

# ELY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

*"The Little Church With the Big Heart"*

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**Parish News**

**June 14, 2024**

## **A "Love Note" to the Ely United United Methodist Church**

This is the final note I'll write to you before heading down the highway toward retirement in Sioux Falls. I'm writing this first draft Monday morning, June 10th, which means the hour when the Metcalf/Mayflower moving truck will arrive on Beacon Hill to load up my things is fast approaching. The final nine days between now and then are going to be filled from dawn to dusk with appointments/meetings here in town, pastoral responsibilities, goodbyes, quick round trips to Crane Lake and the Twin Cities, and the final details related to moving (packing, changes of address, banking, seeing my place is ready in Sioux Falls).

I want to etch these golden, halcyon moments deeply into my memory because my six years in Ely have been some of the richest of my life. Yes, there were the extended years of the pandemic, which still reverberate with their sudden and savage arrival, even as they fade into mists of the past. Yes, there were three or four seasons of personal heartache, including the death of my father and loss of our family cabin. Yes, our community has been living through cycles of uncertainty in the weather and BWCA permitting changes.

But don't the above challenges and moments of adversity highlight what makes living in Ely and knowing each other so remarkable? In other words, the natural beauty of Ely and the surrounding area, the character/wide variety/energy of people here, and the depth of love for God and each other present in our church and community carry each of us through the heaviness of hardship and also elevate the goodness of our days to higher planes of joy and abundance.

I am thankful for ever so many things. For

- The way you embraced me and my ministry among you as I followed on the heels of Dana Thompson's 31 years as your pastor. Dana was the only pastor some of you had ever known, yet you opened your hearts and lives to me. I'm not sure if you're aware how highly unusual this is and I'm grateful.
- Your thoughtful responsiveness to changes within the leadership in our congregation, possibilities for ministry in our community, and necessities pressed upon us by needs within our congregation and with our parsonage and church building. You are resourceful and committed. Thank you.
- Your laughter, your love of singing, your devotion to Scripture and Holy Communion, the way you accept/embrace/forgive one another (and me!), and your love for each other, especially our children.
- Oh - did I mention, the way you responded to Covid? I still stand amazed.

My, oh my, there is so much more to say - perhaps the best way to draw this to a close is to mention the oft-quoted words of the Apostle Paul when pastors say goodbye to churches: (Philippians 1:3-9)

(Continued on the next page)

*"I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, thankful for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day*

*of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to feel thus about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruits of righteousness which come through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”*

Thank you again and always - Pastor Craig

**The Minnesota Annual Conference invited retiring clergy to write that were included together in a booklet. These are the words I wrote.**

First sensing God's call to be a pastor the fall of my freshman year in college, I had little idea what lay ahead. The call has never left me, although it has been and still is a long journey of feeling comfortable in my own skin as a pastor.

I am inspired by our living 3000-year-old faith tradition, which goes back to Abraham and Sarah and has continued since then through twists and turns of cultures across five continents.

I've been nurtured in this vocation by my family, mentors (living and dead), colleagues, and by the members of the nine congregations I have served since 1982.

Looking backward the Apostle Paul's words come instantly to mind: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us."

It's humbling how long it's taken for these words to really crystalize - ministry is always God's work through us and with others. I'm grateful to those in my midst, lay and clergy of all ages, who are examples for me.

Upon retirement I will move to Sioux Falls. I've happily lived in parsonages during my entire pastoral ministry yet am looking forward to moving into my own place a dozen minutes from my son Christopher and family. My other son Kirk and family live in Beaver Falls, PA. I will spend as much time as possible with my sons, their wives, and my six grandchildren.

I'm looking forward to immersing myself in this thriving community, with its myriad of opportunities for recreation, sports, arts, and entertainment. I'll hopefully work my way back into shape and get caught up on my reading.

I will also be serving Magnolia United Methodist Church 1/4 time.

Why still serve? God's call to pastoral ministry continues. Exploring and living out our tradition with others *in congregations* brings me joy and hope. It's also where my thirst for learning finds its deepest expression.

My deep thanks to my family, the Minnesota Annual Conference, colleagues, and each one of you. My life and life in ministry has been a rare opportunity.

The Ely United Methodist Church

**Prayer Wall**

June 14, 2024

This is a guide for prayer this week. The *Prayer Wall* is a reminder of those needing prayers during devotional times. Thank you for dedicating some of your personal prayer time to lift up these requests.

**Ephesians 6: 18 (NIV)**



***"Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests."***

**We lift up the following in prayer...**

- **Deb Minier's family and friends** – Margie Olson asked for prayers for the family and friends of Deb Minier. Deb and her husband, Mike, were involved in a car accident where Deb died and Mike is still in critical care.
- **Adrienne Dubbin's family and friends** – Sheri Rue asked for prayers for the Adrienne Dubbin's family and friends. Adrienne passed away on June 7<sup>th</sup>.
- **Mike Loisel** – Peggy Koschak asked for prayers for Mike Loisel. Mike was in a serious car accident several months ago and is now coming home in a wheel chair because he has reached his 100 day maximum for nursing home Medicare-coverage.
- **Arlene Rice family & friends** – Patty Niskala asked for prayers for Arlene Rice's family and friends. Arlene passed away and she was the mother of Connie Peterson, part of our on-line community and grandmother of Justin Zemke.
- **Polly Johnson** – Kellie Viikansalo asked for prayers for her mother who is in the hospital with cellulitis.
- **Sandra and Jim Davis** – Cathy Aldrich asked for Prayers for Sandra who is having medical issues.
- **Glenda and Steve Harbaugh** – **Update: The pathology of the tumor indicated Steve will need to undergo further radiation treatments. They are grateful for your prayers.** Steve has a tumor revealed through an MRI and will consult with a neurosurgeon concerning diagnosis and treatment.
- **Carol Laine** – **Update: Carol returned home with her new pacemaker and is doing well!** Carol was transported to Duluth with heart issues. She received two stints and will be getting a pacemaker as well.
- **Trace Thome family & friends** – Pam Turnbull asked for prayers for the Trace Thome family. One student that Mike coaches just lost his brother, Trace, who died suddenly.

We include all the United Methodist Churches and Pastors, both active and retired, in our MN UMC Annual Conference as we work in extraordinary ways to keep our congregations and communities free from infection by the COVID-19 virus.

*Prayer requests are compiled from our church prayer chain, from our Sunday morning church congregation using the prayer request forms located in the pew welcome pads, and the North Star District Prayer List. Prayer requests will remain on the Prayer Wall through four weeks unless removed earlier because the prayer is known to be no longer necessary. People may ask that prayers be renewed on the list for subsequent 4-week periods. The Prayer Wall is finalized each Thursday for the Sunday morning service.*

## **Ely UMC Mission Statement Announcement and Invitation for Feedback**

During the Rule of Christ training, it was mentioned our mission statement is not easy to remember and many in attendance didn't know where to find it or what it says. The mission statement is located on our church website and in the new church directory. It says:

*Our Ely UMC congregation seeks to add to and pass on the spiritual enrichment and strength for living in Christ that we have received and to share the love of Christ with others.*

And as with any organization it is good to periodically review mission statements and update them as needed.

In addition to the adults, we also want our mission to be easy for the children in the congregation to be able to remember. At the last Administrative Council meeting we worked very hard as a team to revise our mission statement into a clear, concise, and easy to remember statement. After very open discussion and suggestions, it was determined:

Our mission at Ely United Methodist Church is: *"Growing in faith and sharing Christ's love with others."*

And we ask you to share your thoughts with members of the administrative council or Pastor Craig on how *Growing in faith and sharing Christ's love with others* captures what we do at Ely United Methodist Church.