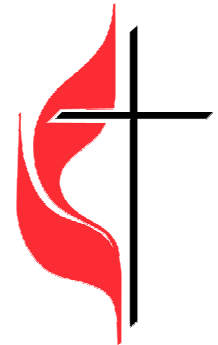


United Methodist Messenger



Giving Thanks?

Most November newsletters received in my office contain a message of “thanks.” After all, November is the month of Thanksgiving. Organizations, including many churches, conduct special offerings, food drives, and charitable events to demonstrate thankfulness. I was even involved in a food drive organized by the Fellowship of Christian Athletes in Anchorage, Alaska last week. The involvement and organization of the young people inspired me to go “shopping” for food being collected at various grocery stores around Anchorage. We collected food, laughed, and were inspired by generous donations.

The last part of October and the first part of November around the town I live were not times of laughter and inspiration. It was a time of frustration, tiredness and a general sense of hopelessness. It was time for harvest, specifically corn harvest, and with the abundance of rain in the late Fall, the water in the fields left combines, trucks and tractors impossible to get the work done. Thankfully, the Groton High School Football team made it to the South Dakota State Finals at the Dakotadome in early November so we were able to celebrate a great season and give thanks for a great bunch of student-athletes.

But driving back toward Groton on that Friday evening reminded me of the work left to be done. How do you give thanks when things do not run on schedule? How do you give thanks when the plans you have do not match up with the

reality you face?

Through the graciousness of a friend, I flew stand-by back and forth from Anchorage last week on a “guest pass.” I had never flown “stand-by” before. It is a process by which a traveler “checks-in” for a flight but only receives a seat on the plane if there is one available. At a certain point in the boarding process, the airline agent calls off names of people on the “standby list” in the order in which they “checked-in.” It was nerve-wracking to stand around with a group of my fellow travelers waiting for our names to be called. Would we be the next to be “chosen” or the ones to be “left behind?” Thankfully, my friend who arranged the guest pass for me could find flights that were almost always half empty so I had no problem with my travels. On the other hand, I still had to go through the “standby process” which is scary enough whether you know you have a seat or not. I recall looking out the window of the Seattle airport to see the Marriott Hotel at 10:30 pm at night and telling myself, “At least I know there is a hotel nearby I can stay for the night and try the next flight the next morning.” And then I heard the voice saying, “Robert Moorlach, please come to the podium.” It was the voice of an angel! More precisely, it was the voice of my friend saying, “Hey stupid, didn’t you know I would take care of you.”

I just read in the newspaper this morning that due to freezing conditions

over the past week, farmers are finishing up with corn harvest in the area. Driving by the large grain elevators the day after Thanksgiving I saw at least 15 grain trucks ready to unload. Things are back on schedule. I arrived home after a wonderful and relaxing visit with my friends in Anchorage to find the church in Groton beautifully decorated for Advent. I even found my in-box of things I needed to get done mercifully low. Truly, it is a time to give thanks! Or is it? What about the people “left behind?” One of the lasting memories for me this Thanksgiving season is of the lady dropping a can of corn in the shopping cart at the food drive and realizing she may be one of those whose plans never matched up with the reality she faces. How do I give thanks at that moment? How do you?

Pastor Rob

Christmas Eve Service

Groton 5 PM

Conde 7 PM



Please send us your email address to save postage on mailing newsletters in the new year! If the office does not have your email address, please contact us at grotonumc@hvc.net



*Sympathies to the family
of Florrann Norris who
passed away on
November 12th and
Jeanette Blader Reid who
passed away on
November 25th*

Thank You

A BIG Thank you to those who helped with, donate to and come to support the mens dinner. It was a great success. With all the help and support it was an easy project to chair. Thanks again,
Alan and Jolene Townsend
Brad and Diann Morehouse



Dec 14 & 21st at 6:30 pm Pastor Rob will be conducting an Advent Study. Please let the office know if you will be attending or need a ride to the church to attend.

Groton Angel Tree

The Outreach Committee has chosen a Christmas project. We are sponsoring an ANGEL TREE. The Sunday School students will be making the angels for the tree. The purpose of the ANGEL TREE is to provide Christmas gifts for children in our community who are in need of our assistance. The Outreach Committee will gather the names and will keep the names confidential. Each angel will contain the age and sex of the child, one item the child needs

and one item from the child's wish list for Christmas presents. The gifts will be gathered at the church and will be distributed to the children's parent/parents ready to be given at Christmas. The gifts will be due to the church no later than December 21st. The gifts will be delivered to the parents on the 21st. Church members are encouraged to go together to purchase gifts for the children.



Bethlehem PD

Conde United Methodist Church is sponsoring a Dinner Theater, December 13 and 14. The play, a Christmas spoof, begins at 6:00 PM with dinner followed by the play in the Sanctuary. Entire cost for the evening is \$12.50, with advance reservations by calling Donna Hearnen at 382-5264 as soon as possible.

Sergeant Joe Thursday is a cop who just “wants the facts, ma’am”. He is good hearted, but wants to get to the bottom of the case. His side-kick, Officer Frank Cannon, finds humor in all things. In addition, there is the man with the whip and the attitude, who is definitely a hot head. No Christmas program would be complete without shepherds, wise men, the industrious inn keeper and his wife, and the Three Kings looking for the Mes-

siah. Most importantly, Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus appear in the play.

This play is a comic look at how some people, even with an attitude, can rise to discover the actual joy of Christmas. The famous “Dragnet” theme is also prevalent.

“Bethlehem P.D.” is written by Daniel Wray; published by Meriwether Publishing Company; used by the courtesy of Contemporary Drama Service, Colorado Springs, Co.

Come to the Conde United Methodist Church, December 13 or 14, to enjoy the dinner theater. Time, 6:00 PM in the fellowship hall, cost for the entire evening is \$12.50. Please remember to call ahead for reservations.

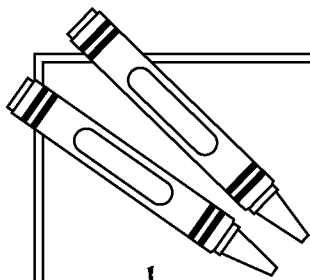


Conde Collecting Layette Kit

6-9 month sizes are preferred. Needed: 6 cloth diapers, 2 shirts or 2 one-piece body suits, 2 baby washcloths, 2 gowns or sleepers, 2 diaper pins, 1 sweater open in the front, and 2 receiving blankets.



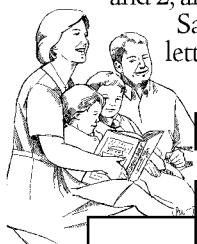
Conde MISSION STATEMENT
“The Conde United Methodist Church is seeking to satisfy the spiritual and physical needs of all.”



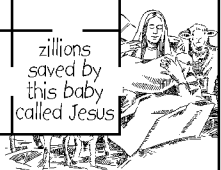
Just for **KIDS**

The Story of Jesus' Birth

Jesus' birth is recorded in three New Testament chapters: Matthew 1 and 2, and Luke 2. Follow some important words about our Savior's birth by starting at a word beginning with the letter **A** and finishing with a word starting with the letter **Z**.



angels	Bethlehem	car	dance	easel	
cat	bear	child	donkey	egg	fast
holy	glory	flocks	Earth	feathers	gap
inn	jacket	grapes	peace	quiet	hat
Joseph	King	Lord	only	righteous	shepherds
kelp	loop	Mary	night	unique	tidings
last	maze	paper	wise men	virgin	water
open	nest	word	excitement	young	zillions saved by this baby called Jesus



Answer: angels, Bethlehem, child, donkey, Earth, feathers, gap, inn, jacket, grapes, peace, quiet, hat, Joseph, King, Lord, only, righteous, shepherds, kelp, loop, Mary, night, unique, tidings, last, maze, paper, wise men, virgin, water, open, nest, word, excitement, young, zillions saved by this baby called Jesus



Groton

DECEMBER:

7th SS

14th SS

21st SS Christmas Program

28th No SS

JANUARY:

4th No SS



Sunday School time line: 10:15-10:30 am is music in the chapel. 10:45-11:15 am is lesson in the classroom. 11:15 am the children will go into church as a group for the children's sermon and then they will sit down for church. If your child will not be going to church that Sunday, Please let their teacher know and have them picked up by 11:10 am.

Groton UMYF will be having a Christmas party at Pastor Rob's house on December 17 at 7:00 pm, bring a \$5 or less gift to pass.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

Groton UMW Christmas Brunch

UMW "Giving Our Hearts" Christmas Brunch will be held December 10th, Wednesday at 10:00 am at Latte Cafe, downtown Groton. Please call Gloria or Clare for reservations. We hope you can all join us for fellowship, egg bake, fruit, carmel rolls and coffee.

We will then return to the church to fill decorated containers with Christmas goodies/cookies or candy and deliver

Groton UMW

The United Methodist Women met Nov 19, at 2:00. The Advent program was presented by the officers, Clare Brotherton, Twila Ruden, Jolene Townsend, & Gloria Pharis.

Pres. Jolene T. opened the business meeting. The Purpose was recited by the group. The minutes of the last meeting were read & approved. A thank you was read from the school for donations of money we gave them for the homecoming activities at the football field, held after the parade for the elementary students and from Bev Sombke for our serving the lunch at the Blader Auction Sale.

Treasurer Clare B. gave the financial report. We went over the Secret Angel program. We added some new names and replaced some new angels. Reports were given by our committees.

Twila presented a calendar to be sent around during lunch for the members to sign up to be hostesses or be program leaders.

Pat Dahlquist reported that a suggestion to help with at the school is with the Reading Literacy Program.

Clare presented the proposed budget for 2009. Mary S. moved we accept it!

them to "Special Friends". Please bring your goodies in snack/sandwich bags or wrapped individually for each container to the church kitchen that morning. (30-36 containers were filled last year) If you know of a "special friend" who would enjoy this holiday treat, please let Pastor Rob know the name/names.

Audrey T. 2nd the motion. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Carolyn S. to accept the slate of officers for 2009, presented by the nominating committee. Marlys R. 2nd it, motion passed, the new officers will be the same as last year. Pres. Jolene Townsend, V. Pres. Twila Ruden, Sec. Gloria Pharis, Treas. Clare Brotherton.

Mission projects we will be donating to was moved by Carolyn S. 2nd by Audrey T. Motion passed. To the Elementary School for clothing and the Reading Literacy Program, the Groton Rescue Squad, the Groton Swimming Pool, the Groton Youth Center, the Salvation Army, the Groton City Transit, Safe Harbor, and the Aberdeen Humane Society.

It was moved and seconded to give Pastor Rob a monetary gift for Christmas.

A delicious lunch was served by JoAnn Krueger and Carolee Heitmann.

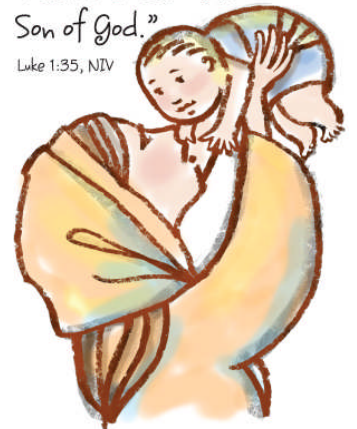
The next meeting will be a brunch at the Latte on Dec 10th at 10 am. We will then deliver our Christmas goodies to our special friends.

Gloria Pharis, Secretary



"The holy one to be born
will be called the
Son of God."

Luke 1:35, NIV



A Christmas blessing

May you have the
Spirit of Christmas,
which is Peace,
The Gladness of
Christmas, which is
Hope,
The Heart of Christ-
mas, which is Love,
The Gift of Christmas,
which is Christ.

—Ada Hendricks

2nd Dakotas Bishop's Laity Gathering

Plan to Attend: The 2nd Dakotas Bishop's Laity Gathering February 27-29, 2009 - 1st UMC Jamestown ND

The Bishop's Laity Gathering will be held Feb 27-28, 2009 at Jamestown First UMC with a theme of *Weave Us Together-Caring For The World's Children*.

The conference will begin Friday afternoon and conclude about 4 pm on Sat. Lay and clergy are welcome. Attendance options include DAVID sites at Piedmont Grace UMC, Sioux Falls Asbury UMC, Fargo UMC Gathering, Bismarck McCabe UMC, and Mitchell Dakotas Conference Center.

Highlights for the second Bishop's Laity Gathering will include: Keynote speaker Rev Rachel Lieder Simeon, Asso-

ciate General Secretary for the Health and Relief unit in the United States for the United Methodist Committee On Relief, a part of the General Board of Global Ministries.

Bishop Deborah Lieder Kiesey, Dakotas area bishop 2004-2012, will preach at opening and closing worship services.

Senator George McGovern will discuss the book he wrote with Sen Robert Dole and the Rev Donald Messer, Ending Hunger Now.

Other interest groups include autism, children's ministries and issues, technology, and sharing ideas for dynamic ministries.

Registration deadline is February 13 for \$25.



Conde UMW

CONDE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN met at the church Wednesday, November 18 at 2:00 PM.

Jane Worlie led the World Thank Offering lesson, assisted by the members present. Print media samples were on the table to be read for good news and bad news. Scripture of Psalm 100 was read, music was a part of the program that told of the use of World Thank Offering.

Donna Hearnen presided at the meeting by leading in the Purpose Pledge. Patty Knoll read the devotional from the Conference Booklet. Reports were given by the secretary and the treasurer.

At the next meeting, Christmas cards will be signed and sent to those we wish to remember at that time.

The gift of mission money was sent to

Abbott House in Mitchell. Contact had been made with the Redfield Center to obtain names for Christmas gifts. Also, the church will be collecting items for the Center during the month of January. Discussion was held to have a speaker come from Redfield to tell of the work they do.

As this is a local mission, we should learn more.

Next meeting will be December 17 at 11:00 AM with lesson Christmas: O Come Let Us Adore Him, led by Betty Taylor. A noon lunch will be served by Cindy Smith and Patty Knoll, followed by the business meeting.

Hostess for the day was Donna Hearnen. Mizpah Benediction closed the meeting.

**Conde December
UMW Meeting
will be held Dec
17th at 11 am**

Program "O Come
Let Us Adore Him"
led by Betty Taylor
Hostesses are Cindy
Smith & Patty Knoll

Our Church Celebrations

Groton Birthdays

Dec 1 Charles Strom
 Dec 2 Meri Erickson
 Dec 3 Anthony Sippel
 Dec 4 Darlys Kampa
 Dec 6 Mary Swisher
 Dec 7 Morgan McNickle
 Caroline Zeeb
 Dec 9 Ann Rix
 Brooklyn Gilbert
 Dec 13 Melissa Gilbert
 Dec 15 Marjae Schinkel
 Dec 16 Dan Schinkel
 Dec 17 Alan Townsend
 Dec 18 Dylan Hanson
 Jasper Pray
 Michaela Oleson
 Dec 21 Noella Graf
 Dec 23 Casey Seelye
 John Padfield
 Dec 25 Steve O'Neill
 Dec 26 Ben Peterson
 Dec 27 Emily Overacker
 Jane Johnson
 Karla Pasteur
 Dec 28 Jaden Dobbins
 Dec 29 Andrea Davidson

Dec 30 Alec Oleson
 Alex Graf

Groton Anniversaries

Dec 11 David & Connie Nilsson
 Dec 14 Bob & Mary Ann Wehde
 Dec 20 Lon & Marva Gellhaus
 Dec 23 Marc & Fran Sippel
 Dec 27 Nathan & Katie Zeeb
 Dec 31 Ralph & Virginia Breitreutz

Conde Birthdays

Dec 1 Joyce Haskell
 Dec 8 Tony Bruckner
 Millie Buising
 Dec 10 Skylar Bonn
 James Zeck

Dec 20 Rex Taylor
 Dec 26 Darlene Meyer

Conde Anniversaries

Dec 4 Greg & Stacey Bonn
 Dec 27 Richard & Dorothy Sanderson



Communications

Are you getting the news about OUR church across the Dakotas and beyond?

- To subscribe to Dakotas Connection, send \$10 to Dakotas Annual Conference, PO Box 460, Mitchell, SD 57301.
- Check out these websites www.dakotasumc.org or www.dakamps.org or www.dakoyouth.com or www.dakotasumf.org.
- To receive Mondays@Dakotas, email dakumcom@dakotasumc.org



Yuletide GAMES

Enjoy the Christmas season with these games, centered around the theme of Jesus, our greatest gift.

JESUS' BIRTH FROM A-Z

What you need:

- Paper
- Pencils or pens
- Bibles (optional)



What you do:

Instruct players to think of as many Christmas-related words as they can that start with each letter of the alphabet. Start with A and give everyone a minute to brainstorm words for each letter. For example, M words include manger, Mary and miracle. If you get stuck, look at the Nativity accounts in Matthew 1 and 2, and also Luke 2. Players get a point for each word not repeated by others.

PIN THE STAR ON THE MANGER

What you need:

- Butcher paper, poster board or plain wrapping paper
- Markers, paint or crayons
- Construction paper stars
- Tape
- Blindfold



What you do:

On large paper, draw a picture of a stable. Give each player a star cutout. Put a small + above the manger where the star led the shepherds and wise men to baby Jesus. Like in Pin the Tail on the Donkey, the blindfolded person who puts his or her star closest to the + wins.

Modest Increase in Percentage of Young Clergy

The Lewis Center for Church Leadership of Wesley Theological Seminary has issued a new version of Clergy Age Trends in the UMC containing updated 2008 statistics. The new report, prepared with assistance from the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, reports that the consistent decline in under 35 elders as a percentage of all elders seems to have hit its low point in 2005 when it sank to 4.69%. In 2008 the number of young elders increased from 876 to 910, and the percentage grew from 4.92% to 5.21% - the first time under 35 elders have surpassed 5% this century. As recently as 1985, young elders represented over 15% of elders. The overall number

of elders continues to decline each year.

The five conferences where young elders are highest as a percentage of elders in 2008 are Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama - West Florida, North Alabama, and Oklahoma. The largest number of young elders is found in Western North Carolina with sixty.

The report shows the numbers and percentages of young elders, deacons, and local pastors for each annual conference. A new feature of the 2008 report gives the average and median ages of elders by conference. The report can be found at the Center's website, www.churchleadership.com - Lewis Center from November UMC Newscope

Nov UMC Newscope Short Takes

The General Board of Discipleship's Center for Worship Resourcing is introducing a new hymn for Christ the King Sunday, Nov 23. "Our Lord, You Stood in Pilate's Hall," by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, is accessible at <http://www.gbod.org/worship>. Beginning with Jesus being judged by Pilate, whose rule was doomed to fall, the hymn goes on to observe that Jesus' rule is not by sword or might but by truth and love. - GBOD

The Foundation for Evangelism recognized Dr. Keith Tonkel, a pastor in the Mississippi Annual Conference, for his exceptional leadership and service in the area of evangelism by naming him the 2008 Distinguished Evangelist of the UMC. Tonkel, a native of New Orleans, has served Wells Memorial UMC in Jackson, Mississippi since 1969. - Foundation for Evangelism

UM Student Day will be observed Nov 30. The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) sug-

gests congregations take up a special offering on Nov 30 to benefit GBHEM's scholarship and student loan programs or invite a UM loan or scholarship recipient to your church to share the impact of the church's financial support on their life. Ums can donate online anytime at www.umcgiving.org/umstudentday, where free promotional resources, video presentations and worship resources are also available. Each UM-related college gets money from the offering for scholarships, and each participating annual conference gets 10% of Student Day receipts to award to their own merit scholars. - GBHEM

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Celebrate Christmas

Decorate your Christmas tree.
Ring a Christmas bell.
Sing a joyful carol
With a jubilant noel!

Light your Advent candle
wreath.
Rejoice with friends on Earth.
Give thanks to God for sending
Christ
In this, His Christmas birth.

Share your joy of Christmas
And God's blessings from
above.
Celebrate God's Gracious-
ness!
Celebrate God's Love!

-Peggy Ferrell, Prayers and Poems



Screen/Projector

Thank you to all who made the screen & projector possible in our sanctuary to enhance worship. Join us for worship and experience this new addition! Please bear with Pastor Rob and Kay as we try to incorporate new items into the worship with this tool.



We need volunteers for times when Kay cannot be there! It is not hard! I need a commitment to running the laptop and recording the sermons each week. Please talk to Pastor Rob or Kay.

Groton Emmanuel Lutheran Church Cantata

November 21st
10:30 am & 7 pm



Tuesday AM Bible Study will start a new study on January 13th "Decisions - Seeking God's Guidance"

Groton UMC



Living Christmas Tree

Joy, Joy, Joy
Saturday Dec 6
at 7 PM
Sunday Dec 7
at 3 PM & 7 PM
Aberdeen Civic
Arena



THE CHRISTMAS Story

- Marlys Rodman 397-4570
- Audrey Thurston 397-8493
- Gert Ruden 397-8211
- Pat Dahlquist 397-2616
- Mary Swisher 397-8337
- Gloria Pharis 397-2375
- Mary Jane Schott 397-8588
- Doris Zoellner 397-2417
- Marjorie Townsend 298-5221
- Darlys Kampa 395-6996
- Marvel Johnson 397-2425
- Mary Ann Whede 397-8330

*Currently 73 on email prayer chain.
If you are not on this list or the email list, please notify the church office.

Groton Mission
Statement
"Enriching Spiritual
lives through Christ."

Men's Fall Dinner



Groton January Family Committee



Carna & Cliff Pray, Kevin
 Dale & Michelle Kramer
 Kim & Craig Weber
 Jay & Linda Johnson
 Marlys Rodman
 Rose Tewksbury
 Kami & Tom Lipp
 Karla Pasteur, Ali
 Yvonne Lange
 Lance & Kristi Hawkins, Katelyn
 Pam & Roger Rix
 Gayleen & Jon Voss, Jordan, Lacey
Honorary Members
 ImoJeanne Oliver

Mary Swisher
 Richard & Doris Zoellner
 Art & Charlotte Lange

January Extra Responsibilities

- Jan 4th white altar cloths and communion banners for this Sunday only
- Jan 11th green altar cloths and monthly banners
- Shovel snow from doorways before Church
- Take down Christmas decorations with all church helping
- Clean Sanctuary
- Potluck 2nd Sunday



January 2009						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Advent Wreath

The Advent wreath is a symbol of watchfulness and increasing joy as we anticipate Jesus' birth. The wreath's circular shape symbolizes eternity, or life without end. The candles remind us that Jesus is the Light of the World – he brought light and life to a dark world (see John 1:4-5). On each of the four Sundays of Advent, we light a new candle. As the light grows, so do our hope and joy.



Merry Christmas!

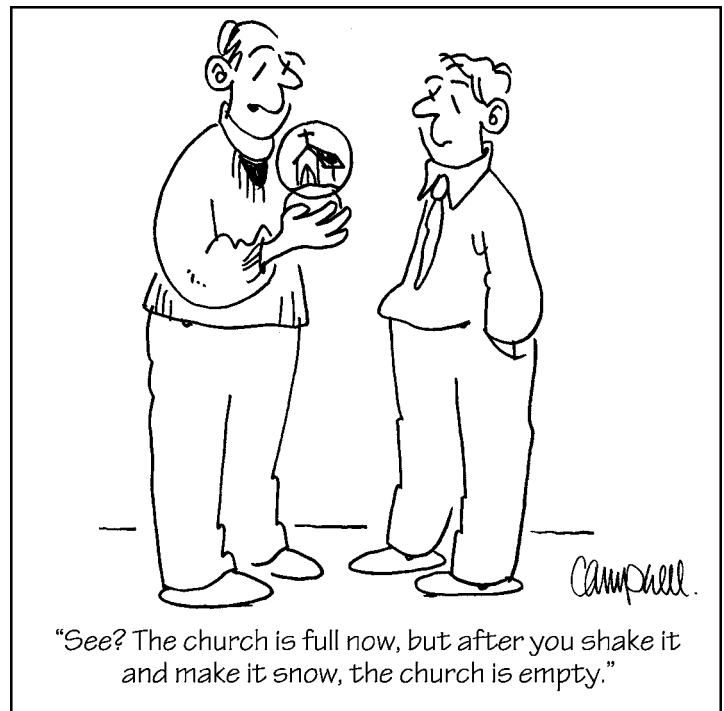


“At Bethlehem, God demonstrated that to love is to give.”

The Christmas grump

Uncle Bill had the reputation of being a curmudgeon. He always seemed to have something to grumble about. Bill's friends and family were used to his demeanor and usually took it with a grain of salt.

One year, while Bill's relatives were decorating for Christmas, his young nephew wondered aloud, “Do you think Uncle Bill will put up a negativity scene again this year



DECEMBER

December 2008						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



Christmas Eve
WORSHIP

Our Church Happenings

- Dec 10 Groton UMW Christmas Brunch at 10 am at the Latte Café
Christmas Goodie Containers will be assembled and delivered
- Dec 10 Groton Ad Council 7 pm
- Dec 13 & 14 Conde Dinner Theatre with Bethlehem PD starting at 6 PM
Reservation is required 382-5264 - cost is \$12.50
- Dec 14 Groton Advent Bible Study 6:30 pm
- Dec 17 Conde UMW 11 am
- Dec 17 Conde Church School Christmas Program 7 pm
- Dec 17 Groton UMYF 7pm at Pastor Rob's House (bring \$5 or less gift)
- Dec 21 Groton Advent Bible Study 6:30 pm
- Dec 21 Groton Angel Tree Gifts need to be at the church.
- Dec 21 Groton Sunday School Program
- Dec 24 Christmas Eve Worship - Groton, 5pm and Conde, 7 pm**