



January/February 2021

906 N 1st St, Groton, SD 57445

...from Pastor Brandon

Hello Church Family,

Do you know which books of the Bible I've read the most? The first 3... The reason being just about every December I have this conviction that I do not read my Bible nearly as much as I should. If I am a follower of Christ then I should behave as someone, well... following. So, I have set a daily Bible reading goal to start January 1st more years than I haven't.

The problem with forming any new habit however is the sustaining nature of the practice until it becomes second nature. Reading your Bible more sounds like a wonderful idea until you realize your body doesn't always get on board as quick as your heart does. Waking up earlier in the day or staying up later in bed... turning off the TV in the evening to have a few moments of intentionality with God and His Word is far more difficult than we want to admit because those practices shake up our established daily rhythm. But it's there that I feel God wanting to speak into me and through me.

What is our rhythm? What are our lives built upon? What are the things that we value the most? Personally, if I cannot bring



myself to spend 15 minutes of my day with my Bible and my Lord, can I really say that He is my priority? If I believe that "every good and perfect gift is from above" (James 1:17) and among those gifts are my wife, friends, family, job, home, food on the table, heart that feels joy, and maybe even greater than all those, purpose for this life... but do not have time to spend with God in thankfulness and in council to know how I can share these great gifts with others... am I misleading myself to believe that God is the rock I stand upon?

Thankfully that is where grace meets us time and time again. It meets us through the blessing of unconditional love and it

meets us through His church. We do not go to church out of guilt. We ARE the church because of grace. It is in our church family that we draw near to God and celebrate His goodness. Celebrate His faithfulness. Celebrate the ways He is moving in the people around us. And draw near to one another in the midst of struggle and pain. It's not just a habit that needs to be started it's a home that is waiting for you.

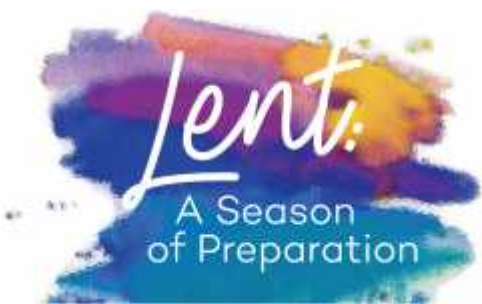
So my charge to you is simple. BE THE HURCH. Lean into the habit of carving out time for the giver instead of just for the gifts. God wants to rebuild us, by His power... do we accept? Blessings,
Pastor Brandon Dunham



Pastor
In Office
Tuesday &
Thursday
Mornings

Friday
Day Off





Lent 2021 Schedule

Ash Wednesday, February 17th

This year we will be offering the imposition of ashes in our Groton church's drive through. Pastor Brandon will be available at the front door from 11:30am- 1:00pm for those who wish to receive ashes and a couple other Lenten gifts.

Groton Memorial Thank You

Thank you for the sanctuary TV, projector, computer, and software in memory of Harry Pharis.

Thank you for the fellowship hall TV in memory of Mickey Padfield, Twila Ruden, Doug Bahr, Jake Mckiver, Emery Sippel and Bert Raap.

Both these projects also involved meters, cables, bracket, wall mounts,

Palm Sunday, March 28th

Marking the beginning of Holy Week we will be remembering the joyful and triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem while also marking the passion narratives that take place throughout the week.

Good Friday, April 2nd

As we did last year, we will be observing the last moments of Jesus before his betrayal and crucifixion through daily devotions throughout the week. Beginning on Monday at 7am and reaching it's end on Friday, we will be sharing the story as well as words of reflection on our Facebook page Facebook.com/grotonsdumc as well as through email. If you are receiving the messages each week through our mail ministry you will also receive these.



Easter Sunday, April 4th

All are invited to join as we celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord! Worship will still be at 9:00am in Conde and 11:00am in Groton.



Groton UMC Confirmation Sunday will be March 14th. There will be no Confirmation the Wednesday before, just a meeting with the 8th graders. ATTENDANCE IN WORSHIP REQUIRED OF ALL CONFIRMATION STUDENTS.

and labor, so thank you to all who remember memorials to the church in honor of their family and friends.



Sympathies to the family of
Gary Heitmann
who died
January 1, 2021



Church Information

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Secretary Email: grotonumc@nvc.net
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Facebook: facebook.com/grotonsdumc/
906 N 1st St Groton, SD 57445

Connections Across the Dakotas: Meet Bishop Laurie Haller

Bishop Laurie Haller is serving as the interim bishop for the Dakotas Conference. She also serves as the resident bishop for the Iowa Area of The United Methodist Church.

In this video interview, she shares about her ministry journey. "I never would have imagined that I would be a bishop serving the United Methodist Church," says Bishop Haller.

She grew up in the Mennonite faith, and had uncles and great uncles who were pastors. When Bishop Laurie went to college and graduate school, she felt a call to ministry. However, women couldn't be pastors in the Mennonite church.

Bishop Haller initially thought she would be a church organist. She received a Bachelor of Music degree in organ performance from Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio, where she spent her junior year studying sacred music at the Berliner Kirchenmusikschule in West Berlin, Germany. She also received a

Master of Music degree in organ performance from the Yale University Institute of Sacred Music and School of Music, and a Master of Divinity degree from Yale Divinity School.

For more than 40 years, Bishop Laurie has been striving to run daily. She has run the Boston Marathon 10 times. You can also find her riding bike. She has participated in the Ride Across Iowa (RAGBRAI), marathons and triathlons. She has completed three Ironman triathlons. She does some hiking and climbing and completed the rim-to-rim hike at the Grand Canyon.

Bishop Haller is married to Rev. Gary Haller. They have three children and two grandchildren.

Article reprinted from [Connections across the Dakotas: Meet Bishop Laurie Haller - Dakotas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church \(dakotasumc.org\)](#) and video may be viewed online here.



Human Relations Day - Jan 17

We are all family. When we walk past our neighbor who is hiding in plain sight, we limit the gifts and graces that our sisters and brothers in Christ bring to the table. We limit the experiences, the voices and the beloved community that take place through mutual sharing of gifts. With a special offering celebrating Human Relations Day, we join with United Methodists around the world, remembering that the size of the table of divine love is unlimited.

Across the United Methodist connection, we come together to help bridge the gap between church and community by participating in an offering set aside for Human Relations Day. For more than half a century, United Methodists have observed this church-wide special Sunday in recognition of the message Jesus demonstrated during his life: all of God's children are important.

One of the wonderful aspects of

The United Methodist Church is that we can do so much more together than we ever could do on our own. On Human Relations Day, we join other UMC congregations in a special offering to support neighborhood ministries through Community Developers, community advocacy through United Methodist Voluntary Services and work with at-risk youth through the Youth Offender Rehabilitation Programs.

In recognizing Human Relations Day, we are called to make an impact in communities where people struggle because they don't have the tools or resources to reach their God-given potential. Our gifts are part of building beloved community through faith-based volunteer programs, community developers and programs that work with at-risk teens.

Give Today by marking your offering and placing it in the offering plate on Sunday morning.

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



Groton UMC 10 AM Bible Study

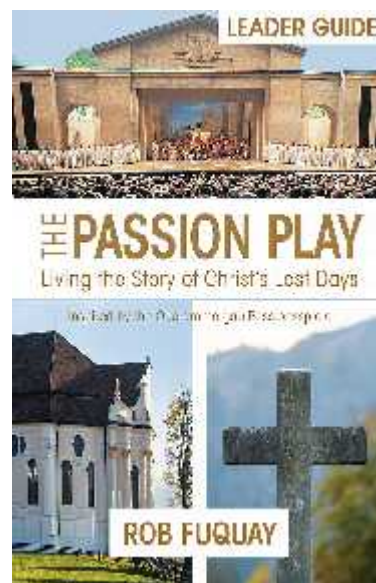
Bible Study will be resuming on Feb 16th for the season of Lent. We will be still wearing masks during this time to take care of each other. You may purchase your own book online if you wish. We will be using a DVD.

Recognize your own place in the story and Passion of Jesus.

Jesus' Passion story is presented each Lent in countless churches every year. But one play presented by the inhabitants of the village of Oberammergau, in Bavaria, Germany, may be one of the longest-running performance of all. Staged every ten years

since 1634, the play makes an impact not only on the villagers who portray the characters but on all who see it as well. In *The Passion Play*, Rob Fuquay follows the biblical story of the Passion and shows how this amazing play has been used both as a ritual of praise and later as a weapon through its anti-Semitic past. The book makes a perfect six-week Lenten group study when paired with the Leader Guide and the DVD, which was filmed on location in Germany and contains behind-the-scenes footage of the production.

Kay Daly



Lenten Small Group Study

This year we are joining with churches across our Dakotas and Minnesota Conference of the UMC in a six-week study of Michael Frost's "Surprise the Word". Books can be picked up during worship and Conde will begin meeting on Tuesday, February 16th at 6:00pm at the Conde church. Groton will begin meeting on Monday, February 15th at 7:00pm in the Groton UMC Fellowship Hall. Both groups will begin conversations around chapter 1.

(Taken from the Conference Description)

Ash Wednesday, February 17, 2021, marks the beginning of Lent. We will be marked with ash, be reminded of our mortality, and know that from dust we came and to dust we shall return. But surprise: God so loved the world that God gave his only Son, Jesus, not so that we would die, but that we would live! We die, but we don't? That is surprising.

And the culmination of Lent, Easter Sunday, this year is April 4, 2021. Everyone thought they knew



how the world worked. Who had the power, what the rules were, who was in, and who was out. They killed the one who came to turn the world upside down, and called anyone who followed him a fool, but then what happened? Surprise! He is not here. He has risen from the dead. Nope,

dead is not dead, and what we think we know for sure, well maybe, just maybe there is more. Way more.

God is not predictable. God is mystery and beauty and amazing love and joy. And God's presence in our life and world breaks in and through in the most surprising ways, leading us to places and new beginnings that we thought impossible.

We who have encountered this surprising God, who have been on the journey from death to life, we too live different lives. Lives that the world often considers unusual, surprising, but that we know to be the best and only way to live. This Lent, we want to be a part of surprising the world. We invite you to join the movement!



Upcoming Lenten Sermon Series

“Wait what? Jonah isn’t a story about Jesus. I remember Sunday School and the felt board told me it’s about a guy who disobeyed God and got swallowed by a fish!” That is correct, but Jonah is also so much more than the kid-friendly tale we remember.

Few stories capture the spirit of disobedience and repentance like the story of Jonah. It’s a story of God’s compassion and longing for all people to return to him. It’s a story of running away and coming home, of disobedience and spiteful obedience, and of course the excitement we love. Ultimately Jonah is a story about a resentful prophet and a relentless God who transforms the world through his love. Would you join us on this Lenten journey?



Groton Ad Council - Dec 15

Pastor Brandon Dunham called the Zoom meeting to order at 7:05 pm. Those in attendance were: Pastor Brandon, Richard Krueger, Lon Gellhaus, Linda Thurston, Anita Lowary, and Jeanne Wanous

Agenda: The agenda was approved on a motion by Anita Lowary.

Minutes: The previous meeting minutes from two special meetings on Nov. 14 & 27, and the monthly meeting on Nov. 18 were approved on a motion by Anita Lowary.

Correspondence: None

Treasurer’s Report: The only discussion was that we were hopeful that members would be making generous end-of-year donations as they generally do which will help our dwindling bank balance.

Pastor Parish: No report

Bills to be Presented: None

Administrative Report:

- ⇒ Pastor Brandon stated that after Advent he will revert back to live stream Sunday services as opposed to the pre-recorded videos he has been doing for Advent.
- ⇒ Brandon reported that he had re-

ceived pre-recorded videos from all Sunday school students which he will put together for the on-line Christmas children’s program.

- ⇒ The Christmas Eve on-line service will be posted at 5:00 pm Dec. 24.
- ⇒ Approximately 25 Advent Kits were picked up by church members.
- ⇒ Brandon said that he had received no requests for specific stops by student Christmas carolers so he and a couple students plan to go to Rosewood Court only.
- ⇒ Pastor Brandon said that Groton’s Sunday Dec. 27 service would be online featuring “A Very Dakota Christmas” prepared by the Dakotas Conf. Cabinet.
- ⇒ Any finally, Dale Kramer will lead our worship on Jan. 3, 2021.

Committee Reports:

Memorial: None

Trustees: Richard Krueger reported that we missed the window to spray for attic flies. He has also turned the heat down in the Sunday school rooms to conserve energy while we are not meeting in person.

Old Business: None

New Business:

- ⇒ The council discussed when they felt comfortable returning to in-person services. After discussion around concerns that there may be another rise in Covid cases after the Christmas & New Year holidays, Anita Lowary motioned to wait until our next Ad Council meeting on Jan. 20, 2021 to decide on a “return to normal” date. All present voted in favor of the motion.
- ⇒ Ad Council Vice-Chairman: It was noted that although Lars Hanson had agreed to be our new Ad Council chairman, we have not secured a new Vice-Chairman for 2021 so Brandon said he would work on that.

Thank You:

- ⇒ To the Morehouse family for putting up our outdoor Nativity scene.
- ⇒ To those who decorated our church for Christmas.

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.
Secretary, Jeanne Wanous

Groton March Family Committee

John & Meri Erickson

Nick & Jenna Strom

Brian Bahr

Dion & Sam Bahr, Ashtyn

Steve & Becky Diegel

Lucy & Andy Daly, Chloe

Adrienne & Tigh Fliehs

Scott & Myndi Kampa, Tristan

Kami & Tom Lipp, Tanae

Julie & Jesse Morehouse

Karen & Ian Rose

Marjae & Dan Schinkel, Emma

William Zoellner

Honorary Members

Ida Hannon

Doris Zoellner

March Responsibilities

Due to COVID19 many duties will be changed. Please find out what responsibilities need to be carried out for the month from the Ad Council Chair.

⇒ 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 Ushers for each Sunday
- ⇒ Straighten the Sanctuary Pews
- ⇒ Change the banners as needed as per schedule in back of committee book
- ⇒ Maintain the Altar Flower Arrangements
- ⇒ Shovel snow from doorways before Church
- ⇒ Potluck 2nd Sunday - give church secretary details for bulletin
- ⇒ Change decorations on tables in fellowship hall with the seasons
- ⇒ Serve at Avantra Nursing Home



Groton Stewardship Report Nov 2020

Average Wkly Giving \$1,601

Needed Wkly for Church Mission \$2,285

Average Weekly Attendance Sunday ---

Total Building Fund Donations for Repairs \$15

Groton Stewardship Report Dec 2020

Average Wkly Giving \$1,001

Needed Wkly for Church Mission \$2,285

Average Weekly Attendance Sunday ---

Total Building Fund Donations for Repairs \$15

Bible Quiz

What was the name of Moses' wife?

A. Miriam
B. Jochebed
C. Zipporah
D. Leah



Answer: C (See Exodus 2:21)





Our Church Celebrations...

Groton

- Jan 2 Holly Walter
- Jan 3 Caroline Graf
- Jan 5 Treyton Diegel
- Jan 6 Sam Bahr
Zachary Townsend
- Jan 7 Karla & Russell Davidson
- Jan 9 JoAnn Krueger
- Jan 10 Anita Voss
Melissa & Neil Gilbert
Neil Gilbert
- Jan 11 Huntley Overacker
Myndi Kampa
Randy Padfield
- Jan 13 Lance Hawkins
Monte McNickle
- Jan 14 Isabella Daly
Jay & Linda Johnson
- Jan 16 Hunter Bahr
Marjorie Overacker
Ryder Johnson
- Jan 18 Cheryl Graf
- Jan 19 Tim Graf
- Jan 21 Taryn Thompson
- Jan 23 Jed Morehouse
- Jan 26 Doris Zoellner
- Jan 27 Kristie Hawkins
- Jan 28 Ruby Luce

- Feb 2 Journey Zieroth
- Feb 4 KayLynn Overacker
Tim Olson
- Feb 5 Scott Eisenbeisz
Todd Thurston
- Feb 7 Gary Voss
- Feb 8 Gage Sippel
Larry Wheeting
- Feb 10 Brenda Madsen
Dion Bahr
June Thompson
Nori Hinman
Andrea & Scott Eisenbeisz
- Feb 12 Skyler Kramer
Yvonne Lorenz
- Feb 14 Diane Nissen
- Feb 16 Pernell Graf
- Feb 19 Gaylene Voss
Robin O'Neill
- Feb 20 Jim & Judy Zeck
- Feb 21 Joe Nelson
Wyatt Morehouse
- Feb 22 Anthony Schinkel
- Feb 25 Brent Morehouse
Greg Heitmann

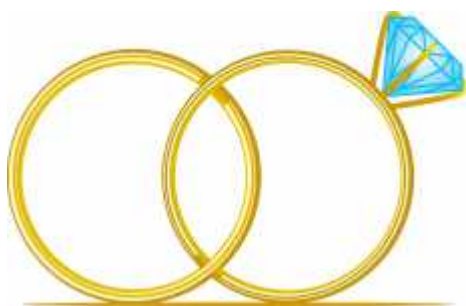
Conde

- Jan 3 Bruce Herman
- Jan 10 Donna Hearnen
- Jan 11 Norman Smith
- Jan 31 Kevin Hanlon

- Feb 4 Donna Walter
- Feb 5 Richard Sanderson
- Feb 9 Vicki Stark
- Feb 15 Tim & Betty Geist
- Feb 19 Tyler Stark
- Feb 22 Horace Walter



The parable of the Lost Ring



Only three years after Paula and Joe Walter married, her wedding ring was lost as she played catch with their son. Naturally, she was heartbroken. Over the years, whenever family and friends gathered in the back yard, she urged everyone to look for the ring — but to no avail. Because the yard borders on woods, Paula feared the ring had flown into the trees, never to be seen again.

But just before the couple's 40th anniversary, landscapers hired to do work in the yard brought her a surprise: They'd found the ring — right where Paula had

been playing with her child so long ago! Like the woman in Jesus' parable who finally found her lost coin (Luke 15:8-10), Paula rejoiced. God too searches until every person who has strayed or been flung away from the faith is found. Sometimes the place we rediscover faith is right where we've looked before. What makes the difference? A different person helping us search? Light shining in a different way? We may never know. We simply rejoice — and so does God.

—Heidi Mann



Groton Ad Council - Jan 20

Pastor Brandon Dunham opened the meeting with a prayer. Lars Hanson called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Those in attendance were: Pastor Brandon, Richard Krueger, Jeanne Wanous, Lars Hanson, Anita Lowary, Brandon Dunham, Brent Morehouse, and Meri Erickson.

Agenda: The agenda was approved as written.

Minutes: The minutes were approved as written.

Correspondence: None

Treasurer's Report: Marjorie Overacker remarked that we are running about \$4000/month behind. Pastor Brandon shared that he and Allen Walter, Financial Chair, have discussed sending a letter to the congregation to make them aware of our financial situation in hopes to help increase member giving.

Pastor Parish: No report

Bills to be Presented: None

Administrative Report:

Pastor Brandon stated that he is looking toward Lent and plans to offer small group studies. In addition, plans are being made for Ash Wednesday & Good Friday.

Committee Reports: None

Memorial: None

Trustees: Richard Krueger stated

that he is regularly monitoring the building to make sure we are not overheating unused areas.

Old Business:

- * 2021 Ad Council Vice-Chair: A new Vice-Chair has not been appointed so suggestions were made and Pastor Brandon will visit with those people to see if they would serve the church in that way. Brandon also stated that the 2021 Charge Conference booklets would be ready soon.

New Business:

- * Auditing of 2020 Church Financial Books: Anita Lowary volunteered to audit the 2020 books.
- * Wells Fargo Bank Closing: Marjorie Overacker reported on the process of changing our bank accounts over to Groton's Dakota Bank. It was noted that Groton UMC has 11 different accounts with Wells Fargo. After discussion a motion by Anita Lowary was made and 2nd to move all Groton UMC accounts from Wells Fargo to Dakota Bank. The motion passed.
- * Outside Groups Meeting at Church Again: The question of allowing outside groups (such as PEO) to begin meeting again at

our church had been raised. The board discussed continuing concerns with the spread of Covid and the consensus was to hold off on allowing this.

- * Status of Surplus Items: This item was overlooked and will be added to Old Business for February's meeting.
- * Rent from Piano Teacher: It was stated that our church is receiving rent from the individual giving piano lessons in our church.
- * Continue In-person Church Services: There were no objections to continuing in-person church services as long as we continue using every other pew and encourage the use of face masks.

The meeting adjourned at 7:43 pm. Secretary, Jeanne Wanous

A daily prayer

Whatever happens today, dear Lord, help us remember that you are present. If we find ourselves in the shadows of disappointment or rejection or pain, let us see your comforting light. If we're in the radiant light of success or acceptance or wholeness, may we acknowledge your providence and grace. Wherever we are, grant us the assurance of your nearness. Amen.

Groton Excess Item

The large TV in the fellowship hall is free to whoever would like to haul. It does work well although it does not have a clicker. Photo attached. Please contact Richard Krueger if interested, krurich@nvc.net





Our Church Happenings...

February 2021						
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						

Feb 10 Groton UMYF at 7 pm

Feb 15 Groton Lenten Small Group starts at 7 pm for 6 weeks

Feb 16 Groton 10 AM Bible Study resumes

Feb 16 Conde Lenten Small Group starts at 6 pm for 6 weeks

Feb 17 Ash Wednesday in Groton with Imposition of Ashes Drive-Thru
at the front door from 11:30 - 1 pm

Feb 17 Groton Ad Council 7 pm

Feb 24 Groton UMYF at 7 pm

Mar 14 Confirmation Sunday

Holy Week Daily Devotions on Facebook Mon-Friday at 7 am

April 4 Easter Sunday Church Conde 9 am and Groton 11 am