Sessions are designed to be 30 to 45 minutes in length and will feature short video presentations along with topic discussions. Session facilitators will be Jay Tomlinson and Lucy Diesslin.

The target date for the first session was suggested as Sunday, November 10th following the All Church Pot Luck with the same topic presented on the Monday at 3:30 pm and Tuesday at 6:30 pm for those wishing to attend but unable to attend on Sunday.

The first topic will be *The 2020 General Conference/The Lydia Scarves and The Way Forward.* For those who knitted scarves, this is an ideal opportunity to see how important your contribution is to the program. Dates for future sessions to be announced later.

Future Dates to Remember

(Check this month's calendar for November events.)

Sunday, Dec 1 – Beginning of Advent
Wednesday, Dec 18 – All Church Conference 7 PM
Tuesday, Dec 24 – Christmas Eve Service – time TBA

A Note from Bob and Victoria Beech

"God is an awesome God." Habakkuk 3:3

To celebrate Bob's past 94th birthday and Vicki's 75th birthday this August, we went to Custer State Park in western South Dakota. Buffalo Round Up (should probably say correctly - "bison") is held every autumn at the park.

Skilled cowboys, cowgirls, and park vehicles round up the bison herd, made up mostly of the cows and calves, and drive them into the corrals. Once enclosed, the cows are tested for pregnancy and the calves are branded and vaccinated. About four hundred are sold to keep the herd at an even thousand, which is the number the park can feed throughout the winter.

Thank God the bison weren't wiped out years ago. How unbelievable that God could create such a beautiful animal as the American Bison and a place as beautiful as the Black Hills of South Dakota. But "God is an awesome God."

Bob and Vicki Beech
Cabin on Fall Lake in the summer.
Home in Cedar, MN in the winter

**UNITED METHODIST WOMEN (UMW) – MINUTES
September 25, 2019**

Prior to the meeting, some UMW members assisted with preparing the October *FISH* for mailing.

The meeting was officially convened at 1:10 pm by President Bonnie Berglund with Beverly Johnson, Tootsie Loe, Sharon Luthens, Margie Olson, Vicki Podominick, Donna Rusco, Janice Tessier and Jeanne Tomlinson, also in attendance. We recited the UMW pledge and Bonnie read the day's scripture and devotional reading & prayer from the *Upper Room*.

The minutes from our April 24, 2019 meeting were read and approved with two corrections: Margie Olson made the announcement in church about the Spring Cleaning and the September hostess was Bev Johnson instead of Lucy Diesslin. Motion to approve by Bev Johnson; second by Margie Olson.

Sharon Luthens submitted the Treasurer's Report, reporting that the summer expenses were mostly just supplies and the custodian with one \$112 bill for parsonage drier repair. She also reported that the May Friendship Dinner receipts were \$385 but that Northland Market had not done a "per plate" billing this time but had charged us a volume price for the various foods ordered so that it only came to \$350. The current account balances are \$3,288.26 in checking and \$6,046.22 in savings. She also reported that she had inadvertently missed the maturity date in September of our \$10,000 CD but had called the bank immediately afterwards. They no longer have the 11 month 1.95% CD which is

what we'd had, but they have a 15 month 2.35% one available as long as we purchase two CDs. Margie Olson moved that we purchase the 15 month 2.35% with the proceeds from the previous CD (\$10,179.24) and that we take \$1,000 from savings to purchase a second CD at the same term & rate; second by Tootsie Loe. Motion passed.

Old Business

- **“Spring Cleaning”**: Margie reported that the nursery & kitchen were thoroughly cleaned and painted as planned. In addition, the upper bathroom was cleaned and a small overhead cabinet installed for storing supplies. The Fellowship Hall cleaning will have to wait until next year once the flooding issue has been resolved (much work on that has already taken place). She mentioned the pews cleaning/refurbishing needs to be done every 3 years and was last done in 2017 so we'll need to do that next summer also. The Trustees will coordinate that.
- **Friendship Dinner Wed May 22**: Jeanne reported we had 35 adults and 10 children attending our event and that Sheri Rue with her sons, Zach and Jacob, did a wonderful presentation on mission trips they'd done.
- **Bazaar**: Our bi-annual Church Bazaar is scheduled for Saturday, November 2 from 1-3 PM. Crafts & baked goods & coffee-and's will need to be at the church no later than 11 AM. Cardamom bread baking will be Friday, Nov 1. Jeanne will coordinate that. Bonnie asked if anyone would be willing to do table decorations for the 6 tables we'll

set up for the coffee-and's. Tootsie offered to talk to Tricia Schreffler to see if she'd be willing to do those. Final plans and details will be discussed at the October 23 meeting.

New Business

- **Festival of Tree wreath**: Jeanne reported that Lucy had received the usual Festival of Trees order form from Northwoods Partners and asked that we discuss it and make a decision. We briefly discussed if we should just donate \$50 since sometimes the wreaths don't even sell but some felt having a wreath provides some visibility for our church at the event. Sharon commented that as far as she can remember, she's never received a request for expense reimbursement from any of the wreath decorators. Jeanne Tomlinson moved that we order the 30 inch wreath for \$30 and authorize up to \$50 for decoration costs reimbursement; second by Margie Olson. Motion passed. Pam Turnbull and Jan Rue have done this in the past. It was also suggested that Paula Mattila might be interested since her radiation treatments will be done by the time the wreaths become available to decorate. Bev offered to take care of decorating it if no one else steps forward.
- **New President/Vice-President**: Bonnie stated that she is resigning as UMW President since she is gone so much of the year and feels it should be someone who is in Ely more. She had spoken briefly with Lucy, our current VP, who indicated she doesn't want to take over but would be willing if no one else steps forward. After some discussion among the group, Jeanne nominated

Lucy Diesslin as President and Bev Johnson as Vice-President. Second by Tootsie Loe. Nominations were approved.

- **Dish towel replacements:** Jeanne Tomlinson reported that many of the “flour sack” dish towels are becoming threadbare and “holy”. She found some similar dish towels on-line and can get 4 dozen for under \$50. She moved we allocate \$50 to purchase these; second by Vicki Podomonick. Motion passed.

We adjourned the business meeting portion at 1:48 pm.

For our devotional study, we read Chapter 4 of our study book, *Attitude is Your Paint Brush - It Colors Every Situation*. This chapter was about having an “Attitude of Determination” and “Taking Dead Aim” at having a strong relationship with, God, your family and your church.

We then enjoyed a delicious lemon cheesecake supplied by Bev Johnson.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne Tomlinson
Secretary

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL – MINUTES October 16, 2019

Call To Order: Jay Tomlinson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Attendees (13): Bonnie Berglund, Rich Floyd, Craig Haberman, Carol Linneman, Dan & Bev Johnson, Margie

& Mark Olson, Keith Rue, Donna Rusco, Jay & Jeanne Tomlinson and Chris Urbas.

Opening: Pastor Craig provided the “Opening Thought” by sharing some background and words of the hymn “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”. He then opened the meeting with prayer.

Minutes: The Sept 18, 2019 Ad Council minutes were approved as printed in the October *FISH* with one correction by Jay Tomlinson: under the Visioning Committee report, he had mentioned that they would be starting up some “small group meetings” to have some more in depth discussions about some of the Annual Conference issues. Motion to approve the corrected version by Bonnie Berglund; second by Keith Rue. Motion passed.

Treasurer’s Report: Mark Olson presented the September 2019 Treasurer’s Report. Receipts & disbursements were \$8,820.90 & \$7,437.73, respectively. Ending balances were: Undesignated Funds \$13,345.59; Building Fund \$3,486.17; Memorial Fund \$10,180.29; Parish Health Ministries \$400; R3 Project \$170.25; Gift of Giving Project \$1135.16. Motion to accept by Jeanne Tomlinson, second by Rich Floyd. Motion approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Memorial Fund:** Carol Linneman reported that their next meeting will be November 12 at 9 AM. The choir has requested some funds for new music for the Thanksgathering service and funds given in memory of Wally Fendt may be used for some of the landscaping costs.
- **Finance:** Bev Johnson reported that she did a projection and determined that if the income

continues as it has, we will have no problems meeting our budget. The committee will be meeting Wednesday, November 13 at 3 PM to prepare the 2020 Church Budget for Ad Council review on November 20. This is the same time as Kid's Club but should not be a problem since the committee will meet upstairs.

- **Outreach:** Jay Tomlinson reported that we have a new outreach program, the *Keep Warm Project*, which is a multi-church project collecting winter clothing for VCC students. Paula Mattila is coordinating this project in our church.
- **Pastor-Parish Relations:** Jeanne Tomlinson reported the committee met on Wednesday, Oct 2 to complete Pastor Craig's annual evaluation and decided on his 2020 salary to be submitted to the Finance Committee as part of the 2020 budget preparations.
- **Worship:** Bev Johnson and Craig Haberman reported that the committee met on ?? to primarily discuss the *Hanging of the Greens* which has been traditionally held on the Saturday following the Thanksgiving weekend. With Advent starting on December 1 which is part of the Thanksgiving weekend, it was felt that this year the Advent decorating should be done prior to that usual time. So it was decided to invite any interested participants to come to a meal following worship on Sunday, November 24 and then do the decorating after that with "experienced decorators" guiding any "newbies". The meal would be

prepared and served by the Kid's Club and associated adults. The idea is to make this more of a family event and encourage more people to come. It was decided that we would use the current decorating supplies and then as they are taken down and stored, make notes of any changes that would be needed for the subsequent year. It was noted that we will need about \$50 to cover the cost of the front porch garland, \$25 for ribbons to have new bows made and some money to purchase some replacement strings of lights since every year some of the existing ones don't work. This was addressed under New Business.

- **Parish Health Ministry:** Donna Rusco reported some of the history of our Parish Health Ministry and documented what the Parish Health Ministry currently involves. This will be used in the Handbook update that is in progress.
- **Visioning:** Rich Floyd reported that the Visioning Committee hadn't met this month since they didn't have much new to discuss. We had some discussion about the Natural Church survey that was taken that seemed to indicate we still need improvements in "Passionate Spirituality" (developing a more enthusiastic relationship with God) and "Small Holistic Groups" (small groups to foster spiritual growth in the members). Pastor Craig pointed out that the survey was designed for all sizes of churches and that with our church size and number of survey participants the results could easily be skewed and perhaps not taken

literally. He expressed the opinion that with our size and all we currently do, we probably don't need to establish additional small groups. The committee had decided that it would like to get more details from the survey down to responses for each of the questions to get more specific direction. Rich moved that we allocate \$85 to purchase the more detailed survey results.

Second by Keith Rue. Motion passed.

- **Board of Trustees:** Margie Olson reported their next meeting will be November 7 to discuss Fall and Winter upkeep. She mentioned that our previous focus, and much of the Building Fund, had been spent on the parsonage last year but that the church building itself has a number of issues that need to be addressed that will probably cost more than we currently have available. There are cracks in the library walls and we need to replace the floor tiles in the fellowship hall floor. The committee had met briefly the previous Sunday to discuss the gift of a commercial coffee maker from Kerntz Funeral Home that they had in turn received from the Holiday gas station when it upgraded its equipment. The machine requires a 220 electrical line which would cost between \$1000 to \$1500 to install. They voted to put it into storage for now and later address installing it on the existing 220 line when the current electrical stove stops working. We could then use that 220 line for the coffee machine and install a gas stove.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **Progress on Church Handbook:** Jeanne Tomlinson distributed a draft copy of the revised handbook for all to review and make comments. She will send an electronic copy out that will include the new information just received about the Parish Health Ministry.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Christmas decorations and lights:** In addition to the need for funds mentioned by the Worship Committee, Jay Tomlinson reported that we'll also need to purchase additional lights for the Apartment Trees. It was moved to allocate \$150 to cover the costs of these items. Motion by Margie Olson, second by Keith Rue. Motion approved.
2. **Sanctuary Lights:** Margie Olson reported that after a discussion with the Head Usher, Dan Johnson, it was determined that we need to purchase a number of new flood lights and smaller light bulbs for the sanctuary chandeliers since many are not working, causing a problem especially for older members. It was moved to allocate \$150 to cover the costs of these light bulbs. Motion by Bev Johnson, second by Bonnie Berglund. Motion approved.
3. **Sewer line repair:** Margie Olson reported on the sewer line backup problem that had occurred during pasty prep on Monday. This is not the first time this has happened. BJ from Rusco Plumbing has done a temporary fix each time by just clearing the line out. BJ will probably do the sewer repair in January or February.

- 4. Outdoor Lights (over front porch and old ones in the furnace room):** The outdoor parking lot lights were replaced a couple years ago with dawn-to-dusk lights since the old motion sensor lights weren't working as needed; the old lights were then stored in the furnace room. Margie Olson said she will talk to Cunningham Electric to see if the old lights are of any use and if not, we'll just take them to the dump. It was suggested we also replace the front porch light with a dawn-to-dusk light but it was felt that it would be better to fix the motion sensor lights so we don't add more to the current city light pollution.

Correspondence – None

Items of Information

1. **October 2019 Pasty Report:** 720 made; gross income \$4342; cost \$1521.86. Net Income \$2,820.14.
2. **All Church Conference:** We will have our annual Church Conference on Wednesday, December 18 at 7 PM followed by our Ad Council meeting.
3. **File of Life:** Bonnie Berglund reported that they had to order more folders from the hospital and will be using \$15 of the Parish Health Ministry fund to cover the cost of more printed sheets.

The meeting adjourned at 8:46 PM with a unison reciting of *The Lord's Prayer*.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne Tomlinson, Ad Council Secretary