



UMC Newsletter

GROTON—CONDE

AUGUST 2003



Pastor Piehl's Message

There is an interesting question floating around in some Christian circles these days, which is, "What would Jesus Drive?" It has value if it makes us think about how we should live out our Christian experiences in the everyday things of life. Eco-Christians ask, "Should Christians get behind the wheel of a gas-guzzling sport utility vehicle?" Don't worry this is not a sneaky ad for any make or model of car. The eco-Christians argue Jesus would never have driven an SUV because car pollution causes illness and death, and it has a particularly devastating effect on the elderly, the poor the sick and the young. Gas-guzzlers they point out, contribute to global warming, which can cause drought, flood, hunger, homelessness, poverty, illiteracy, disease, loneliness, divorce, freckles, the heartbreak of psoriasis, ADHD, earthquakes, cancer, strokes, heart disease, seasonal affective disorder, and most anything else you can think of.

Choosing a car is an important moral choice, these Christian activists say. "Of all the choices we make as consumers," claims the Evangelical Environmental Network, the cars we drive have the biggest impact on all of God's Creation.

A Hummer H2 Adventure Series SUV one author suggests. This smaller, commercial version of the military humvee is built for high-mobility off road use, enabling its occupants to go just about anywhere, including over rocks, fallen logs, hills, deserts, and streams. With a gargantuan 6-liter V-8 engine, you've got the kind of power you need to haul trailers, haul people, and haul cargo anywhere.

Seriously this author claims in Mark 6 as Jesus returns to his home town, the unbelief is totally astounding, to the point He can do no miracles except heal a few

sick persons. In fact they want to run Jesus out of town. The H2 might have been helpful. "What would Jesus drive?" Part of the answer seems to be something tough.

Warren Brown thinks of the Hummer H2 as a missionary vehicle, able to haul loads of food, supplies, and people to remote places of the globe. "What would Jesus drive?" a vehicle that can help people to do God's work even in the most remote corner of the world."

That leads to another question, "Are we willing to go where our SUV is designed to go?"

More than 90% of off road vehicles have never been off road. Many owners would have to check the owner's manual to get them into four wheel drive.

After we drop big bucks on an SUV we use it to drive to the coffee shop or shopping center on a fair weather day. We don't use them to haul the food, medical supplies, water, building supplies to people in urgent need.

The same sort of distortion goes on in our practice of the Christian faith every day.

We possess wide-ranging skills and knowledge, but we use them to help ourselves more than to assist people around us. We own beautiful homes, but we concentrate more on our personal comfort than on the practice of hospitality. We are given free time on evenings and weekends, but we focus more on shopping and on self-improvement than on performing acts of service. We have enormous wealth and material resources - more than any other nation on earth - but we feel greater passion about stocking up on things for ourselves than about sharing our abundance with others.

This is not to say than any of these

things are bad, just as a sport utility is not inherently evil. The problem is that we so often distort or misuse what we've been given.

A Hummer H2 can certainly be holy.... But not while it is idling in the parking lot of the convenience store. The real question may be "how would Jesus use his vehicle." The answer would be, to further the kingdom of God, and to help others.

It could mean counseling homeless people at a city shelter, teaching English as a second language to recent immigrants of giving a week of vacation to chaperone a youth group on a mission trip or summer camp. Or acting as a foster parent to a troubled child in our community or volunteering to use your talents to teach a tough age group in church school or tutor a discouraged and failing public school student

It means standing up for what you believe as a disciple of Jesus Christ. It has never been easy to leave the comfortable road of conventional wisdom and to face the rocks and logs and other barriers that society throws in our way. Jesus offended his neighbors when he spoke with wisdom and power.

"It seems to me," says Brown, "that Jesus was all about peace, love and forgiveness, and about beating swords into plowshares." He would have loved the idea of taking a military humvee and turning it into a peaceful vehicle that could bring food and medical supplies to poor and hungry people.

How would Jesus use his vehicle? As he used everything else in life, to heal the sick, feed the hungry, cast out demons, and spread the gospel.

How do we use what we have?

Peace, Pastor Grant.

[Next Page...](#)

Groton Administrative Council



The following items were on the agenda at the July 9th meeting:

--The Education Committee has set a meeting to arrange the curriculum and order supplies for the coming Sunday School year.

--Four members from the Andover church will attend here. They will be recognized at a Sunday service in the near future.

--The UMW July meeting is to be a Tea Party on Wheels, where visits are arranged with elder UMW members in their homes.

--A "Comments Please" box will be placed in the foyer, to give members an opportunity to make suggestions for changes they believe might be helpful in the activities of the church. Lay Leader Carna Atherton-Pray will monitor the input and respond as appropriate.

--Since people are not signing up voluntarily to be ushers or greeters

on Sunday mornings, consideration will be given to making these duties a function handled by the monthly work committees.

--The Trustees obtained an estimate from Roy Olson to repair the sewer line from outside the church to the street. The line was found to be in very poor condition while the bathroom remodeling project was being done. The decision was made to have the work done before winter to avoid a possible major catastrophe.

--The Finance Committee reported a continuing shortfall in Offerings, and listed the remaining balance on the bathroom remodeling project at \$3,240.98.

--Four hundred persons were served at The Banquet on June 3rd. The total cost of the meal served (\$449) was donated through the Groton and Conde churches. The date to serve in 2004 is June 9th.

Bathroom Remodeling Project

The final payment is needed for the Groton bathroom remodeling project. Now that we are using the new room, handicapped stools, and baby changing station, it is time that show our appreciation for all the work involved. Even if you haven't used them yet, please know that those who have used them have really appreciated their convenience. We are so thankful to have found the collapsing sewer pipe before sewage backed up inside. We still have a section of the outside pipe which is collapsing to replace

during this next month. An additional \$4,000.00 is still needed to cover the costs for all this work. For those who have pledged donations, now is the time to get those checks in to Anita. For those who have not contributed yet, please join in this worthwhile project. For those who have already contributed, thank you and please feel free to send in additional funds. Thanks for your support.

Groton Finance Committee



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.

September Work Committee

Chairpersons:

Carol & Luverne Strom
Sue & Bob Kubal
Carla & Tim Geffre & Lucius

Honorary Members:

Barbara & Robert Wagner
Irene Breitrkruetz

Extra Responsibilities:

Clean meeting room by chapel and the chapel

Committee Members:

Don Bartz
Scott Craig
Caralee & Gary Heitmann
Linda & Jay Johnson
Charlotte & Art Lang
Brenda & Tony Madsen
Diane Nissen
Gloria & Harry Pharis
Marjae & Dan Schinkel
Francine & Mark Sippel
Autumn Sperry
Ward Sperry
Haida Boyd
Jean & Vern Walter
Kim & Craig Weber
Sharon & Larry Wheeting
Karla Pasteur & Jessica

Go With God by Bishop Mike



(Luke 24:44-53)

Today is a day of mixed emotions – remembering/ joy for past/ sadness for end/ hope for future

Pastor Grant Piehl's letter to me:

"We intend for this to be a day of celebration of all that the church has accomplished for God's Kingdom, a time of remembering and also a time of looking forward"

And then he added in his letter: "This church closes, but the Kingdom of God is still open."

Scripture today is appropriate – speaks so well to today's mixed emotions

In Luke 24 the disciples are saying "good-bye" to Jesus – must have been a mixture of emotions:

Rejoicing, remembering, gratitude, sadness, sense of loss, a bit of fear for the future

Let's listen and learn from the scripture and from the experience of those early disciples:

(1) Gathering – congregate - huddle (but the huddle is not the game) – church is not ministry, it is the place we get prepared for ministry

(2) Remembering – the disciples gather to remember, and Jesus remembers with them

Oklahoma City memorial to the 1995 bombing – { description of memorial }

The thought occurred to me: "Through memory the past is always present"

(3) Understanding – in the Gospels, the disciples usually didn't get it. We have it "explained to us" – sermons/Bible study/SS/ UMW circle

(4) Going – to be witnesses – share with others – be the church as we leave and go other places when I received the worship bulletin for today, I was impressed with the list of where your members are going

(5) Going with the Lord – going with power - we don't go

alone – Spirit comes to empower us Jesus is still at our side-----

-----That Scripture story reminds us how the church – at its best – is supposed to work.

*We Gather,
We Remember,
We start to Understand,
Then we Go, not alone, we go with the Lord, to be witnesses*

Today is the hard part of that "going" – we are closing this "huddle", this church, and going forth to be witnesses, going with the Lord.

It was hard for those disciples, to say good-bye to Jesus, to him go, and then to go themselves.

So, how were they able to go forth "rejoicing" and "blessing God" every day?

The Spirit came (that's the next story in Luke/Acts, the story of Pentecost), and so they were able to go with power, to go with the Lord.----- We are also blessed today with the Old Testament reading. Psalm 23 reminds us, too, that we never go alone, we go with God. And we dwell in the house of the Lord (not the church) forever. I have re-written

Psalm 23 (my own words, not a real scholarly translation) to remind us that we go with the Lord – past and present and future:

"The Lord has been my shepherd, and I have not wanted for anything.

That is why I can trust that the Lord will be my shepherd in the future.

The Lord has provided green pastures, and still waters, and restoration for my soul.

The Lord has led me in right paths, pathways named after God's goodness, love, and mercy.

And so I can know that God will continue to provide, and God will continue to guide my life.

I can remember dark valleys

in the past, times when I was virtually surrounded by enemies and by threatening circumstances. But God was with me during those dark valleys, and even my worst fears did not overcome me, because I learned that God was there at my side.

If that has been true in the past, why should I fear any dark valleys in the future?

Looking back on my past years, I realize now that the Lord has provided for all of my needs: food to eat even during tough times, healing balm for my hurts, and so many blessings that my life has truly overflowed.

Remembering this, how can I ever doubt that God will continue to provide for me?

God's goodness and mercy have followed me ever step of the way, even when I did not notice.

But now, remembering and reflecting upon those years, I see a pathway of God's presence.

And so I move into the future with confidence that God's presence will never leave me,

And I will always be at home with God, wherever I go, however long I live, forever and ever."

So, we can go in faith, we can go remembering, and we can go with God.

Say that to one another, "Go with God."



NOTES FROM
BISHOP MIKE'S
SERMON HE GAVE
AT ANDOVER'S
FINAL
WORSHIP
SERVICE

Health Kits

“Those Methodist Kits” make appearance at latest Black Hills Fire Fire fighters at the Red Point Fire on the South Dakota/Wyoming border received a delivery Thursday of United Methodist Health Kits from Steve Foss, pastor at Trinity UMC, Lead-Deadwood. Health kits are popular among fire fighters who need access to quick cool-down and clean-up supplies. They became so popular during last year’s fire season that they were asked for by the church name.



Sewing Kits

-] 3 full yards of cotton or cotton blend fabric
-] 1 pair of sewing scissors
-] 1 package of needles
-] 1 spool of thread
-] 6 matching buttons

Thank You

We thank you so much for the beautiful appreciation gift and the wonderful cake honoring us for the appointment to be with you another year here in Groton.

We have enjoyed the past year with you and look forward to another year!

Thank you for being so thoughtful, caring, friendly with us. We love each of you very much. We look forward to the year ahead!

Love ‘n’ Prayers,
Rev Grant & Eileen

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.

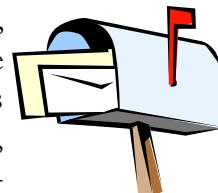
INGATHERING
SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 27

CHRISTIAN
SYMPATHIES TO THE
FAMILIES OF
GLADYS DODGE
AND
JUNE KNOLL



Lay Leader’s Letter Box

Carna Atherton-Pray, Lay Leader, will be setting up a Letter Box at the back of the Groton Sanctuary. This box is for all members to place ideas, suggestions, or complaints to be addressed. If you would like an answer to your letter, then please include your name and Carna will get back to you. Worship ideas are wanted. A Letter Box form will also be set up on the website for those of you who wish to use a computer.



Hunger Conference

Senator George McGovern will be the featured speaker at a Hunger Conference, Dakota Wesleyan University on November 6, 2003. Registration is between 8-9 a.m. World Hunger will be discussed and explored. Agriculture Secretary Ann Venneman has also been invited. Watch for further developments and details on the DWU website.

Abeln Family Benefit

August 10, 2003 at the Groton Community Center with a Pancake Brunch from 10a.m.-1p.m. Bake Sale & Fresh Garden Produce from 10a.m.-1p.m. Silent Auction. Auction starting at 1 p.m. Lunch served at the Auction. To donate items call Steve Simon at 397-8507 or Topper at 397-8273 or 380-5131. Sponsored by Friends of Abelns with Supplemental Funds from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

UMW Meeting

Next meeting will be August 20th with Betty Jensen leading the lesson at 2:00 p.m. and Betty Taylor will be hostess. "Deeds of Faith" will be the lesson led by Betty Jensen. Be sure to bring your book reports to this meeting. Marjorie Wright will also have another quiz, so prepare!



Tea Party on Wheels

Instead of the regular meeting on July 16th, members hosted a Tea Party on Wheels event. Several teams went to visit UMW members who are no longer able to attend meetings. An appointment was made ahead of time requesting the visit.

Each group took the necessary coffee or tea, cookies, and all necessary tableware to set up a “tea party” at the member’s home. All reported having a wonderful visit with old friends we don’t get to see often enough. Upon return, it was the consensus that this is

an event that should be repeated, perhaps more often than annually.

At the Executive Committee meeting prior to departing, plans were discussed for the Fall Bazaar to be held in October. Gloria Pharis and Jolene Townsend are co-chairpersons.

The next regular meeting will be September 17th.



**NO AUGUST
UMW MEETING
AT
GROTON**

KARTOON KNUGGETS

By Troy Knechtel



Upcoming Events

- J Groton Administrative Board meets August 13th
- J Groton UMW NO Meeting
- J Conde UMW, August 20th
- J Pastor Parish meets Weds, August 6th in Groton
- J August 10th, Abeln Benefit

WELCOME

NEW GROTON
MEMBERS
CLARENCE & I DA
HANNON
AND
IVAN & CAROLYN
MOREHOUSE

CONGRATULATIONS
TO
JOSH ATHERTON
&
MERRIE McNICKLE
WHO WERE UNITED
IN MARRIAGE
JULY 18TH