

Ely United Methodist Church
Church Conference – 2021
December 15, 2021
State of the Church

The year 2021 has been a repeat of 2020 in many ways. Our church has continued to respond and adapt to the changing landscape of Covid-19. Miscellaneous challenges with our Facebook Live broadcast have cropped up occasionally, but we're settling in with remarkable consistency, remaining a vital congregation amidst all the changes and uncertainty right now. Thank you to Jay Tomlinson for unraveling the mystery of the camera and overseeing our broadcasts.

Participation in our congregation remains strong: Ad Council, Committees, Liturgists, Music (Choir, Susan Germek, and Sharon Luthens) and Ushers. The financial contributions of our members to our church budget are outstanding.

Chris Urbas continues to teach Sunday School to our children during the school year. Our mid-week Zoom Bible Study has a loyal group that varies in size depending on who is in town. We've scheduled a two-session study in January 2022 based on the inspirational "I'll Push You" video.

With our church, as with most churches, we just don't know what things will look like when the worst of the pandemic dies down. Sunday morning in-person worship attendance is down about a third from before the pandemic, but most people staying home out of health concerns join us online. Additionally, we're reaching people from our church and beyond who aren't in Ely on a Sunday morning.

A congregational SWOT analysis is one of the items on our Vision Committee's agenda in 2022. In light of all the changes in our community it makes sense for our committee to look at our church's Strengths, Weaknesses, and Opportunities, as well as potential Threats. How will we continue to be "The Little Church with a Big Heart" during the five years and beyond?

We've established a Technology Committee in our church, but haven't got this off the ground yet, despite a number of efforts. The committee will be looking at a number of technology questions – how to centralize our computer information that's presently on different computers and how to upgrade our sound system. The second item is pressing because of the increasing reliance on our aging sound system for Facebook Live broadcasts. Please talk to Pastor Craig or someone on our Administrative Council if you are interested in helping us with this.

As always, I'm grateful for your participation in our church. And the way you support me as your pastor. It's been a challenge for all of us since March 2020 with the pandemic. My father's death and our family losing the cabin we've had for over half a century has been additional challenge for me. You've been great through all of it. Thank you.

Pastor Craig Haberman
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