

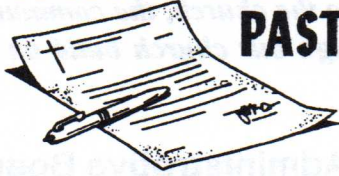
# United Methodist Church News

Groton - Conde - Andover



March 2003

## A Word from the PASTOR



With the beginning of March comes Lent. Ash Wednesday is March 5 this year. Yes, Lent is late this year, but it still comes. Easter is on April 20, nearly as late as it can be. One of the practices of lent is "giving up something for Lent" or as one child explained to another, "It's when one adult tries to make the others miserable, by telling what they have given up for lent." Actually it would be called a partial fast. A fast is giving up something (usually food) for a spiritual reason. We might give up one meal, or one meal a day or a whole day's eating (be sure your health can handle it before doing this). It might be for a longer time or it might be a partial fast, in which we give up one item of food, like meat, or coffee, or candy during the season of lent. If we choose to do this, then our hunger is to remind us that Christ also gave up something for us. He gave his life on Calvary. Or our desire for food can remind us to pray - for ourselves, or family, or church or missions or other things. A feast is when we celebrate with a large, good meal, like at Christmas or Thanksgiving. Rev James A Gillespie of Charlerio, PA suggests we combine the two and gives us this list to work on during Lent.

*Fast from gossip;*  
*Feast on the Gospels.*  
*Fast from junk foods;*  
*Feast on the Bread of Life.*  
*Fast from bad news;*  
*Feast on "The Good News."*  
*Fast from darkness;*  
*Feast on the Light.*  
*Fast from the secular;*  
*Feast on the sacred.*  
*Fast from despair;*  
*Feast on hope.*

*Fast from revenge;*  
*Feast on forgiveness*  
*Fast from tears of sorrow;*  
*Feast on tears of joy.*  
*Fast from getting;*  
*Feast on giving.*  
*Fast from complexities;*  
*Feast on simplicities.*  
*Fast from horror;*  
*Feast on humor.*  
*Fast from listlessness;*  
*Feast on laughter.*

Its worth a try. Hope you choose something special to remind yourself of Christ in the coming Lenten season.

*Peace*  
*Pastor Grant*



Our Christian sympathy is extended to the family of Hazel Hite who died February 20, 2003. Her funeral was in the Groton UMC on February 24.



Welcome Brooklyn Ann Gilbert, born to Melissa Mortenson and Neil Gilbert on December 9, 2002. She was baptized in the Groton UMC on February 23, 2003

## Conde UMW

The Conde UMW met on Wednesday, February 19 at 11:00 am with nine members and one guest present. Devotions were given by Joyce Haskell. Cards were sent to Dolores Grimes, June Knoll and Wava Thomas.

Marjorie Wright gave the Call to Prayer and Self Denial, "A Gift of a Lifetime". She asked members to share their feelings about what they considered special and lasting gifts that had been given to them. Most mentioned such gifts as a happy marriage, the gift of children, and the fellowship of Church Women. She had readers relate the stories of several missionaries and deaconesses.

### Old Business:

-- Thank You's were read from the Good Samaritan Center for our participation in the "Christmas Adopt a Family", from Grant & Eileen Piehl for the Mission Memorial in memory of Eileen's mother, and from "Tree of Life" for the \$50 Mission Money donation. --There are groceries to be taken to the Good Samaritan Center in Redfield. Judy Zeck will be contacted.

--World Day of Prayer in conjunction with the Catholic ladies will be held at the Methodist Church on Friday, March 7 at 2:00 pm.

### New Business:

--The reading program was discussed. Patty Knoll reported on two books she had read. Betty Taylor displayed several books she had purchased and read and offered them to others to read.

--Motion passed to meet in April at Rosewood Court where Irene Pfaff and June Knoll live.

--UMW Focus Day will be Saturday, April 5 in Mellette.

--Ideas were presented for the May Fellowship. A salad lunch with play to follow was suggested.

--Betty Taylor suggested having Sarah Baker/10-10 Missionary/Parish Nurse for a speaker at a special meeting.

--A six week Lenten study led by Rev. Piehl will start on Sunday, March 9 at 12:00 pm.

Hostesses for the day were Joyce Haskell and Betty Taylor.

Next meeting is March 19 at 11:00 am at Conde. The lesson on Mexico will be presented by Patty Knoll. Lunch will be served by Patty and Cindy Smith, followed by the business meeting.

## World Day of Prayer

"*Holy Spirit, Fill Us*" is the title of worship for World Day of Prayer for this year. This service is open to all in the community on Friday afternoon, March 7<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM at the Conde United Methodist Church. This is an ecumenical service with an opportunity for all to take part.

This year's program has been written by the women of the beautiful country of Lebanon, noted for its cedars of Lebanon and the olive trees that yield beautiful wooden products and the olives that are favorites on our tables. This small country is noted for many talented people, some of whom have written the program for the day. This program is based upon The Song of Solomon. We are reminded that what God made is good and what God intends is abundant life for everyone.

The World Day of Prayer is always the first Friday in Lent following Ash Wednesday and programs are sponsored by Church Women United, composed of about a dozen church wide organizations throughout the world.

We are very fortunate to be able to observe this day with those of other faiths in our community. Coffee hour will follow the worship in the Fellowship Hall of the church.

We will expect to see you there.

### THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"It would've been a better miracle if the whole crowd had pizza instead of loaves and fishes."

from *The Joyful Noiseletter*

**Conde Ushers for March**  
Cindy Smith & Virginia Sheppard

## Groton UMW

The February meeting was opened at 2:00 pm by Linda Thurston.

Mary Hayenga gave devotions from the booklet. It was written by June James, entitled "Pieces of Puzzles." She noted missionaries for the day from the Prayer Calendar and led the group in prayer.

### Business meeting

- minutes read and financial report given, balance being \$2196.82.

-- A baby card was sent to Brooklyn Gilbert.

--World Day of Prayer - March 7, 2:00 pm at Emmanuel Lutheran Church. Mary Hayenga, Spiritual Growth chairman represented UMC at the planning meeting. Gloria Pharis, Clare Brotherton and Jolene Townsend will assist with the program. Twila Ruden and JoAnn Krueger will furnish cookies and Doris Strom and Eunice Sperry will assist in the kitchen. This year's service was prepared by the country of Lebanon.

-Mary Swisher, Program Resources chairman gave a brief synopsis of the book, An Ordinary Woman's Extraordinary Faith. The book is in the church library.

-Clare Brotherton gave a report on the May Breakfast plans.

-There was a report on the UMW worship service February 9. There were good comments.

-Obtaining babysitters for the Sunday morning worship services was again discussed and will be pursued as the need arises.

-A calling committee for regular meetings will be organized. Gloria Pharis will be in charge.

-The bathroom remodeling project and plan were discussed. Suggestions to be brought to the special committee meeting were made.

-Five more baby mission cards will be ordered. The card sales prices will be slightly increased.

-The Ingathering committee has made plans to receive items for the health kits now.

-Lunch was served by Gert Ruden & Gloria Pharis

### Announcements:

March 5 - Ash Wednesday

March 19 - UMW

April 5 - Focus Day

April 18 - Good Friday

April 20 - Easter Sunday

## UMW

Wednesday, March 19

Executive meeting - 1:00 pm

UMW meeting - 2:00 pm

### Program

"Mexico's Garment Industry Workers;  
Jesus' Sisters"

Leader - Anita Lowary

Hostesses - Sharon Wheeting/Mary Swisher

## Health Kits

Donations for health kits will begin. Each kit includes: 1 hand towel, 1 washcloth, 1 comb, 1 nail file, 1 bar of soap, 1 toothbrush, 1 tube of toothpaste, and 6 adhesive band aids. These kits will be prepared for the Ingathering later this fall. Containers and display in the back of the sanctuary. *"Little things mean a lot."*

## GROTON APRIL WORKGROUP

JoAnn & Richard Krueger - 397-8597

Michelle & Chuck Padfield - 397-8108

Herron Smith - 298-5614

Arlene Boehmer

Darlys Kampa

Jean Lowary \*\*

Adeline & Gene Cassels \*

Ruby & Eugene Luce \*\*

Marie McClintic & Larry Schnaidt

Vicki & William Podoll, Chris & Jennifer

Crystal & Doug Sippel

Deb & Todd Thurston

Joyce & Al Walter & Holly

### Honorary Members:

Earl Lowary

Emery Sippel

Rodney Boehmer

DeLoris Knoll \*\*

Twila Ruden \*

Doris Strom \*

Ruby Fuller

Lorraine Bartz

Extra responsibilities for April: Clean adult Sunday school room.

# LIFE IN THE DAKOTAS - WHAT IS REALITY?

By Bishop Michael Coyner

I have to admit it; I have not watched any of the so-called "reality shows" on TV. There seem to be so many of them: "Survivor" and its many successors, "The Bachelor" and now "The Bachelorette," and of course "Joe Millionaire" in which a man lies about being a millionaire in order to choose among a group of women who are attracted to him (or his money?). There is also so-called "reality TV" in the form of the "COPS" show, many different court-tv shows, and a whole variety of other shows which are videotapes of "real life" events.

It all leads me to wonder, "*What is reality?*" If this stuff is real life, then what about the life that you and I are living? And why are so many people attracted to watching this kind of "reality" on TV, rather than living their own, real lives?

Maybe the problem is that we have seen too much reality in the last 20 years: from the destruction of two space shuttles, to the images of starving children around the world, to war and the videos of "smart bombs" (that is just about as strange a term as "reality TV") blowing up buildings and people, to the computer-generated images which we know are not real but which look so real to us, and even to public figures telling us that what we think is "real" is not really real. We are surrounded by what the novel 1984 called "doublespeak" and such misuse of language leaves us wondering what is real, what is true, and what is believable? And most certainly the events of 9/11/2001 were played and replayed on our TV's and in our minds so many times that we even wondered, "Is this real?" Or at least we wondered, "How can this be happening in America?"

It is a tough time to know what is "*reality*" and what is to be believed or not believed. So, I ask again, "*What is reality?*"

There is a very real sense in which "reality" is what you and I believe it is. *The old saying, "I won't believe it until I see it,"* has been turned around in our culture, until now it is more true to say, "*I won't see it, until I believe it.*" Let me give you some examples. Are we "rich" or are we "poor" in America? If you listen to nightly stories of the Wall Street and the Stock Market going down, you could well believe that we are poor and our economy is in trouble. But what if you read the statistic which says that since 1960 the total assets of the people in the United States of America (adjusted for inflation) have tripled? Which is "reality" to you? And what if you compare the situation of our people to just about anywhere else on earth -- are we "rich" or are we "poor"? What is reality?

Or, how about our culture and its morality and its spirituality? If you watch much TV and listen to many reports, you will believe that the morales of our US citizens are going downhill fast. But other reports indicate: the number of abortions has dropped dramatically in recent years, the number of divorces/marriages is on the decline, and all levels of crime are on the decrease in the US. So which is "real"?

Or, how about here in the Dakotas Conference. Is there a terrible drought affecting our ranching and farm economy? If you live in the western half of South Dakota or the southwestern part of North Dakota, your answer is "Yes!" -- and that is why we are engaged in "Hands Across South Dakota" and in the "Rural Response Coalition" in North Dakota to help those suffering the drought. But I have also had farmers in the eastern parts of South Dakota and North Dakota tell me about record crops last year with just the right amount of rain. Which is "real" for you?

Or, how about your local congregation? What is "reality" for you? Are you just a dying, barely-hanging-on group of desperate people? Or are you a lively fellowship of worship, education, fellowship, and mission? Does your church have a future, or just a past? What is "real" for you? It is so obvious in my office as I look at statistics and reports, that "reality" for a local congregation has much more to do with attitude and vision and faith, than it has to do with demographics and economics. Local congregations tend to make their own reality, which is why two churches in the same dire economic and demographic straits will react totally differently: one will **thrive** (share, rejoice, invite, educate, and dream), while the other just tries to **survive** (worry, fret, argue, blame, avoid, and cut).

Or, how about our United Methodist Church? Are we a stagnant and declining denomination which keeps losing members to other denominations? Some might say that is our reality, but the statistics show that every year we gain more members from other denominations than we lose by transfer out to those denominations. And in many places in the US and especially in places like Africa, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, our United Methodist Church is growing

in dramatic fashion. Moreover, the Christian faith gained more adherents in the 20th century than in all of the previous 19 centuries combined! But what is "reality" for you? It is probably what you see and believe about your local church.

And finally, what do you believe is "reality" about God? Is God at work in our lives and in our world? Or is all this stuff about "miracles" and the "God of history" just a past-tense reality?

The answer to most of these questions about "reality" is this: what you **believe** will greatly impact what you see and hear and experience as "real."

To a very large degree, we create our own reality.

Just this week I went to the dentist for a check-up and cleaning. I was treated by a new (to me) dental hygienist who asked me the "What do you do?" question, and when she learned I am a minister, she proceeded to tell me all about her battle with spinal cancer the past two years. Her words were incredibly revealing about her own "reality" when she said, "I never would have wanted this, and I was certainly scared when I heard the word 'cancer' from my doctor, but I can honestly say that this has been a great learning experience for me. I have grown so much in my faith. Of course it helps that my prayers have been answered and my cancer is gone, but even if not, I think I would be grateful for what I have learned about myself, about my true friends, and about God's love." Wow! What a "reality" she is choosing to live! That is better than any "reality TV" show I could watch.

How about you? What is "reality" for you? Do you choose to live in the reality of God? Or do you choose to live in some other reality?

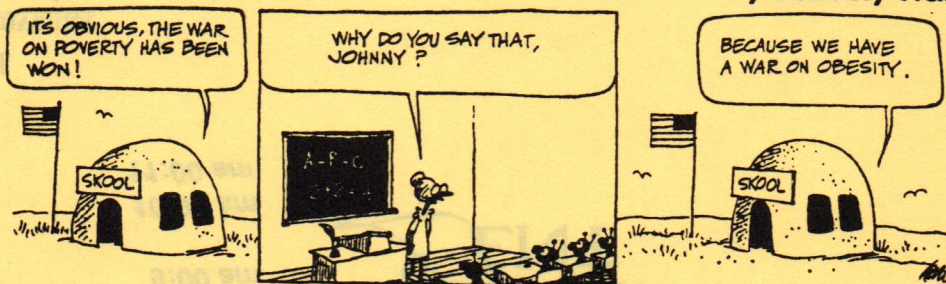
May these words from Isaiah remind us of our true reality:

*"Do you now know? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is God who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; it is God who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to live in; who brings princes to naught, and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.*

*"Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. The Lord does not grow faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." (Isaiah 40:21-23, 28-31)*

**So be it. Live in that reality. Amen.**

**B.C.**



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**CAPTIVE FREE**

**Contemporary Christian Band Concert**

brings a message of hope thru music, drama, puppetry, interaction

Wednesday, March 5 at St John's Lutheran Church

7:00 pm – Youth only

7:30 pm open to Public

## Groton UMC Mission Statement

*The Groton United Methodist Church is a body of believers seeking to strengthen and build a church family that provides all individuals with the opportunity to grow in their faith and lead an enriched spiritual life in Jesus Christ through worship, study, fellowship, working together and reaching out to others.*

## Groton Administrative Council

The following items were on the Feb. 12<sup>th</sup> agenda: In reports from committees it is noted that:

Vacation Bible School will be held at the Groton Methodist Church, in conjunction with the St. Elizabeth Seaton Catholic parish; a copyright license authorizing use of a wider variety of music has been received; a wall crack in the pastor's office has been repaired and the area repainted; the UMYF is considering doing an Easter Sunrise Service; the annual audit of all church accounts has been completed and all accounts are in excellent order.

A proposed schematic and cost analysis for remodeling the bathrooms to make them handicapped accessible was presented and referred to the Finance Committee for their consideration. The Trustees and ad hoc Bathroom Remodeling Committee have been working on the project since May 2002.

Rev. Piehl announced there will be Ash Wednesday services on March 5<sup>th</sup>. He will lead a Lenten Bible study on the apostles during Lent.

Net proceeds from the Men's Dinner are \$1,278.13. Use of the funds are undesignated at this time.

A Goodwill Industries semi-trailer to receive city-wide donations will be placed on the church parking lot during the first week of May. Further details will be arranged with a representative who will be in Groton in March.

Adjustment of the shared expenses between Conde and Groton is being discussed. The formula as directed by the Conference is based on membership numbers.

A person to do the major snow removal from church sidewalks was hired. The Work Committees are responsible to clean doorways prior to services.

A newer model used photocopier was donated to the church by Gellhaus Assoc. The replaced machine will be located in the Sunday School Supt.'s office.

Administrative Council Special Meeting, Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>.

The Finance Committee having met February 16<sup>th</sup> and endorsed the schematic and cost analysis as presented, the remodeling of the bathrooms to make them handicapped accessible was approved and referred to the Trustees for implementation.



from *The Joyful Noiseletter*

## Volunteers for March

**Ushers** - Cliff & Carna Pray

**Greeters** - Mary Swisher & Mary Hayenga

**Acolytes** -

Mar 2 - Sydney & Evan Erickson

Mar 9 - Mitchell Madsen/ Tanner Johnson

Mar 16 - Cody & Dylan Hanson

Mar 23 - Bianca Sperry & Alexa Nilsson

Mar 30 - Kaitlyn Hawkins/ TaylorSchmidt



## Special Giving Sundays

The second of six special giving Sundays is coming up at the end of March. On March 30, during "One Great Hour of Sharing" you will have the opportunity to help the National Council of Churches relief agency. The purpose – to think of lent as a season of repentance, self examination, and awareness of the hurts of the peoples of the world. One Great Hour of Sharing calls the Church to share the goodness of life with those that hurt.

## Special Meeting

There will be a meeting at Aberdeen First United Methodist Church on March 23 from 2:00- 5:00 pm to help our pastors and laity discuss the issue of homosexuality in a spirit of Christian dialog. This will not be a debate on the issue of homosexuality but rather a dialog on ministry and understanding. If you are able to attend contact Betty Jensen at 382-5939.



from *The Joyful Noiseletter*

## Conde UMC Mission Statement

*The Conde United Methodist Church is a body of believers seeking to worship God; to proclaim the salvation of Christ the Lord; to increase the knowledge of the teachings of the Bible to all ages of people; to satisfy the spiritual and physical needs of all; and to instill in the people a sense of concern and obligation to the church, the community, and the world, through our church build on God the Rock.*

## Conde Administrative Board

The Conde Administrative Board met on Sunday, February 16, following Worship.

### Old Business:

-- On authority of the District Superintendent, the PPR Committee approved a plan, whereby, in 2004, the percentage split between the two churches will be Groton - 75%, Conde - 25%. This formula will be in effect for 2004 and 2005, and after that, membership will be assessed every year. This new division will amount to a 4% decrease in the Conde budget for dollars paid into the Parish Fund.

–A furnace check resulted in the need for a new boiler. This will cost about \$10,000. Bids will be acquired from Bullocks, NWPS and McGannon Plumbing & Heating.

### New Business:

–Best Business Products will no longer issue a contract for the existing parish copy machine. Lon Gellhaus offered to give the parish a copy machine that his law office is no longer using and on which a repair contract can be issued. The offer was accepted.

–State Farm Insurance issued a premium refund in the amount of \$284.

–The present church fire extinguisher is obsolete and can't be refilled. A motion passed for Darrel to purchase a new one.

–The Conference would like to have the Health Kits complete by Annual Conference rather than the Ingathering. Members are urged to bring items or contribute money for this project as soon as possible.

### Calendar

March 5 - 8:00 am – Ash Wednesday Service/  
Prayer Vigil

March 9 - 12:00 pm – 1st of a 6-week Lenten Study

March 23 - 2:00 pm – Homosexuality Discussion  
meeting at First UMC/Aberdeen

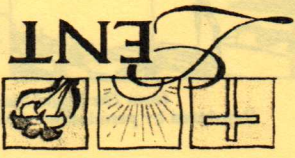
April 18 - 7:30 pm – Good Friday Services

**March 2003**

<b>Sun Mar 2</b>	<b>Communion</b> 12:00 pm 7:00 pm	(C) (G)	Lenten study UMYF
<b>Wed Mar 5</b>	8:00 am 5:30 pm 7:00 pm 7:30 pm	(C) (G) (G) (C)	Ash Wednesday Worship Confirmation Ash Wednesday Worship Lenten study
<b>Fri Mar 7</b>	<b>World Day of Prayer</b>		
<b>Sun Mar 9</b>	11:00 am 12:00 pm	(G) (C)	Potluck dinner Potluck dinner/Lenten study follows
<b>Wed Mar 12</b>	5:00 pm 7:00 pm 7:30 pm	(C) (G) (G)	Confirmation Lenten study (time change) Ad Council
<b>Sun Mar 16</b>	12:00 pm 7:00 pm	(C) (G)	Lenten study UMYF
<b>Wed Mar 19</b>	11:00 am 1:00 pm 2:00 pm 5:30 pm 7:30 pm 8:00 pm	(C) (G) (G) (G) (G) (C)	UMW UMW Executive UMW Confirmation Lenten study Administrative Board
<b>Sun Mar 23</b>	11:00 am 12:00 pm 2:00 pm	(C) (C) (Abdn)	<b>World Hunger Offering</b> Lenten study Homosexuality meeting
<b>Wed Mar 26</b>	5:30 pm 7:30 pm	(G) (G)	Confirmation Lenten study
<b>Sun Mar 30</b>	<b>One Great Hour of Sharing</b> 12:00 pm (C) Lenten Study		

Pastor: Grant Piehl  
 email: [grotommc@nvc.net](mailto:grotommc@nvc.net)  
 home page: <http://members.nvc.net/grotommc>  
 Office, Groton 605 397-8270  
 Home 397-4538  
 Kitchen, Groton 397-2670  
 Andover Church 298-5265  
 Conde Church 382-5261

**March 2003 SUNDAY WORSHIP**  
 Groton 9:00 am  
 Sunday School 10:00 am  
 Conde 11:00 am



United Methodist Church  
 Groton - Conde - Andover Parish  
 906 North First Street  
 Groton, SD 57445-2192  
 ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED  
 March 2003 SUNDAY WORSHIP  
 Groton 9:00 am  
 Sunday School 10:00 am  
 Conde 11:00 am  
 NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
 US POSTAGE PAID  
 GROTON, SD 57445-2192  
 PERMIT #31  
 CAPTIVE FREE