

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Think about this, when you are 5 years old, 5 years is a long time; when you are 5 your parents help you across the street, 5 years later you own the streets with your bike.

Think about this, when you are 10 years old, 10 years is a long time; when you are 10 you are living at home operating on house rules, 10 years later you are off to work or college making your own rules as you go.

Think about this, when you are 20 years old, 20 years is a long time; when you are 20 you are trying to figure out what your life might be like, 20 years later you are in the midst of all that makes life happen.

Think about this, when you are 40 years old, 40 years is a long time; when you are 40 you are immersed in a career path, 40 years later you are immersed in something called the “Golden Years” or possibly retirement.

Think about this, when you are 80 years old, 80 years is a long time; **NO, NO, NO** please **STOP** before reaching 160 years old!!!

Well how about 125 years old, when you are 125 years old, 125 years is a long time; even for a church like say the **ELY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH!!!**

Actually, 125 years for an individual church may be a long time, even the Ely U.M.C.; but for **GOD’S CHURCH** living as the Family of God a 125 years is not even as long as the **“BLINK of an EYE”!!!** For with **GOD** and the Family of God there is the potential for the **ETERNAL!!!**

Yes, even as the Ely U.M.C. celebrating with great **JOY** the opportunity to share in ministry with **GOD** for what is now over 125 years, we can look upon this as **“JUST the BEGINNING”!!!**

But, and this is a **“BIG BUT”** how do we at 125 years old maintain a **YOUTHFUL VITALITY???**

Well, we as the Family of God here in the Ely U.M.C. can maintain that youthful vitality in the **“BLINK of an EYE”** by simply holding fast to the wonder of **GOD’S** gracious **LOVE** for us as the Family of God!!!

Indeed, it is our gracious and loving **GOD** who is by nature **ETERNAL** who can provide us with that youthful vitality we need to not only celebrate a 125 years of being in ministry with God already but can provide us with that youthful vitality we need to look forward to the next 125 years as well!!! **LOVE, GOD’S LOVE** for us is the energy that can drive the vitality of our ministry with **GOD**, today, tomorrow, and **ALWAYS!!!**

Yes, as long as we, as the Family of God, here in the Ely U.M.C. continue to keep our hearts, minds, and spirits focused of our gracious and loving **GOD, GOD’S LOVE** will enable us to continue sharing in ministry with **GOD!!!**

Yes, there is no **“BUT”**, **“BIG”** or otherwise that can limit us as the Family of God, as long as we prayerfully focus on **GOD** and **GOD’S** will for us as the Family of God, here in the Ely U.M.C.!!!

Love in Christ,

Pastor Dana