

Parish News • Friday, November 27, 2020

Ely United Methodist Church Members/Friends,

Greetings! Since 1952, the day after Thanksgiving has been regarded as the beginning of the Christmas shopping season. More recently it has been dubbed “Black Friday.” It seems to me I was in my 30’s or 40’s when we started to see the frantic shopping with long lines outside stores early in the morning and then the frantic rush when the doors opened.

Well, there won’t be any long lines at shopping malls and big box stores this year due to the pandemic, which is just one way the 2020 Thanksgiving/Christmas holiday season will be different. Yesterday was the first day in my memory I ever spent Thanksgiving alone. It went OK – I went on a long walk in the morning, someone in the congregation dropped off some Thanksgiving leftovers in the afternoon (yeah!), I worked on Christmas cards, and had texting conversations with family and friends off and on throughout the day.

Yes, this will be a different holiday season from any preceding it in our lifetimes, but it appears with a third vaccine being announced, that even though we still have some months and a Covid-19 winter to go before the pandemic is over, the end is in sight.

Since this all started last March our church leadership has worked diligently to continue the ministry of our congregation, to help us stay connected to God through worship, and connected with each other through a variety of means.

We've all been stretched, haven't we?

Item #1: We've been streaming our Sunday morning worship service on Facebook Live for three weeks now. This was brand new for us, so it's been quite a learning process. Last week our experiment to improve the sound quality by having Pastor Craig wear a face shield was a step backward.

This week Pastor Craig will not wear a mask or a shield when he is in the pulpit, but everyone else in the sanctuary will be sitting fifteen or more feet away and will be wearing masks.

Four principles have guided our decisions as far as masking during worship services.

1. Providing for the safety of all people in the sanctuary by exceeding CDC recommendations.
2. Providing the highest audio and video quality possible, along with a well planned and carefully "produced" worship service.
3. Adhering to Bishop Ough's guidelines for churches, whenever possible.
4. Maintaining the public perception that we are taking necessary safety precautions.

We've been using my laptop to record the services until our camera arrives. Yesterday, I learned I've only had my recording volume two-thirds of the way up. I've since turned the volume

up to full, which will also improve the audio quality of our Facebook Live recordings, whether at church or from the parsonage.

Note: There will also be a children's time during the service on Sunday for the first time since we began streaming services.

Item #2: Part of our Administrative Council discussion on Wednesday dealt with plans for Christmas 2020 at our church.

- We will have poinsettias again this year and are offering you a chance to purchase one in memory of a loved one(s). This cost for each plant is \$14.00. You can mail or drop off payment at the church with a note indicating whom you want the poinsettia to be in memory of. As with previous years you may take the poinsettia home after Christmas. The deadline for ordering is December 1.
- Our Facebook Live Christmas Eve Service will be December 24th at 5:30 p.m. You may, of course, tune in at your convenience on Facebook Live anytime after that. I encourage you to have candles ready to light when we sing Silent Night during the service.
- The Minnesota Annual Conference is producing a worship service for Sunday, December 27th and making the service available to all churches in Minnesota. We decided not to hold our own service on the 27th and to invite people to stream this service led by Bishop Bruce Ough and other Annual Conference leadership. Watch for a link to the service as December 27th approaches.

Item #3: Please find attached the minutes of Administrative Council meetings held on Wednesday, November 18th and Friday, November 20th.

Item #4: Marge Forsberg sent this thank you note to the church recently. “Thank you so much for the prayers, expressions of kindness, “Thinking of You” gift bag, cards, notes, emails, prayer shawl, and visits as I went through a cancer health journey this summer and fall. All is so greatly appreciated. Thank you. Marge Forsberg”

Item #5: This week’s Prayer Wall is attached.

I’m including the final words of Jesus to his disciples in the Gospel of Matthew as our closing words this week. They have been referred to as “The Great Commission.”

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

With my appreciation,

Pastor Craig

The Ely United Methodist Church

Prayer Wall

November 27, 2020

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 5: 3



“In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice, in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.”

We lift up the following in prayer...

- **Robin** – Heather and Marshall’s niece, a nursing home nurse where there is a dramatic uptick in covid-19 cases in both residents and staff, is working multiple shifts with very little sleep.
- **Andy Baker’s family & friends** – Andy passed away in Columbus, OH, on Saturday, November 21
- **Nigel Cooper** – Butch & Lucy Diesslin’s brother-in-law, Nigel Cooper, had a heart attack and is scheduled for open heart surgery. Pray for Nigel and those involved.
- **Emily Wahlberg Family & Friends** – Emily passed away Dec 20, be in prayer to her family & friends
- **Mike Haney** – Gail’s husband is in the hospital having some tests done. Pray for a good outcome.
- **Abbey** – Linda Gass’s 8 yr old granddaughter is having brain surgery on December 14 to reduce seizures
- **Linda Williams** – Linda is still having some health issues. Please keep her in your prayers.
- **Don Markwardt** – The second procedure in St. Luke’s went well and Don is much improved
- **Steve White** – Charlie Berglund’s nephew is battling colon & liver cancer and after his bout with COVID-19 is now having surgery to remove half his liver. Pray for successful surgery and healing.
- **Gary & Dayle Felder, family and friends** – Gary’s father, James at 96, passed away last Saturday
- **Motley Free UMC** – Pastor Jim Johnson & wife Sheri & many church members have COVID-19
- **Ina Happala** – Irene Hatfield’s Sister, Ina, had a TIA, a type of stroke, pray for healing & recovery
- **Emma Smrekar** – Carolyn Fendt’s great granddaughter receiving chemo treatment for stomach cancer
- **Barb Niewierowski Family & friends** – Barb’s husband, Bob - diagnosed with CIDP: Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy - passed away somewhat unexpectedly.
- **Eileen Springer family & friends** – Eileen’s husband, Bob, passed away while in hospice at home
- **Health care workers and residents of Ely Carefree Living** – Those who have tested + for COVID-19
- **Those who have contracted the COVID-19 Virus and Family Members**
- **All essential health care workers exposed to the COVID-19 virus**

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.