

UNITED METHODIST MESSENGER

GROTON/CONDE UMC PARISHES

Pastor's Ponderings

Not to be morbid, but did you know January, as a month, has one of the highest suicide rates of the year? Psychiatrists and therapists have credited this high rate to everything from the “after-Christmas blues” to colder temperatures. Personally, January has always been one of the “longest” months of the year for me. Is it because of the place I live, or maybe it is “after-Christmas slow-down?” I’m not sure of the reason.

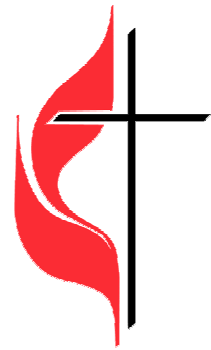
One thing I am quite sure – I’m not going to end my time on this earth, especially after what happened this morning! Today started like any typical Sunday for me. Getting up early, getting dressed and having a small breakfast are all part of the routine. Arriving about an hour or earlier to the church prior to leading worship has also become a habit. There has only been one time in the past 18 years of local church ministry in which I have arrived at church not sure yet as to what I was going to say in the morning’s message, but that was a unique occasion about something that happened the week before.

This morning was going to be a “special” Sunday in which I answer questions from the congregation. Of course, they are questions handed in the week or two prior to the service (I’m not foolish enough to open the floor to questions!). As I read the questions this week, I noted the majority had to do with heaven and what we will be doing and look like in that great place. Preparing to answer those questions did not really challenge me since the subjects of eternity, heaven, death and the after-life are common subjects to small-town ministers who do more than our share of funerals.

What surprised me and made my day a great Sunday was in answering the question, “What will we look like in heaven and will we be able to recognize our loved ones?” I used the parable of Lazarus and rich man to illustrate the idea of recognition as well as Jesus’ teaching on marriage in heaven (or more precisely, not be given in marriage) and His use of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as still being alive to illustrate individuality, but then the Holy Spirit got involved.

All of a sudden I remembered my grandfather’s visitation service in which he was made to look like a young man; I recalled the races we used to have at my grandparent’s farm pretending we were in heaven and could never get tired; I even remembered the “endless” card games we used to play with Grandma. I loved being her partner and the way she always wanted to win. My grandparents were not perfect by any stretch of the imagination but all day long I have had a tremendous desire to see them again. I even told the church, “I wonder if God will let my grandmother cheat at pinochle like she used to here?”

The concept which really struck me this morning was how short our time is here on this earth and how long eternity will be in heaven. Are there situations, relationships and circumstances I would like to change or have changed here? Who doesn’t wish this from time to time? One thing I know for sure – January was made much shorter because the Holy Spirit decided to pay a visit and remind me of eternity.

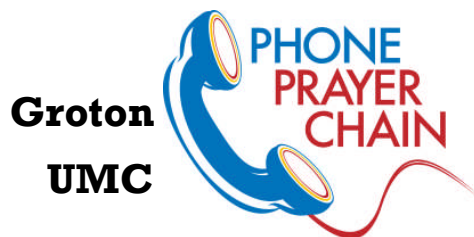


Time to gear up for CAMPING!

The Dakotas United Methodist Camps Brochures are here! Pick one up in the Office today or you may go online to www.dakcamps.org and find camping information.

The Registration deadline is April 20th and we will be doing this online this year. Kay Brandt will be able to help you in the church office. So get ready for summer!

Groton will promote camping on March 22nd during worship.



Marlys Rodman	397-4570
Audrey Thurston	397-8493
Gert Ruden	397-8211
Pat Dahlquist	397-2616
Mary Swisher	397-8337
Gloria Pharis	397-2375
Doris Zoellner	397-2417
Marjorie Townsend	298-5221
Darlys Kampa	395-6996
DeLoris Knoll	397-2681
Marvel Johnson	397-2425
Mary Ann Whede	397-8330

*Currently 82 on email prayer chain.

If you are not on this list or the email list, please notify the church office.

Groton Lenten Services Start

Each work committee is responsible to prepare, serve, and cleanup one Lenten Supper according to the schedule below. Soup & Sandwiches are typically served but other choices are optional. Prepare for 50 people. Meal is served from 6-7 pm. Take a free-will offering which should be turned over to Anita Lowary or Kay Brandt. It will be used to defray the cost of the meal. Groceries may be charged or receipts given to Kay for reimbursement. Questions may be directed to Gloria Pharis or Clare Brotherton.

Feb 25 - Jan Committee

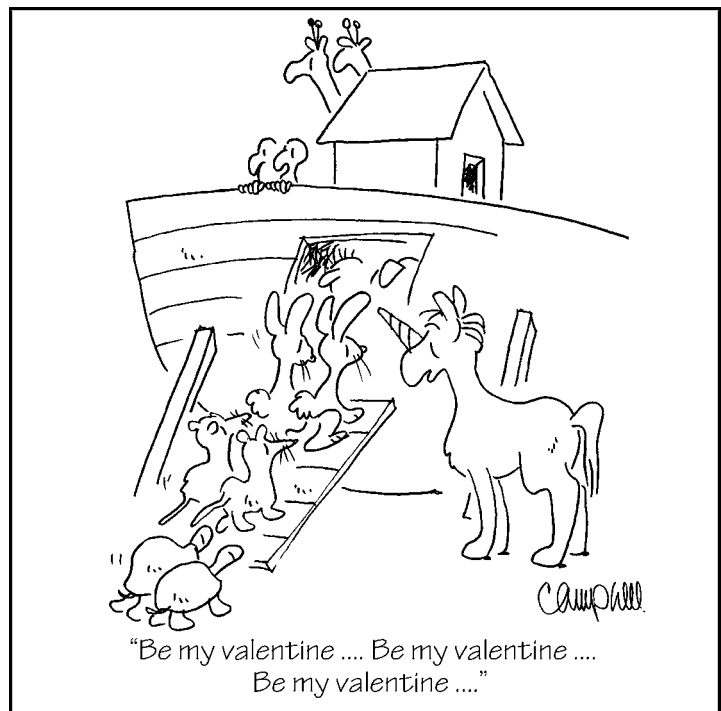
March 4 - Feb Committee

March 11 - March Committee

March 18 - April Committee

March 25 - May Committee

April 1 - June Committee



Health Kits Collected Jan/Feb in Groton & Conde

The Mission Committee is asking for donations to the Health Kits. Health kits provide the basic necessities to people who have been forced to leave their homes because of human conflict or natural disaster. The kit items will be collected in January and February. The items are listed below. If you would like to donate cash you may do so and items for the kits will be purchased.

- 1 hand towel (15" x 25" up to 17" x 27"), no kitchen towels
- 1 washcloth
- 1 comb (large and sturdy, not pocket-sized)
- 1 nail file or fingernail clippers (no emery boards or toenail clippers)
- 1 bath-size bar of soap (3 oz. and up)
- 1 toothbrush (single brushes only in original wrapper, no child-size brushes)
- 6 adhesive plastic strip sterile bandages

Complaint dissipated

A woman called a newspaper office to complain that her Sunday paper hadn't arrived. Trying to calm her, the man at the office pointed out that the paper hadn't arrived because it was Saturday.

After a brief silence, the woman said meekly, "Well, that explains why there was no one in church today."

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

**Conde Habitat for
Humanity Birthday
Donation**
is voluntary during
the month of your
Birthday. House is
available at the
church for Donations.

X = Kiss

During the Middle Ages, when few people were able to write, many documents were signed with an X. Signers kissed the letter to affirm their sincerity in the same way they kissed the Bible when taking an oath.

The letter X wasn't selected at random. It was the sign of St. An-

drew, who was crucified on an X-shaped cross. The X implied a sacred promise to fulfill one's obligation in the saint's name.



Groton UMW

United Methodist Women met Jan 21st at 2:00. Jolene Townsend presented the program, "Who's at the Table," from the program book.

Pres. Jolene opened the business meeting. The Purpose was recited by the group. The minutes of the Nov meeting were read and approved.

Many thank-you's were read. The Prayer Chain was discussed. Report for Social Action - emphasizing the "To Not Smoke" program.

We were reminded to pick up

our labels that Kay has prepared for us for the updated Secret Angel ministry.

A reminder of UMW Sunday to be held Feb 15th and needing help from everyone.

We also will be making plans for the May Breakfast to be May 6th.

The next meeting will be Feb 18th at 2:00. The program will be a video. Hostesses will be DeLoris Knoll and Rose Tewksbury.



Groton UMW Meeting

Feb 18th
2 PM

Program is a
Video

Hostesses
DeLoris Knoll
Rose Tewksbury



Valentine's Day

In the early Christian church, there were three priests named Valentine or Valentinus. Though they didn't live at the same time, each was said to be holy and each had been martyred for his faith. All three priests were designated as saints. Around the year A.D. 498, Pope Gelasius declared February 14 as St. Valentine's Day.

Valentine's Day came to be associated with love, romance and marriage. The day is now so popular that only during the Christmas season do people mail more greeting cards.

No matter how many cards, flowers or sweets you receive this Valentine's Day, be assured that God loves you with an "everlasting love" (Jeremiah 31:3, NRSV).

"He who has a thousand friends has not a friend to spare; and he who has one enemy will meet him everywhere."
—Ralph Waldo Emerson



Our Church Celebrations

Groton

Feb 1 Dick & Gert Ruden
 Feb 4 Kay Lynn Overacker
 Feb 5 Gene Luce
 Andrea & Brian Bahr
 Feb 7 Gary Voss
 Feb 8 Larry Wheeting
 Gage Sippel
 Feb 10 Alan & Jolene Townsend
 Brenda Madsen
 Dion Bahr
 Feb 12 Skylar Kramer
 Feb 14 Diane Nissen
 Feb 16 Pernell Graf
 Feb 18 Chuck & Michelle Padfield
 Feb 19 Gaylene Voss
 Robin O'Neill
 Terry Furman
 Feb 20 Michael Wells
 Feb 21 Ruth Thompson
 Feb 22 Anthony Schinkel
 Robin Williamson
 Feb 25 Brent Morehouse
 Greg Heitmann
 Feb 26 Mary Ann Wehde

Conde

Feb 4 Donna Walter
 Feb 5 Richard Sanderson
 Feb 7 Bill Trapp
 Feb 9 Vicki Stark
 Feb 10 Greg & Vicki Stark
 Feb 12 Norb Hearnen
 Feb 15 Tim & Betty Geist
 Feb 19 Tyler Stark
 Feb 22 Betty Jensen
 Horace Walter



What is Lent?

It is forty days of stripping down to the living essentials;
 It is forty days of facing truth about one's self-indulgent evasions;
 It is forty days of fellowshipping with Christ in the desert;
 It is forty days of rejoicing in God's mercy and forgiveness.



PRESIDENTS' DAY

Prayer for Presidents' Day

Lord of heaven and earth, we offer you our deepest appreciation for this blessed land. Stir up a sense of stewardship in every citizen so we all may care for our nation and each inhabitant of it.

We pray especially for our leaders. Prompt everyone in a position of authority, from local to national

leaders, to strive for righteousness, justice and the welfare of all citizens.

Finally, we pray that we may be ever mindful of the psalmist's teaching that "Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord ..." (Psalm 33:12, NRSV). May that promise become real "from sea to shining sea." Amen.

Answer: "Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge." Psalm 62:8

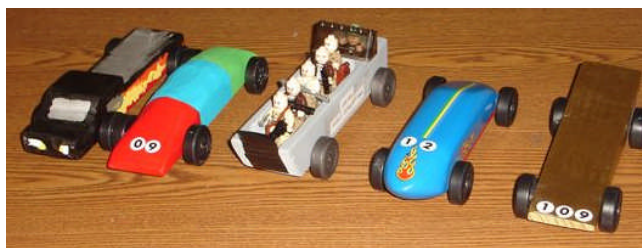
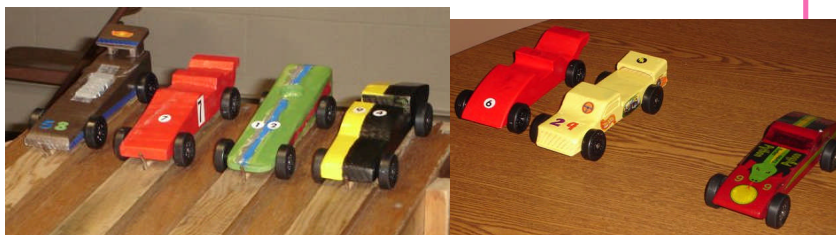
Cub Scouts held Pine Wood Derby

Cub Scout Pack 264 of Groton held their monthly Pack Meeting on Monday January 19, 2009 at the United Methodist Church of Groton, their Chartered Organization. CubMaster Bryan Anderson called the meeting to order at 6pm with the Pledge of Allegiance and the Cub Scout Promise. The meeting was then turned over to CubMaster-in-training Clint Fjelstad to start what every Cub Scout was anxiously awaiting: THE PINWOOD DERBY RACES!! This is an event where every Cub Scout is given a kit to build a race car. The kit contains a chunk of wood for the car body, wheels and axles. The Scouts were to make the cars at home (carve, sand, paint, use the imagination) with help from family members and bring them to race on a track. After the rules were read (mainly weight not to exceed 5 ounces - a digital scale was used), we were off to the races! When the smoke had cleared Alex Kern was the Grand Prix Champion! Way to go Alex! Second place went to Kayde Wiedrick, third place was Peyton Jondahl and fourth place went to Nathan Fjelstad. Congratulations to all who participated! In all, there were 14 Scouts who raced that night. In closing everybody received a candy bar with a wrapper commemorating the 2009 Cub Scout Pack 264 Pinewood Derby. Our next Pack Meeting will be February 16, 2009 at 6 pm at the Groton United Methodist Church. Everybody is welcome to attend. If a student grades 1-5 would like to join Cub Scouts, please contact CubMaster Bryan Anderson at 605-265-0015 or CubMaster-in-training Clint Fjelstad at 605-397-4486.



Cub Scouts Meetings

Pack meetings will be on 3rd Monday at 6 pm
Parents meetings will be on 3rd Wednesday at 7 pm
A Den will be meeting on 2nd and 4th Tues after school
A Den will be meeting on 4th Weds from 6-8pm
Contact Kay Brandt if this ever conflicts with an activity.



The Boy Scout Oath

Every boy in scouting learns the Boy Scout Oath:

"On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law; To
help other people at all times; To
keep myself physically strong, mentally
awake, and morally straight."

What more could parents ask of their sons (or daughters) than a pledge such as that? As Christians we should be pleased to host troops of Boy and Girl Scouts in our churches.

The significance of Lent

Lent is the fourth season of the Christian year. Its length is the 40 days preceding Easter Day, not counting Sundays. This means Lent always begins on a Wednesday, known as Ash Wednesday.

Lent commemorates Jesus' fast and temptation in the wilderness of Judea Province, which, according to the Gospel, lasted 40 days. Just as Jesus confronted his temptations during these 40 days, Lent helps Christians focus on our most basic need as sinners: forgiveness.

The only way our Lord's forgiving power can become effective in our lives is by our taking the initiative to confront our sins, confess them and repent of them. In short, Lent is a season of penitence.

Some Christians fast during Lent. This denial of bodily comforts can help encourage self-reflection about the need for Jesus' forgiveness.

True Love Grows

Through sunshine, rain,
Through smiles and tears,
Through sickness, health,
And passing years,
True love still grows
More firm and sure,
More deep and strong,
More sweet and pure.

—Peggy Ferrell, Prayers and Poems



Groton March Family Committee

Caralee & Gary Heitmann

Alan & Jolene Townsend

Linda & Gary Thurston

Zachary Townsend

Brenda & Tony Madsen, Mitchell

Marjae & Dan Schinkel

Carol & Luverne Strom

Sharon & Larry Wheeting

Kristi & Ben Peterson

Lori & John Seelye, Casey

Betty & Charlie Strom

Dwight & Eugenia Strom

Mary Jane Schott

Loel Schott

Diane Nissen

Don Bartz

Curtis Krueger

Honorary Members

- DeLoris Knoll
- Hazel McKittrick

Extra Responsibilities

- Shovel snow from doorways before church
- Clean the kitchen
- Mar 1st change altar cloths to white and hang communion banners for this Sunday only
- March 8th change the altar cloths to purple and hang the banners for this month
- Order Easter Lilies
- Water the Easter Lilies
- Potluck 2nd Sunday

March 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				



More than words

Abraham Lincoln apparently didn't have the voice of a great orator. Some people said his voice was squeaky; nevertheless, Lincoln's messages were invariably insightful and meaningful.

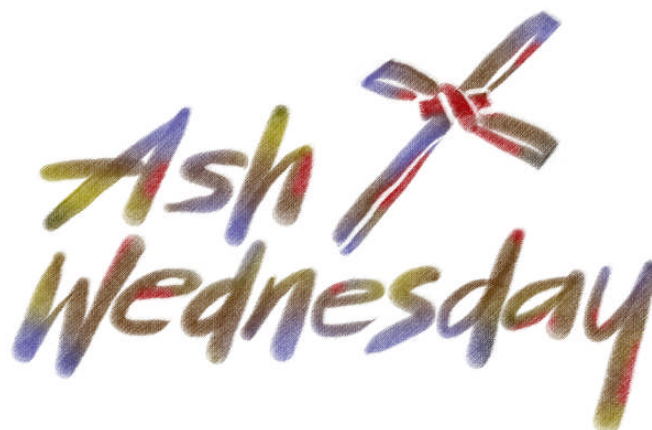
A teacher who once heard him speak later said Lincoln's presence wasn't notable but his earnestness, vigor and logic were impressive. Everyone was awed by Lincoln's speech, and the teacher rode home on his horse greatly exalted from hearing it.

The teacher recalled hearing not so much a speech as "a message in the form of a man."

People who took time to listen

to Jesus could say the same thing. God's greatest message to us came in the form of his Son, Jesus. And as meaningful as Jesus' words were, it's his life, death and resurrection that left the biggest "impression" of all.

**Groton
Mission
Statement**
"Enriching
Spiritual
lives
through
Christ."



February 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

If you received this in the mail and are able to pick it up at the church or receive through email, please contact Kay 397-8389

Our Church Happenings

- Feb 4 Groton UMYF at church 7pm (making chili for cook-off)
Feb 11 Groton Ad Council 7 pm
Feb 13-15 Groton UMYF Youth on Ski trip
Feb 15 UMW Sunday in Conde and Groton
Feb 18 Groton UMW Meeting 2 PM - Video
Feb 25 Groton Ash Weds Service with January Committee
Serving Supper from 6 - 7 pm then Service to follow
Mar 22 Camping being promoted during worship in Groton

