

December 2013



United Methodist Messenger

Groton/Conde Parishes

Dear Friends in Groton and Conde

"Is not the fast I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin? Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am. If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom shall be like the noonday." Isaiah 58:6-10

We often think of a fast as being a period of time when one abstains from food or some other thing, for the sake of developing a certain discipline. And we usually think of a fast as being linked to the season of Lent which proceeds the season of Easter. But the season of Advent is not devoid of its traditions, the feasting, the tree trimming, more feasting, the shopping, the wrapping, more shopping and wrapping, more feasting and then more waiting... until finally Christmas has arrived and we begin to unwrap our gifts with unbridled fervor, fueled by anticipation and gift lust. We tear through ribbons, bows and gift wrap

with a chaotic gleam in our eye. But this is far from the Christmas tradition that God intends for us.

The prophet Isaiah proposes something else. He asks, "Is not the fast I choose...?" And notice here he isn't suggesting that we abstain from anything but rather commit to increased action; loosing the bonds of injustice, letting the oppressed go free, sharing food with a hungry world and breaking systems which keep people controlled and under occupation and oppression, caring for the homeless, clothing the naked. He continues by saying that if we succeed in doing these things our darkness will become light!

I often wonder what God thinks of our "Christmas" traditions. You could easily switch out the word traditions and replace it with idolatry. If we are to honestly look at the story of the nativity and compare the intent to our modern holiday mayhem, I am not even going to complete the thought... God's intent, love, promise and covenant towards a broken world are too sacred and just in comparison to our human practices during the Christmas season. Have we strayed too far off the path to recognize how to return home, to a place where we can once again claim that we are Christians, faithfully celebrating the arrival of the messiah?

The words of the prophet Isaiah ring strong and true; let them be our guide our spiritual GPS and with God's help we will arrive safely, kneeling beside a manger in humble adoration and holy awe as we gaze once again into the infant eyes of the savior.

I look forward to seeing you in church,
Pastor Matt



Thank You



We would like to thank everyone for their support with the dinner that was held Sunday, Nov 10. Thanks to everyone who worked, donated money,, brought pies or desserts or supported with your prayers. A very special thank you to the youth group and their leaders, also to Chuck, John, and Tyke in the kitchen. May you each be richly blessed. The Methodist men's Dinner Committee

Thank you to Richard Krueger for patching the sidewalk, relocating a shelf in the storage shed, for covering the air conditioner, and all the other jobs he does around the church.

Thank you to Weber Landscaping for donating the 60 inch wreath hanging in the fellowship hall.



Christmas Eve

Service in Conde will be at 5 pm and the Christmas Eve Service in Groton will be at 7 pm. Please join us in worship

The Offering at the Groton Christmas Eve Worship Service will go half to UMCOR (to aide in the disasters around the country) and half to Easter Baskets to help those in need locally.

The Offering at the Conde Christmas Eve Worship Service will go half to the Good Samaritan Center in Redfield and half to the Salvation Army in Aberdeen.



Groton Missions

The Angel tree is up and we put 39 children upon it. Thank you to all who are making a blessed Christmas for our local children. Please use the sign-out card when you take a card so that if a problem should arise, I know who belongs to what card number. Please have the gifts at the church wrapped and all gifts for one child in a holiday or garbage bag with the card number tied to the top.

Our Pie Auction/ Bake Sale was a success. We raised \$418 that Sunday for our Thanksgiving Baskets. Sixteen local families benefited from the total \$660 we raised. Thank you everyone!

Special thanks to Carna Atherton-

Pray, Jan Raap, Carol Strom, Laurie Mitchell, Marjorie Overacker, Linda Thurston, Karla Pasteur, and Carolyn Snyder for making pies. Thank you to others for the baked goods and anyone else I may have not written down on that busy wonderful day.

Thank you to all our cooks last month for the great chili. Thank you to Kim and Sunday School kids, Karla Pasteur, Pastor Matt, Linda Thurston, Doug Daly, Chuck Padfield, Laurie Mitchell, John Padfield, Joey Padfield, Diann Morehouse, Samantha Weber, Jane Johnson, and Kelli Hanson.



Local

Missions

Groton UMW - Nov

Before the business meeting Bruce Blumer Executive Director of the Dakotas United Methodist Foundation talked briefly about what the foundation is and how it can help with meeting your financial needs as well meeting charitable goals.

President Gloria Pharis began the meeting with 14 members reciting the UMW Purpose. The minutes and financial reports were given and approved. Doris Zoellner read Devotions on being thankful and that God supplies all of our needs.

Old business consisted of a report on lefse making. There were only 41 packages left so sales have been good. Jolene Townsend thanked everyone for all their help. Jeanne Wanous reviewed the survey on the Missions giving budget and proposed those organizations which received the most votes be selected for 2013 budget. She then asked that this proposal be accepted. Jolene Townsend made a motion to accept the budget and Marj Overacker seconded it. All agreed.

New business began with the announcement of the top readers for the Reading Program. Gloria Pharis announced that Marlys Rodman and herself received a certificate for Plan 1 with Jan Raap receiving her certificate for Plan 2. Gloria also announced that the

Groton UMW Mtg - Dec 11 at Noon

We will be celebrating Christmas with a luncheon provided by the officers.

Everyone is encouraged to bring 3-4 dozen individually wrapped treats to fill our coffee cans which will be delivered around town to 30-40 people. If you cannot be at UMW that day, please leave your treats marked "gift boxes" on the kitchen counter. Everyone help with this UMW Mission Project.

Groton Unit again received the Five Star Award Certificate from the District. WAY TO GO GROTON!! It was proposed new books be ordered and added to the Reading Program selections. Jan Raap made a motion to order new books and Sharon Wheeting seconded it. All approved. The Slate of Officers was reviewed and Marj Townsend made a motion to accept the group and Carol Strom seconded it. All approved. On Dec. 1 Recognition pins will be given. Marj Overacker reported the theme for World Day of Prayer "Streams In The Desert." It will be based on the women of Egypt. Groton will host it on Mar. 7, 2014.

The next meeting will be the Christmas luncheon on Dec. 11 at 12:00 at the church. The officers will provide the meal. After lunch, the Christmas containers will be filled and delivered. Be sure to bring your Christmas goodies for the containers by Dec. 11. Lunch was served by JoAnn Krueger and Caralee Heitmann. After lunch, the Christmas containers were decorated for the December meeting.

Before lunch, President Gloria read a benediction to end the business meeting.



Groton UMC

Marlys Rodman	397-4570
Pat Dahlquist	397-2616
Doris Zoellner	397-2417
Marjorie Townsend	298-5221
Ann Rix	397-8478
Darlys Kampa	395-6996
DeLoris Knoll	397-2681
Gloria Pharis	397-2375

*Currently 84 on email prayer chain. If you are not on this list or the email list, please notify the church office.

We must have your permission to start the Prayer Chain. So please call and request this to be done. It is not automatic for privacy reasons.



Sunday School Offering

Christmas is a time of giving and learning compassion. It is a perfect time to teach children these life long lessons, so we are doing a local Christmas offering this year. For Sunday School offering throughout the month of December and as a special offering at our Christmas program, Dec. 15, we will be collecting for a young girl who has a type of cancer called lymphoblastic lymphoma T cell stage 3. On June 3, 2013, Cameron Lea Walter started chemo in Sioux Falls and will continue the treatment for three years. She will need many prayers throughout this time and continues to have several complications which have caused her to be hospitalized. Cameron turns three years old on Dec. 3, and we are excited to "adopt" her this month as our little Christmas angel. We plan to

give her some pajamas, a blanket, and some books (which are being donated) along with the offering money we collect for the family to use as needed. Any donations from other people besides Sunday School children would be greatly appreciated.

"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

Galatians 6:2

Thanks for your prayers and thoughtfulness! Kim Weber, Sunday School Superintendent

Note: Cameron is the granddaughter of Teresa and Jerry Cameron and the niece of Bill and Arielle (Schaller) Cameron, all of Aberdeen.

Groton UMYF

UMYF has been busy!

Worked the Men's Fall Dinner

Salvation Army cart - fills up once a month

Went to Rosewood to help decorate and BAGS program

All Church Event of Dodge Ball and raised \$142 for BAGS

Hauled in the Christmas Decorations for the Church

Attended the Groton Youth Rally in the new gym

Tia was accepted in next years Devozine. Her story about bullying will be featured in the Sept/Oct Issue.

"An Old Fashioned Christmas"

GROTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Sunday, Dec. 15, at 11:00 am
during church service
(Sunday School come at 10 am)

*Special Offering for Cameron Walter,
a three year old local cancer patient.*



Groton Memorial Committee

I have realized lately that a false assumption in many churches is that everyone knows everything that is going on in the church. This is not the case. So, I would like to use this newsletter to bring everyone up to date on the doings of your memorial committee. The memorial committee receives memorials, acknowledges memorial gifts by sending thank you notes, and assists people in selecting memorials that shall be of the greatest service to the church. On the memorial committee is Becky Diegel, Meri Erickson, Alan Strom, Gloria Pharis, Brenda Madsen and Sharon Wheeting.

We have made several purchases with memorial funds in the last 3 years and I would like to name many of them. In the fellowship hall we have installed new carpet, seasonal centerpieces and the new table clothes add a nice touch, plus we have very comfortable chairs. You may have noticed the acolytes are using new candle lighters and the candle lighters have a beautiful oak stand to rest in. In the sanctuary, we have several new banners, and a new microphone set. For last Christmas we had new candles and holders for the Christ-

mas Eve Candle Service, and we have several new altar cloths, and communion linens. We also refinished the oak wall behind the altar. The Sunday school rooms have new white boards and fund for vacation bible school. Outside we have a very nice parking lot, and landscaping. A new storage shed, and we repaired the planter the church bell is mounted on. We still have gifts to purchase from memorial funds we have received, which are a urn table and flower stands. And we still have projects that need to be done, like doing something with our sidewalks. We do have a memorial brochure that provides ways to give.

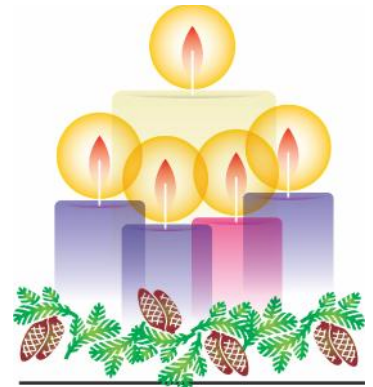
We have made many additions and repairs from funds donated in memory of loved ones. None of these things I mentioned were financed by your weekly Sunday offerings. On Nov. 3rd we remembered our saints of this past year, and consecrated the many gifts we have received in their memory and in memory of those who have died before them.

Linda Thurston

Let it shine

Whatever else be lost
among the years,
Let us keep Christmas
still a shining thing.
Whatever doubts assail
us, or what fears,
Let us hold close one
day, remembering
Its poignant meaning
for the hearts of men.

Let us get back our
childlike faith again.
—Grace Noll Crowell



"I'd like to thank the congregation for the snooze alarm you gave me for Christmas."

Hundred-dollar word

During his lifetime, English poet and novelist Rudyard Kipling achieved both fame and fortune. One day a newspaper reporter approached him and said, "Mr. Kipling, somebody calculated that the money you make from your writings amounts to more than \$100 a word."

The reporter pulled out a \$100 bill out of his pocket, gave it to Kipling and said, "Here, now give me one of your hundred-dollar words."

Kipling looked at the money, put it in his pocket and said, "Thanks!"



Groton Ritual of Friendship

The Ritual of friendship books are located in each pew. We used these a few years back and quit because people were not signing them.

In an effort to manage our communication more effectively, the administrative council has decided to bring back the ritual of friendship books. The ritual of friendship will assist the pastor with pastoral calls. Telephone numbers, addresses, family members, and emails assist chairmen of committees and the church office. It will also help us to be a more friendly church as we identify visitors and grow our congregation.

If you desire a pastoral call please make a check mark in the appropriate box. If someone has told you they would like a pastoral call, please write it in the book.

With ONE CALL or ALL CALL, if we do not have an updated telephone number you will miss important messages. We are increasing the use of ALL CALL to call off church, update you on Sunday school, or Christmas program practice. We also use ALL CALL to schedule or cancel meetings etc. If we hear, "I didn't know about it, or nobody told me." Chances are we need an updated number. Make sure we know both yours and your spouse's land line and cell #.

If you have an email or have changed your email please write that in

as well. We use email for our newsletter and other correspondence.

And last make sure we have an updated address, letters go out to the congregation from time to time, and delays or you don't get the letter at all are never good.

Use as much of the page as you need to, to give us your information.

After your first entry, if all of this information for you has not changed, just sign your name. You may not think this is important, but it is, especially for visitors who may like to know who you are. For example, I will use Anita Lowary, perhaps a new person in the community is sitting by Anita and when they see Anita's name in the book, they can make a connection, oh yes, I saw her at city hall. Or someone might know Al Strom and they will see Doris Strom's name and they can strike up a conversation with Doris, they can make a connection.

Last, but not least it gives us a way of telling visitors, hey we are glad you worshiped with us, here is what we have to offer

So please sign the ritual of friendship every time you come to worship, it only takes a second, and will save the church staff hours, and will make our church a more friendly place to be.

Linda Thurston

"A Christmas Message"

Christmas holds the mystery
Of how God touched the
earth
By giving us the Christ child
In a newborn baby's birth.

Great awe was in young
Mary's heart,
And in the shepherds' pace
As they ran quickly to the
town
And found that special
place.

These humble shepherds
knelt before
This tiny newborn king;
And as they did so, they
could hear
The lovely angels sing:

"Fear not, for unto you this
day,
The Prince of Peace has
come
To share God's love
throughout the world.
Rejoice now, everyone!"

—Peggy Ferrell

Happy Birthday Jesus!

Each Christmas, a family celebrated by holding a birthday party for Jesus. To remind themselves of Jesus' presence, they placed a chair of honor for him at their dinner table.

The highlight of the party was singing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus and then blowing out the candles on a special cake.

One Christmas, a visitor asked the family's 5-year-old daughter, "Did you get everything you wanted for Christmas?"

The girl paused and then answered, "No! It's not *my* birthday!"



Our Church Celebrations

Groton

Dec 2 Meri Erickson
 Dec 3 Anthony Sippel
 Dec 4 Darlys Kampa
 Dec 7 Morgan McNickle
 Dec 9 Ann Rix
 Brooklyn Gilbert
 Wesley Morehouse
 Dec 11 Dave & Connie Nilsson
 Dec 13 Melissa Gilbert
 Dec 14 Bob & Mary Ann Wehde
 Dec 15 Marjae Schinkel
 Dec 16 Dan Schinkel
 Sage Mortinson
 Dec 17 Alan Townsend
 Dec 18 Dylan Hanson
 Michaela Oleson
 Dec 20 Lon & Marva Gellhaus
 Dec 21 Kent Webb
 Noella Graf
 Dec 23 John Padfield
 Marc & Fran Sippel
 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
 Dec 31 Ralph & Virginia Breitreutz
Conde
 Dec 1 Joyce Haskell
 Dec 4 Greg & Stacy Bonn
 Dec 8 Tony Bruckner
 Millie Busing
 Dec 10 Skylar Bonn
 James Zeck
 Dec 20 Rex Taylor
 Dec 27 Richard & Dorothy Sanderson

If your name is missing on our celebrations list, please let the church office know so you will be added and we can help you celebrate.



Gifts for a King

Bring him thy precious things
 And lay them at his feet;
 The gold of love, the hope
 that springs
 The unknown ways to meet.
 Bring him thy lovely things;
 The joy that conquers care,
 The faith that trusts and
 sings,
 The frankincense of prayer.
 Bring him thy bitter things;
 The myrrh of grief and fears,
 The aching heart that stings
 With pain of unshed tears.
 These for thy gifts to him;
 And for his gifts to thee,
 The comfort of his steadfast
 love,
 His tender sympathy.
 —Annie Johnson Flint

Christmas Family Photos

The Groton Church Office would love to have your family photos that you are sending this Christmas! We would like to do some updating on the Church Directory. So please make sure we have one either by mail, email, or drop off and even slip under the office door. Thank you all!



Conde Ad Council - Nov Highlights

- Christmas Eve Service will be at 5 pm - Offering will be used 1/2 for Good Samaritan Center in Redfield and 1/2 for Salvation Army in Aberdeen.
- UMW Sunday will be on March 9.
- Advent Bible Study will be on Tuesdays at 7:30 starting on Nov 26 thru Dec 17
- Advent Decorating will take place on Dec 3 at 4 pm
- Greg Peterson has become a member of the church
- Budget and nominations for 2014 was presented and approved
- Buying battery taper candles for candleabra was approved

Conde MISSION STATEMENT

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



Making Lefse





Groton Men's Dinner Photos



Groton Ad Council - November

The council was updated on the Sunday school classes which continue to be well attended and the students are now working on their Christmas Program. Beginning in January the classes will be re-grouped so that the 6th grade students will be included in the Sunday school classes.

Kay Brandt reported that the missions committee has had great success with recent fund raisers and are happy to be able to put those funds toward Thanksgiving gift certificates to a number of local people and families again this year.

Marge Overacker updated the council on a number of items including our church insurance and how our property will be impacted next year with new sidewalks being installed by the city to provide a safe walking route to school. In addition, Marge shared a list the trustees prepared of needed repairs as a result of a walk around the church building structure looking for issues. Some needed repairs may be costly so funding such as the Builder's Club will be investigated. Much more information needs to be gathered before any action is taken.

*Groton Mission
Statement
"Enriching
Spiritual lives"*

Groton Stewardship Report Nov 2013

Average Wkly Giving \$1,959

Needed Wkly for Church Mission \$2,088

Average Weekly Attendance Sunday 80

Total Building Fund Donations \$110

Groton January 2014 Family Committee

Mendy & James Jones, Marlee

Brent & Jessica Morehouse

Kay Brandt

Marva & Lon Gellhaus

Justin & Amanda Morehouse

Julie & Jesse Morehouse

Angela & Perryn Dobbins

Marjorie & Roger Overacker

Jesse & Jaymie Overacker

Kim & Craig Weber

Roger & Pam Rix

Alan Strom

Jay & Linda Johnson

Michele Kramer

Corey & Jamie Mitchell

January Extra Responsibilities

- Jan 5 white altar cloths for communion & Epiphany
- Jan 12 white altar cloths for Baptism of the Lord
- Jan 20 green altar cloths
- Shovel snow from doorways before church
- Take down Christmas decorations with all church helping
- Potluck 2nd Sunday
- Make sure banners are changed.

FUNERAL GROUP A

Honorary Members

- Dick Ruden
- Gerald & Ann Rix
- Don Walter
- Bob & Carolyn Snyder
- Doris Strom



January 2014						
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	



Our Church Happenings

- Dec 3 Conde Advent Decorating 4 pm
Dec 3 Conde Advent Study 7:30 pm
Dec 8 Groton Sunday School starts at 9:30 am
Dec 8 Groton Fischbach Baptism & Blessings Shower
Dec 9 PPRC in Conde 7 pm
Dec 10 Conde Advent Study 7:30 pm
Dec 11 Groton UMW Noon Luncheon with delivering Gift Boxes
Dec 14 Groton Sunday School Program Practice 3 - 4:30 pm
Special Music Groups will practice at 2 pm
Dec 15 Groton Sunday School Christmas Program during Worship
Dec 17 Conde Advent Study 7:30 pm
Dec 22 Groton Angel Tree Gifts at Church by Noon
Dec 24 Conde Christmas Eve Service at 5 pm
Dec 24 Groton Christmas Eve Service at 7 pm
Dec 29 Newsletter Items Due
Dec 29 Groton - No Sunday School
Jan 5 Groton - No Sunday School

December 2013						
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				

New Online Calendar Now Available on Website or go to

<http://grotonumc.view-events.com>

