

**Ely United Methodist Church
Church Conference – 2019
December 18, 2019**

State of the Church

My daily “commute” on foot between home and the church takes me nearly the length of Third Avenue East, so I walk by the parsonage owned by Ledgerock Church multiple times a day. There was a flurry of activity there at the end of November and the beginning of December as the congregation made improvements prior to the arrival of their new pastor. I counted as many as a dozen vehicles parked outside on one occasion.

While passing by I had opportunity to recall all the maintenance and improvements our congregation made to our parsonage between Pastor Dana’s departure and my arrival. This, in turn, reminds me how we approach everything we do as a church with the same care and thoughtfulness, whether this is planning worship services, considering new programs, following through on outreach commitments, or stewarding our financial resources.

Now sometimes this level of attention to detail can stifle a church’s spontaneity and the movement of the Holy Spirit. What I love about our church is our caution; our prudence doesn’t dampen the Holy Spirit’s presence among us. We are an enthusiastic congregation with a warm and lively way of worshipping, greeting new people, and interacting with each other. We both “take care of business” and are open to new things God may be doing among us.

All this is my way of saying I believe our church is a healthy church. We certainly have “work” to do in deepening our life together, reaching out to others not a part of our congregation, inviting them to church, embracing them as they walk through our doors, and considering how to touch the lives of more people in Ely.

And we may not necessarily know what the next thing is until it’s on our doorstep, so let’s all of us keep watching and praying!

Thank you for your all your good work, worship, and service. I am thrilled to be your pastor and look forward to the next years together.

With appreciation,

Pastor Craig Haberman
December 18, 2019