



United Methodist Messenger

Groton/Conde Parishes

December 2014



Monday 9 am - 4 pm

Tuesday 9 am - 4 pm

Wednesday 9 am - 3 pm
followed by evening meetings

Thursday will be out spent
on visitation and a time of
sermon prep

Friday and Sat - Off

Emergencies - Any time



Dear Friends,

As we are enveloped by the winter solstice; the coldest and darkest time of year, the days grow shorter and the nights exceedingly longer. Our need for light grows more and more in the midst of the waning of day and waxing of night. It is the darkest time of year and for many of us a lonely time. In this season of Advent we find ourselves waiting for the celebration of the Christ Child. And despite our waiting and yearning, despite the longer periods of darkness, we are called to be children of light!

The book of Genesis tells us that we are created in God's image. That awareness and knowledge should give us all a sense of hope as we seek to find signs of God's light and likeness working in our world. In fact the reality is that we only need to look at those around us who exhibit the love of God to know that we are all capable of bearing the light of Christ. We yearn for this light, this hope, this promise and this peace.

As humans we rely heavily on the use of symbols to express meaning and truth. Consider the tradition of Christmas lights, Advent candles and the promise of the Christmas star. All of these beloved Christmas traditions point to God's light emerging from a world of darkness. From their limited human view, the shep-

herds and the magi followed the star. During the season of Advent we light candles to signify the waiting and the hope for the light of Christ, and who can discount the joy and excitement we feel when we put up Christmas lights or see the houses around our neighborhoods decorated with light.

In the beginning when the universe was vast and void of light, God spoke into the darkness and chaos and said let there be light. We too being created in God's image are invited to be co-creators with God bringing light into the dark places of our world. And that light is the light of Christ, the light of hope, truth, life and peace.

Let us remember that all the hanging of lights and the candle lighting are symbols of a greater light pointing us to acts of mercy, justice and love. The symbols mean nothing unless they are made relevant by our actions in a dark world. May you feel stirred and compelled by the power of the Holy Spirit this Advent season to be a light and bring the joy and shalom of Christ into the lives of others.

I look forward to seeing you in church,

Pastor Matt

Groton Missions

Thank you all for participating in the October Chili Cook-Off. It was great fun! Congratulations to Pastor Matt for having the 1st place chili this year. Jane Johnson was 2nd and Doug Daly was 3rd. Thank you as well to our judges: Lynn Wright, Mel Sombke, and Lori Westby. We raised \$80 towards the Angel Tree.

The Angel Tree is up and I thank everyone for your support to make sure our local children have a blessed Christmas. Gifts will be delivered the afternoon of Dec 21 so please have them all placed back at the tree by noon on Dec 21. Any missing gifts will have to be purchased on Monday morning and delivered. So any problems, please call Kay at

397-8389. Our tree is open to anyone in the community who wishes to help give a child a joyous Christmas.

Thank you everyone for all your support and help the past 4 years as I have led the missions committee. Karla Pasteur will be the new chair in January and I thank her for taking the position and helping me throughout this year. May we continue doing for others as Jesus did.

Kay Brandt, Chair



Thank you to everyone for the birthday card wishes I received for my 75th birthday. Gloria Pharis

We would like to thank everyone who worked or donated to the church dinner. It was a good day of fellowship for our church and the community. Thanks again. Blessing to all, The Church Dinner Committee

Thank you very much for letting us use the dining hall. The Padfield Family

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Groton Service is at 5 pm

Conde Service is at 7 pm

The Three Trees

According to legend, three trees grew near Jesus' manger: an olive tree, a palm tree and the fir. The olive offered its fruit to the newborn king, and the palm tree gave its dates.

The poor fir, having nothing to give but worship, raised its boughs in adoration, and the angels hung stars on its branches. So the fir became the first Christmas tree.



Conde UMW - Nov

The Conde UMW met at 10:00 AM on November 5th. The World Thank Offering lesson was given by Jane Worlie, and Cindy Smith prepared a delicious dinner for the members that were able to attend. Plans were made for the UMW Christmas Party on December 10th, and we also discussed having a Musical Christmas program on December 21st at about 4:00. With no children to have a traditional "Sunday School Program," we thought it might be enjoyable to have the adults do this very special Christmas event.

The UMW has been doing a Bible Study class using the book, "Seeing Gray in a World of Black and White" which is written by Adam Hamilton. Pat Siefken is leading this class. We have one more session to complete this study, but we will put that off until after Christmas, as we are now doing another Adam Hamilton Study for Advent. Pastor Matt is leading this, and the book is "Not a Silent Night". Both of these studies also have a DVD that we use.

Conde participated in Shoe Box Christmas

This year we had a good response to the Shoe Box project. There were some gifts purchased, and then several people donated money to buy more things. Donna Hearnen and Donna Walter had the joy of doing this. Both of these ladies like to shop, so they took on this job "full force ahead"; however, they don't seem to have quite as much speed as they did a few years ago.

After the shopping, the items were taken up to North Highland Church. They put together the boxes with all the gifts that are brought in from several churches. The best

part is that they then deliver them to the Enemy Swim Indian School. It is fun to hear their stories about the happiness that these rather small gifts bring to these children. A lot of volunteer work goes into sorting items according to age suitability and trying to make each box somewhat equal in amount of gifts. We feel that it is a very worthwhile mission, and no money is used for distribution or postage.



Conde UMW Christmas Party Time Changed

The event was originally planned for the morning of the 10th at 10:00, but because of some conflicts, it had to be changed. It will be in the evening at 6:00 pm on the same date, December 10th, so we hope for some nice weather. There will be a meal and program. The ladies will present a short play entitled, "Have You Heard the Latest?" Imagine a group of women talking about this young girl, Mary, "who is pregnant and not even married." It shows that "gossiping" didn't just start in the twenty-first century.

There will be no charge, but guests will have an opportunity to donate a nonperishable food item, or a monetary gift for the same charity.

Code MISSION STATEMENT

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

Groton UMW - November

President Jolene Townsend began the meeting by reading a prayer for children at risk at Christmas time. We are often too complacent in caring for the world's children. The reading reminds us that we must never forget the world's children are our future. She also thanked Gloria Pharis for filling in for her recently.

The minutes and financial reports were given and approved. Correspondence consisted of a thank-you from Camille Sippel and the Justin, Amanda, and Kaelee Morehouse family.

There were no mission reports, but members were reminded to keep pop tabs, cards, and grocery receipts etc through May. There are enough coffee cans for Dec. 10. Jolene asked if someone would prepare the cans by washing them and Mar-



lys Rodman volunteered. Gloria has also started a partial list for delivery.

In other business, the Secret Angel Program will take off in January, 1:30 will be the permanent start time for UMW meetings, and approval was made by the group for 2014 mission giving.

At the end of the meeting Kay Brandt gave the program "Vintage Christmas." It was a delightful program of reminiscences and food. Vintage Christmas is a time to slow down and remember. To reminisce and to reflect on God's love and faithfulness. Kay was assisted by Marlys Rodman.

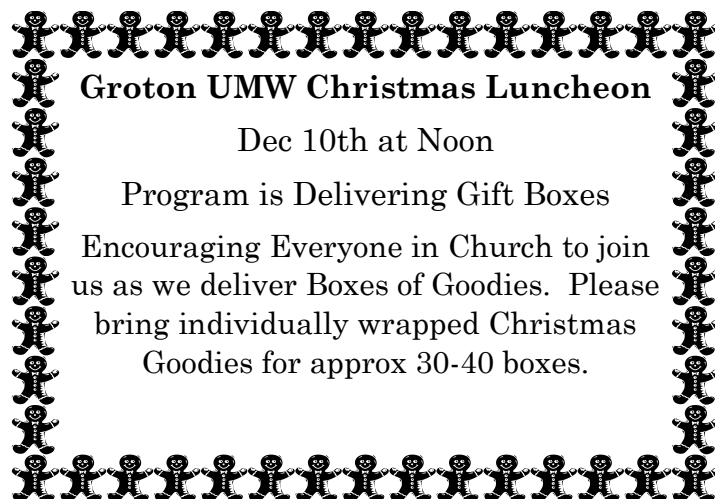
Don't forget to join the fun on Dec. 10 at 12p.m. for the UMW Luncheon and the delivering of boxes of treats.

Groton Sunday School Christmas Program is on Dec 14th during Worship. A potluck dinner will follow. Please bring a vegetable dish, salad or dessert to share. Families and guests welcome. Main dish and drinks will be provided.

Children in the program should be at church at 10:15 am to rehearse music.

Extra Practices will be Weds, Dec 10 after school. A snack will be served and practice will begin by 4 pm. Practice will end at 5 pm.

Extra practice will be Sat, Dec 13 at 10 am.



Groton UMW Christmas Luncheon

Dec 10th at Noon

Program is Delivering Gift Boxes

Encouraging Everyone in Church to join us as we deliver Boxes of Goodies. Please bring individually wrapped Christmas Goodies for approx 30-40 boxes.

God's Heart Toward Us

Bryon and Ruthie were unemployed one December. Wanting their seven children to have gifts to open on Christmas morning, they took \$20 and shopped diligently at the thrift store, finding seven small items to place under a tiny tree they'd found in a field. Feeling desperate about all their other needs and guilty for praying for presents, the couple asked God to bless their kids.

On Christmas Eve, a couple they barely knew, friends of friends from church, called and asked to stop by. They pulled up in a 15-passenger van and

asked if Bryon and Ruthie's kids could help carry in "a couple of things." In fact, the rear seats had been removed and the vehicle was filled with packages and groceries. The next morning, the family unwrapped goodies both practical and fun.

"We felt as if the Lord was saying, 'This is my heart toward you. I want to bless you,'" Bryon writes. "It is the Lord's heart to bless his children."

—Adapted from *Miracles: 32 True Stories*, Joanie Hileman

A song with a message?

According to modern folklore, the song "The 12 Days of Christmas" was written to help young believers learn about their faith.

Although no evidence proves that claim, some say the popular carol contains these codes:

The partridge in a pear tree is Jesus Christ.

Two turtle doves are the Old and New Testaments.

Three French hens stand for faith, hope and love.

The four calling birds are the four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

The five golden rings are the Law: the first five books of the Old Testament.

The six geese a-laying represent the six days of creation.

Seven swans a-swimming represent the gifts of the Holy Spirit: prophesy, serving, teaching, exhortation, contribution, leadership and mercy.

The eight maids a-milking are Jesus' eight beatitudes.

Nine ladies dancing are the fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

The 10 lords a-leaping are the Ten Commandments.

The 11 pipers piping stand for the 11 faithful disciples.

The 12 drummers drumming symbolize the 12 statements of belief in the Apostles' Creed.



November 30 Titan Jay Johnson was baptized. Son of TJ and Samantha Johnson, Aberdeen.

Baby Shower for Jesus

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace!" Isaiah 9:6

JESUS was once a baby with many needs. He too needed things like food and blankets. There are babies/children in our area who also are in need of these items, and the children in our congregation will have the opportunity to give and share during this season of giving. This will be our Sunday School offering/missions project for the holiday season. There will be a table in the back of the church through Sunday, Dec. 21, for donations of gifts and/or money to be used to purchase items.

Gift ideas (to be donated locally) are small packages of diapers, baby food, bibs, and receiving blankets. We have been informed that Lincoln School in Aberdeen has a great need for the following items: Lg./XL goodnights, 4t-5t pull-ups, Med./Lg swim diapers, wipes, diaper cream, baby lotion, and no tear shampoo, as well as sizes 4, 5, 6, & 7 pants & shirts and size 9 kid's shoes. Please do NOT wrap any gifts.

We appreciate your donations very much, and wish everyone a blessed holiday season!

Please call Kim Weber (380-7148) with any questions.

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 24 Kenley Johnson
 Dec 26 Ben Peterson
 Dec 27 Emily Overacker
 Jane Johnson



Karla Pasteur
 Dec 28 Jaden Dobbins
 Meredith Anderson
 Dec 29 Andrea Davidson
 Dec 30 Alec Oleson
 Alex Graf
 Breslyn Hinman
 Dec 31 Ralph & Virginia Breitzkreutz
Conde
 Dec 1 Joyce Haskell
 Betty Haskell
 Dec 4 Greg & Stacey Bonn
 Dec 8 Tony Bruckner
 Dec 10 Skylar Bonn
 Dec 20 Rex Taylor
 Dec 24 Floyd Smith
 Dec 25 Larae Taylor
 Dec 27 Richard & Dorothy Sanderson

80th Birthday
 Celebration for
 Darlys Kampa
 Sunday December 7th
 During Coffee Hour

With Humble Hearts

Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity, which marks the likely spot of Jesus' birth, has a four-foot-high entrance. Throughout the centuries, the height of the entrance has been lowered twice: once to prevent looting and once to keep out camel- and horse-riders.

Because visitors must bow as they enter, this has become known as the Door of Humility. It's a reminder of the reverent, submissive posture our hearts should take as we approach our newborn Lord and Savior. It's also a reminder that Jesus is

the narrow door (Luke 13:24) – the only path to eternal life.

As you worship this Christmas season, whether or not you're physically able to kneel, enter Jesus' presence with a humble and thankful heart. He alone deserves our reverence because he alone is able to save.





Groton
Men's Fall
Dinner

A tale of the Candy Cane

The account of the candy cane's origins circulates every Christmas season and is more likely a fun story than historical fact. No matter; tales often contain truth. This tasty treat can convey important elements of our Christian faith.



The stripes remind us of the heart of Christmas, our Savior, Jesus: white for his purity; red for his blood shed on the cross. The candy cane resembles the curved staffs of the shepherds – the first people to visit the Christ-Child and worship at the manger. And when the cane is turned upside down, it becomes a letter J, for “Jesus.”

Indeed, Jesus turns our lives upside down and inverts our presumptions: A poor baby born in a stable becomes King of kings and Lord of lords; enemies aren't for hating but loving; blessings aren't for hoarding but sharing; the world works for war, but Jesus calls us to live in peace; receiving is better than giving; sinners are made saints; and death is conquered as God grants us eternal life.

Groton Stewardship Report Nov 2014

Average
Wkly Giving
\$2,132

Needed Wkly for
Church Mission
\$2,125

Average Weekly
Attendance Sunday
67

Total Building Fund
Donations
for Repairs
\$7835



Groton UMC

Marlys Rodman	397-4570
Pat Dahlquist	397-2616
Doris Zoellner	397-2417
Marjory Townsend	298-5221
Ann Rix	397-8478
Darlys Kampa	395-6996
DeLoris Knoll	397-2681
Gloria Pharis	397-2375
Audrey Thurston	397-8493

*If you are not on this list or the email prayer chain, 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



A Special Baby

Mark Lowry, who wrote the lyrics to the Christmas song “Mary, Did You Know?” says he's always been amazed by Mary's silence at the cross, as her son was being crucified. Maybe she was remembering back to that first Christmas, he wonders, when she counted Jesus' fingers and toes.

“I wonder if she realized then that those were the same fingers that had scooped out the oceans and formed the seas. I wonder if she realized those were the same feet that had walked on streets of gold and been worshiped by angels. Those little lips were the same lips that had spoken the world into

existence. When Mary kissed her little baby, she wasn't just kissing another baby; she was kissing the face of God.”

Mary silently watched her son die 33 years later, Lowry notes – not just for the world but also for his own mother. “The baby boy she had delivered on that first Christmas was now on a cross delivering her.”



Sunday School Schedule

Dec 7 Sunday School Christmas Program Practice

Dec 14 Sunday School - Christmas Program During Church with Potluck Following

Dec 21 Sunday School Craft Day

Dec 28 No Sunday School

Jan 4 No Sunday School

Jan 11 Sunday School

Jr UMYF Schedule

Dec 10 6 pm POTLUCK for all families and then Caroling at Rosewood and Golden Living Center. With Sr UMYF as well as any church members

Dec 24 No Jr UMYF

Jan 7 6:30 pm

Upside Down?

Even amid increased secularization, God makes the core Christmas message known. Take, for example, the story of a “winter pageant” a mother attended at her son’s grade school. Songs of reindeer, snow and Santa included one titled “Christmas Love,” in which the youngest performers held up letters as the song progressed: “C,” “H,” etc.

When a little girl unknowingly held her “M” upside down, the older kids snickered and the adult audience smiled acceptingly. But as the song drew to a close and all the letters were revealed, surprised recognition struck the Christians in the room.

“CHRISTWAS LOVE,” read the string of student-borne letters. God’s truth had penetrated the human clutter and confusion around Christmas — as it has power to do throughout our lives: “Christ was love.” And of course, he still is.



Make this special plate as a gift to give this Christmas.

What you need:

- Clear glass plate
- Acrylic craft paint
- Paintbrush and water
- Black permanent marker

What you do:

1. Turn plate upside-down on table. Paint one of your palms brown, and press it on the center of the plate.
2. Rotate the plate so fingers point down. Using yellow paint, make a straw bed in the palm.
3. Mix white and brown paint for Jesus' face. Use white paint for a swaddled body.
4. Paint a yellow star above Jesus and a yellow border around the plate rim.
5. When paint is dry, turn plate over. With the marker, draw dots for Jesus' eyes and write the words of Luke 2:12 around the plate rim.

Groton Ad Council - November

After reviewing the end of October financial statement, the council discussed delaying payment of our apportionments until our monthly financial situation improves. They also decided to include our weekly funding needs in our church bulletin. It was noted that we have been blessed with a continued increase in the building fund for our update project.

Both the general and parish proposed budgets were reviewed and the council voted on budgets to

propose at the Charge Conference.

The council decided to designate the Men's Dinner proceeds (total not yet know) toward our general fund and also decided to designate ½ of the Christmas Eve offering to Easter baskets and ½ to our Missions Committee.

The trustees reported that our window replacement project should be complete by the third week in December and we will then be billed.

Groton Jan Family Committee for 2015

Darlys Kampa

Yvonne Lorenz

Kim & Craig Weber

- Lynette & Leroy Severson
- Tim Olson
- John Padfield
- Pernell & Noella Graf, Brady, Alex
- Kevin & Kara Pharis
- Melissa & Neil Gilbert
- Josh & Merrie Atherton
- Francine & Marc Sippel, Anthony
- Kelli & Lars Hanson, Kari
- Jay & Linda Johnson
- Carol & Pat Knecht, Spencer, Macy
- Brenda & Tony Madsen

Honorary Members

- Audrey Padfield
- Bob Johnson
- Audrey Thurston

January 2015						
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

January Responsibilities

- Shovel snow from doorways before Church
- Take down Christmas decorations with all church helping
- If tree lights need replacing, do so before putting trees away
- Potluck 2nd Sunday - give church secretary details for bulletin
- Check Kitchen Supplies for the month
- Check & Clean Oven and Fridge as necessary
- Coffee Hour workers (make coffee, provide cookies, launder towels, and remove trash)
- 2 usherers for each Sunday
- Pickup ritual of friendship sheets
- Straighten the Sanctuary Pews
- Maintain the Altar Flower Arrangements
- Serve at Golden Living Center - 2nd Sunday
- Remind Carna & Cliff Pray to change banners and altar cloths



Groton Mission Statement
"Enriching Spiritual lives through Christ."

Our Church Happenings

December 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			



- Dec 3 Groton NOOMA DVD Study 7:30 pm
Dec 6 Lay Ministries Effective Evangelism Course 9 am Groton UMC
Dec 7 Groton 80th Birthday Celebration for Darlys Kampa 10 am
Dec 7 Groton UMW Special Recognition Sunday
Dec 10 Groton SS Program Practice after school till 4:45 pm
Dec 10 Groton Jr High UMYF Caroling with potluck 6 pm
Dec 10 Groton UMW Christmas Noon Luncheon
Dec 10 Conde UMW Christmas Event 6 pm - all are welcome!
Dec 10 Groton NOOMA DVD Study 7:30 pm
Dec 12 UMYF attending "The Reason" Concert in Aberdeen
Dec 13 Groton SS Program Practice at 10 am
Dec 14 Groton Sunday School Christmas Program with Potluck
Dec 15 Charge Conference 7 pm in Groton
Dec 17 Groton UMYF Pizza/Christmas Party
Dec 17 NO Groton Ad Council
Dec 21 Groton Angel Tree Gifts due by NOON
Dec 24 Groton Service 5 pm
Conde Service 7 pm