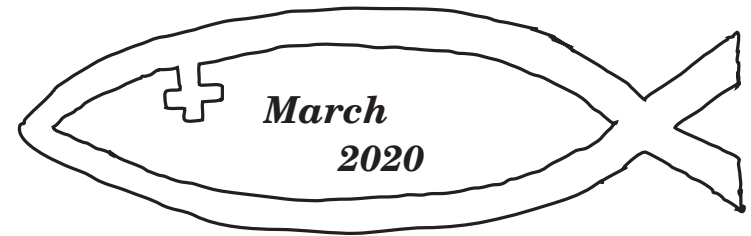


Ely United Methodist Church
305 E. Camp Street
Ely, MN 55731

The fish



ELY U.M.C. 1892....

THE FISH

The Fish is a publication of the Ely United Methodist Church. The sign of the fish was formed by two people. The first drew a curved line of no significance, perhaps with his or her toe in the sand. But when the other person added an inverted curve, the fish was formed and two Christians had indentified each other in the days when to be Christian was anathema. In this paper we draw lines with the hope that in your response the faith will be more clearly seen by all.

A Note from Pastor Craig

February was an extremely busy month for our Ely United Methodist Church prayer chain as well as for each of us praying for people we love and are concerned about. I can't recall any time since I moved to Ely in July of 2018 when as many people in our congregation were experiencing surgeries, major medical tests, accidents, illnesses, and deaths in their family.

Monday, February 10, was an especially busy day with half a dozen or so people from our congregation doctoring for significant conditions.

We are always reliant upon God for our existence from moment to moment. A memorable line from Scripture, which means a lot to me, refers to God as the one "*in whom we live, and move, and have our being.*" (Acts 17:28) Most of the time, however, the awareness of how quickly life can change is beneath our level of consciousness. Generally speaking, without being presumptuous, we are accustomed to God's goodness being more or less continuous in our life.

Then, comes a moment, when in a heartbeat the fragility of life comes crashing down upon us. Yes, life is good; our bodies are complex and resilient, we are surrounded by doctors, hospitals, car mechanics, power utilities, those in the working trades, and wonderful people who provide us with a high quality of life. Yet, the unthinkable still happens and we are brought face to face with the reality that we are not in charge of our lives; we are not in control.

We are now in the church season of Lent, where the focus is on the journey Jesus makes from Galilee to Jerusalem, from being a teacher, preacher, and healer, to one who lays down his life for each of us and for the world. We see in Jesus' life and death that God's power and grace is focused upon the cross; upon Jesus' death and resurrection. God's strength is not brute force, rather that of self-giving love.

As the apostle Paul reminds us what seems at first to be sheer foolishness is indeed God's wisdom. This is not merely an "idea," it's something that makes a difference in our living and in our

dying. Nicholas Wolterstorff and his wife lost a college-age son in a mountain-climbing accident. Nicholas found as he grieved his view of God changed. He writes:

Rather than Eric's death evoking in me an interest in theodicy*, it had the effect of making God more mysterious. I live with the mystery.

If I cannot make sense of it, why not give up on God? I cannot. When I consider the stupendous immensity and astonishing intricacy of the cosmos, and the miracle of human consciousness and intelligence, I find that I cannot believe it all just happened. A being of incomprehensible wisdom, imagination, and power must have brought it about – or rather, is bringing it about.

..... The God who became more mysterious to me has also become more awesome, awesome beyond comprehension. And that has magnified my astonishment that God would care about human beings.

(In *This World of Wonders: Memoir of Life in Learning*. By Nicholas Wolterstorff. Erdmans Publishing Company. 2019. p. 2010. Italics by the author)

*- theodicy is a theological category that tries to make sense of God's power and love in the face of evil. In other words, if God is all-powerful and all-loving why is there evil and suffering in the world?

This is the journey each of us walks throughout life, but especially one we focus on during Lent. By the time you read this we will have already held our Ash Wednesday worship service. We are also hosting a Holy Week Service Thursday, April 9 at 7:00 p.m. where we will remember/celebrate Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples and his death on a cross on the hill of Golgatha.

Between now and then, I hope you have a blessed March and that God will open your hearts and minds to the depth of God's love, grace, and mercy in Jesus Christ.

Pastor Craig

Contact Information and Office Hours for March 2020

Church Office: (218) 365-3355

Parsonage: (218) 365-3716

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

For this month, Pastor Craig is planning to be in the church office from 9 AM to 11 AM on Tuesdays through Saturdays. He will be out of town Monday, March 2nd through Friday March 6th, and March 30th and 31st.

Future Dates to Remember

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

- **Sunday, April 5** – Palm Sunday – 10:AM service
- **Thursday, April 9** – Maundy Thursday/
Good Friday Tenebrae service
- **Sunday, April 12** – Easter Sunday – 10:00 AM service

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit does not flit about the sky
Awaiting for a plea, a prayer or call from you or I.
God placed it in our hearts the day we were conceived,
And there it will remain until its' purpose is achieved.

God left His Word, a book of rules of all that we should know
On how to testify for Him, and make His Kingdom grow.
He gave us Pastors, Choirs, songs and churches to worship in.
He gave His Son upon the cross, to save our soul from sin.

In living, the Holy Spirit grows or it becomes quite small.
Shall it be beautiful or blemished at the time we get our call?

Obey its' true directions as on life's path we trod.
And it will be a pleasure then, to hand it back to God!

by Walter J. Kent

Articles for the *FISH*

Just a reminder to all – the EUMC *FISH* is our church newsletter. We sometimes ask some groups or individuals to write specific articles about coming events, but we always welcome articles from any member of the congregation.

If you have a 'Spiritual Moment' or a personal story, thoughts, a favorite article or other information you'd like to share with our *FISH* readers, please send it to the church.

Send electronic versions to:

elymethodist@elyumc.com or paper versions to *FISH* Editors, Ely United Methodist Church, 305 E Camp St, Ely, MN 55731.

A New Sponsored Child

As mentioned in the March 2019 *FISH*, our church donates regularly to Children's International to cover the cost of sponsoring a child. Normally we are assigned a specific child and we get to hear from or about the same child through his or her growing years. Our most recent "child", Evelin, whom we sponsored for over a decade, has turned 18 and we now have been assigned a new child!! Her name is Lizzbeth and she lives in Guatemala City, Guatemala.

Lizzbeth is currently in preschool and likes dance, math and art. For fun she spends her free time exercising, playing with siblings and playing soccer. She's only 6 years old so we will probably be sponsoring her for the next 10 years or so and will be able to follow her growth and development with regular updates from Children's International, and sometimes letters from her.

Please check out her picture and learn more about her by checking out the information sheet on the small bulletin board in the annex just above the recycling basket.

Community Bible Study

Thursdays: 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

In addition to the Small Group Sessions mentioned above, we have another study opportunity. Chris Maroni, PhD, a native Elyite and former Mesabi Community College professor, will be holding a 12 week community Bible Study at our church. The focus will be on the The Birth of the Christian Church from 33 CE to 200 CE (CE = Christian Era). The study is held on Thursdays from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM upstairs in the back of our sanctuary or in our Fellowship Hall depending on attendance. It started on January 23rd and will continue each week until April 9th. This study is open to anyone who is interested.

Administrative Council - Minutes

Wednesday, February 19, 2020 • 7:00 PM

Call To Order: Chair Dan Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Attendees (6): Craig Haberman, Bev and Dan Johnson, Margie and Mark Olson, Rich Floyd.

Opening: Craig provided opening thoughts – read a poem from *Wing over Wing* by Julie Cadwauader Staub and gave a prayer lifting up many who are ill and suffering loss.

Minutes: The minutes from the January meeting were approved as printed in the January *FISH*. Motion to approve by Margie Olson; Seconded by Rich Floyd. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: The treasurer's report showed a beginning balance of \$21,438.83 with income of \$7,802.50 including \$153.50 from UMW for the Reach, Renew, Rejoice. In addition to the usual salary expenses, the Church Multi-coverage insurance for the year was paid (as approved by the board in January) with total disbursements of \$10,935.29. The month-end balance was 18,307.04. Motion to approve made by Bev Johnson, seconded by Margie Olson. Motion carried. (A copy of the report is attached to the written minutes).

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Board of Trustees:** No report.
- **Finance Committee:** No report.
- **Pastor-Parish Relations Committee:** Sheri Rue will be acting chair of PPR. They will keep the congregation abreast of pastoral absences.
- **Worship Committee:** The Worship Committee has put into place the Services occurring during Lent: Ash Wednesday – imposition of ashes; Maundy Thursday/ Good Friday Tenebrae service on April 9. Palms will be ordered for Palm Sunday Service. The choir will sing on Maundy Thursday, Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. The EUMC will be responsible for the Thursday Lenten supper on March 19 (we will make the mini-pasties). Pastor Craig will be away June 21 (Dana), August 2 (Marshall), August 9 (We believe that will be the Semers Park Ecumenical Service), September 13 (Dana) and September 20 (open). The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 27.
- **Outreach:** No report.
- **Visioning Committee:** 1) Kid's Club is currently not meeting due to few kids attending and illness. Depending on circumstances, it may be reconstituted on Wednesdays in the fall. 2) *Racial Reconciling Covenant:* currently, not much is known about this initiative, which came out of the Minnesota Annual Conference. If it simply involves signing a declaration, the committee was not too interested. There are probably some commitments involved, and that will be further investigated. 3) Pot Luck Scheduled for May 17. 4) Looking to the questions asked in the *Natural Church Development Survey* to find initiatives to undertake that would increase our spiritual enthusiasm. Sharing "God Moments" is one way, and the committee is brainstorming ways to do that.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Web Site:** The Web site needs to be updated to be congruent with current programs and information and in terms of its architecture, content and photos. Dan will talk with Jay about content and photos and will notify appropriate people about updating information. This will be an ongoing project.
- **Uniform Pasties:** After noting pasties coming out of the oven with some dark and some light, Dan Johnson worked with Mark Olson (and others) to strive for more uniformity. During this pasty run, the temperature was lowered for baking to 375 degrees and all shelves were rotated in a consistent manner creating a more uniform and lighter brown pasty.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Gideons to visit:** presentation will be positive in nature and they will take an offering. They will be scheduled for sometime this summer to make a presentation during a Sunday service.
2. **Annual Audit:** The books of the UMW, the Church, and the Building Fund were audited by the Audit Committee to prepare the report that goes to the Annual Conference. The record keeping is exemplary. The report is available in the church office.
3. **Facebook Presence:** It was reported that there is a *Facebook* page for Ely United Methodist Church. It is not known who set it up, and how information is controlled about what appears on the site. We need to find out if anyone knows about how it was established.
4. **Ecumenical Service (in August):** Margie Olson moved that EUMC join in the service at Semers Park pending verification of time and date. This means our worship service will be cancelled on that date. Rich Floyd seconded the motion. Motion passed. Pastor Craig will bring it up at the Pastors' meeting.

Items of Information:

1. **February 2020 Pasty Report:** We made 584; deposits were \$3,519.00; cost \$1,201.56; net income \$2,317.44.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM with a unison reciting of *The Lord's Prayer*.

Respectfully submitted,
Bev Johnson – Acting Temporary Ad Council Secretary

TIME OF SORROW

The time of sorrow comes with age,
As friends and kin depart.
They take with them true acts of love
And leave an aching heart.

So we live on with memories
Of happiness and pain.
Time erases hurtfulness
And the happy times remain.



Thus God has given all of us
Relief from constant sorrow,
And promises a fairer day
Upon some future morrow.

by Walter J. Kent

Psalms 34: 18

***The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and
saves those who are crushed in Spirit.***

March 2020

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|--|---|---|--|-----------|
| 1 8:45 AM Sunday School 9:30 AM Choir Practice Worship & Communion Service K-6 Sunday School 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Fellowship/Refreshments 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM | 2 Pastor Craig Out | 3 Pastor Craig Out | 4 Pastor Craig Out | 5 Pastor Craig Out Community Bible Study: The Birth of the Church: 33 -200 AD 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM Lenten Supper - 5:30 PM St. Anthony's Church Choir Practice 6:30 PM | 6 Pastor Craig Out | 7 |
| 8 8:45 AM Sunday School Worship Service K-6 Sunday School 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Fellowship/Refreshments 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM Confirmation Class 11:30 AM | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 Community Bible Study: The Birth of the Church: 33 -200 AD 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM Lenten Supper - 5:30 PM Grace Lutheran Church Choir Practice 6:30 PM Visioning Committee Meeting - 7:35 PM | 13 | 14 |
| 15 8:45 AM Sunday School 9:30 AM Choir Practice Worship Service K-6 Sunday School 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Fellowship/Refreshments 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM Boundary Water Care Center Worship Service - 2:30 PM | 16 Pasties !  | 17 Pasties !  | 18 Ad Council Meeting 7:00 PM | 19 Community Bible Study: The Birth of the Church: 33 -200 AD 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM Lenten Supper - 5:30 PM Ely UMC held at St. Anthony's Church Choir Practice 6:30 PM | 20 | 21 |
| 22 8:45 AM Sunday School Worship Service K-6 Sunday School 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Fellowship/Refreshments 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM | 23 | 24 | 25 UMW Meeting 1:00 PM (Janice Tessier Hostess) | 26 Community Bible Study: The Birth of the Church: 33 -200 AD 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM Lenten Supper - 5:30 PM 1st Presbyterian & St. Mary's Church held at Presbyterian Church Choir Practice 6:30 PM | 27 Worship Committee Meeting 10:00 AM | 28 |
| 29 8:45 AM Sunday School Worship Service K-6 Sunday School 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Fellowship/Refreshments 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM | 30 Pastor Craig Out Continuing Education | 31 Pastor Craig Out Continuing Education | | | | |