

## **THE STATE OF THE CHURCH:**

**2012**

*Well, we are moving toward the close of another year of ministry together with God's gracious care here in the Ely U.M.C.; let us do so with **THANKSGIVING** in our **HEARTS!!!** Indeed, God has blessed us during 2012 in many fruitful and **WONDERFUL** ways!!! May we as God's children rejoice with appreciation for all **GOD** has done among us, and for all **GOD** is doing among us, and for all **GOD** will do among us!!!*

*May we as God's children "rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts" because our God is a gracious and loving God who has provided us many opportunities to experience that **LOVE** for ourselves and to share that **LOVE** with others!!!*

*May we as God's children "rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts" because our God has provided us with the **COURAGE** to continue seeking out ways to be in ministry with God and with each other!!!*

*May we as God's children "rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts" because our God has provided us with a spirit of **HOPE** assured of God's gracious gift of "Emmanuel" "God with us" through Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit!!!*

*Yes, as the Family of God here in the Ely U.M.C. let us celebrate and "rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts" wrapped in the wonder of love, courage, and hope, as children in the Family of God!!!*

*We as the Family of God have experienced love, courage, and hope, as we have taken the time to participate in God's Ministries through our worship of God. We have also experienced love, courage, and hope, as we have spent time in fellowship with one another within the worship experience!!! Let us "rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts" for the many precious moments God has provided for us to spend quality time in worship and fellowship!!!*

*One of the things that makes our worship experiences something that provides the opportunity to experience love, courage, and hope, is found in the many and willing people who have **AWESOME** talents in the area of music!!! During this year we have continued to see an awesome level of dedication and commitment by our organists, and our pianists, each of whom is rich in talent, and rich in a willingness to share with us in the worship experience!!! During this year we have continued to see an awesome level of dedication and commitment from our choir director and our choir!!! Indeed, we have seen our choir grow a little this year even after losing some long time members to the choir. Further, during this year we have had the opportunity to experience the joy of guitar music accompanied by solo voice within our worship experiences thanks to a new*

*church family member who has these special talents. Indeed, the ministry of music has added great depth to our worship experiences again this year nurturing love, courage, and hope, for us as the Family of God here in the Ely U.M.C.!!! Let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!*

*Yet, another aspect of our worship experience that heightens our opportunity to experience love, courage, and hope, is the **AWESOME** willingness of our Church Family Members to participate in worship by providing leadership with Holy Communion, ushering, providing fellowship time refreshments, lifting up prayers of joy and concern, doing readings, reports, and presentations of various kinds. Let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!*

*During 2012 we as the Family of God here in the Ely U.M.C. have experienced love, courage, and hope, because of our “Visioning Committee”, a group of dedicated and committed Church Family Members who have worked diligently to continue looking for ways to help become as the hymn says: “Nearer, My God, to Thee”!!! Following our initial efforts at revitalization taken a couple years ago by participating in the “Natural Church Development Survey”, we have now been able to implemented most of our plans. Therefore, we have made a change during this past year, we are no longer meeting every other month, but for now are meeting quarterly, while anticipating taking the “Natural Church Development Survey” again in 2013 to see how we have been progressing and where we might go from here. We give thanks that this committee has been willing to look honestly at where we are at in today’s society as a church and where we might go to continue being the Ely U. M. C. at work in Ely, Minnesota!!! Further, we hope others will soon begin to see the value in actively participating in the work of this committee and in trying to help accomplish our goal of nurturing our potential for sharing in God’s Ministries here in the Ely U.M.C. Indeed, our “Visioning Committee” has added depth to our potential for being the Family of God here in the Ely U.M.C. nurtured by love, courage, and hope!!! Let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!*

*As an outgrowth of the “Visioning Committee” and the “Administrative Council” we have seen the birth of a website for the Ely U.M.C. found at **elyumc.org**!!! We take this step into the future with love, courage, and hope, that we might become at least a bit more visible as children in the Family of God reaching out to others within the community of Ely and far beyond!!! We share a word of thanks with everyone who has helped get this unique effort at ministry up and running but acknowledged one individual has poured a great deal of time into making this a reality, for that individual we share a special word of thanks because of your willingness to share some unique and special talents with us your Church Family!!! Indeed, the new website has the potential for not only keeping our Church Family Members with internet access up to speed with regards to what is happening at the church, but it also has the potential for introducing us to those people who by way of the internet are looking for a church home. Clearly, we are trying to figure out what it means to be the Church with God in a new*

*day!!! Yes, our new website is an adventure in love, courage, and hope!!! Let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!*

*During 2012 we have continued to provide Sunday School during the school year for K-6 youth seeking to nurture love, courage, and hope, for the people of God here in the Ely U.M.C. as we take seriously the commitments made in the form of vows when we have shared in “Baptism” and “Reception into Church Membership” services!!! Yes, we continue to seek to provide opportunities for learning about God and God’s love and for growing in God’s love as the Family of God here in the Ely U.M.C. We not only continue providing Sunday School, but we also have other learning opportunities such as an active Bible Study group and a women’s circle group called the “Guild” who study together. Starting with December 2012 we are also going to try to establish a before worship Sunday morning Sunday School for all comers, focused on the scripture reading for the day, at least at the start. Let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!*

*This year we will have a very special opportunity for celebration as the Family of God here in the Ely U.M.C., as we come to the close of 2012 we will celebrate with love, courage, and hope, as we participate with a wonderful group of young people within our Church Family who will be completing their Confirmation Studies and Requirements!!! These young people are a precious blessing to our Church Family and we look forward to celebrating with them as they complete the Confirmation experience, what a truly **AWESOME** way to celebrate what it means to be the Family of God, alive and well here in the Ely U.M.C. in Ely, Minnesota!!! Let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!*

*During 2012 we as the Family of God here in the Ely U.M.C. have experienced love, courage, and hope, because of the many ways we have looked beyond ourselves, by sharing in a great variety of outreach ministries which have enhanced our potential to remain actively involved in God’s Ministries!!! Let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!*

*During this year we have participated in the U.M.C. Campaign which is called “Imagine No Malaria”. When this Campaign was preparing to begin we were asked by the Minnesota Annual Conference of the U.M.C. to become a model church committing to raise \$100.00 per worshiper per Sunday during the year the campaign was starting. At that time we were averaging 70 worshipers per Sunday which translates to,  $\$100.00 \times 70 = \$7,000.00$ . The Administrative Council of the Ely U.M.C. accepted this challenge from the Minnesota Annual Conference. We were given 3 years to reach this goal. We reached the goal and exceeded the goal in less than 1 year!!! Looking beyond ourselves let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!*

*During this year we have again partnered with “Stanley the Scarecrow” to provide food and money to the local Ely Area Food Shelf. “Stanley” has been a great help to us over the last few years with this special outreach project. Yes, we*

have provided food items to the Ely Are Food Shelf” but we have also given at the least, \$600.00!!! Looking beyond ourselves, let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!

Leaving “Stanley” behind until the next time, we have moved unto another local outreach project which we call our “Giving Tree”. This project is one we participate in with the “Ely Community Resource” team and many others. This project is one that seeks to make sure youth in our community who may not have a blessed Christmas receive at least one special gift!!! Looking beyond ourselves, let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!

During this year we may be hitting the tenth anniversary of a very **SPECIAL** outreach ministry here in the Ely U.M.C. we call “Hearts 2 Hands”!!! This is a special group of women in our church we have been “Quilting” Baby Quilts for “at-risk-kids” and who now may be moving into doing some Quilts for men who are dealing with the effects of Alzheimer’s disease. What an **AWESOME** group of women doing awesome ministry whether it is quilts for children or quilts for men. Looking beyond ourselves, let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!

During this past year we have continued to be involved in some local community outreaches with other local churches, such as providing worship services at the “Boundary Waters Care Center” and the “Ely CareFree Living” facilities. We have also continued to participate in the Ely Community Lenten Supper Ministry. Looking beyond ourselves, let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!

Again, during this year we have had a number of our Church Family Members actively involved with “Northwoods Hospice Respite Partners” which provides special services for some of the older people within our community. Looking beyond ourselves, let us rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!

Yes, we have also continued to be a sponsor for the “Young Life” group in Ely during this past year and with “Children’s International” during this past year. Looking beyond ourselves, let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!

Two other very special Ministries which have enhanced our potential for love, courage, and hope, during this past year as the Family of God here in the Ely U.M.C. are our “Prayer Chain Ministry” and our “Prayer Shawl Ministry” touching lives in **AWESOME** ways both near and far!!! Looking beyond ourselves, let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!

Indeed, when it comes to Outreach during 2012, we here in the Ely U.M.C. have stepped out in Ministry with God in a great variety of ways, seeking to spark love, courage, and hope!!! Looking beyond ourselves, let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!

*Yes, we have looked beyond ourselves in many wonderful ways during 2012!!! Still, we remain dedicated and committed to being the Family of God within the Ely U.M.C. Family. Indeed, our long standing ministry nurtured by the “Parish Health Ministry” team and our Parish Health Nurse continues to enhance our potential to nurture the growth of love, courage, and hope, as we seek to be the people God here in the Ely U.M.C.!!! What a **TREASURE** these people are as we continue to participate in ministry with God as the Family of God here in the Ely U.M.C.!!! Let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!*

*Yes, during this past year we have continued to participate in our “Pasty Making Ministry” with love, courage, and hope, which provides us two very **AWESOME** benefits enhancing our financial well being and enhancing of fellowship experiences. Indeed, something our “Pasty Making Ministry” continues to show us is that when we work together we can do some amazing things as the people of God!!! Let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!*

*During 2012, at least to date we continue to have a depth of financial giving which allows to remain stable and active in ministries of all kinds nurturing our potential for being the Family of God here in the Ely U.M.C. that shares in love, courage, and hope!!! Let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts”!!!*

*As we celebrate 2012, we could not do so without acknowledging the **AWESOME** job that our Ely U.M.C. Trustee Committee does in maintaining the facilities we use to participate in God’s Ministries within the community of Ely!!! Indeed, our Trustees put forth **TREMENDOUS** effort with regards to our facilities so that we can continue to nurture the potential for growing in love, courage, and hope, as we share in God’s Ministries together!*

*Let us “rejoice with thanksgiving in our hearts” for the many ways God has blessed us during 2012!!! Indeed, we have been blessed with many opportunities to participate in and share in growing as the people of God wrapped in the warmth and wonder of **LOVE**, to participate in and share in growing as the people of God the necessary **COURAGE** for the days that are to come, to participate in and share in growing as the people of God a sense of **HOPE** ; indeed we as God’s Family can celebrate **“EMMANUEL” GOD** with us through **JESUS CHRIST** and the power of the **HOLY SPIRIT**!!!*

*Love in Christ,*

*Dana*

***WORSHIP, SERVE, & FELLOWSHIP  
IN HEART, MIND, & SPIRIT,  
AS WE “REJOICE WITH THANKSGIVING IN OUR HEARTS”  
FOR WHAT GOD HAS DONE, IS DOING, AND WILL DO,  
AMONG US!!!***