



Groton & Conde & Britton UMC

Newsletter

November 2025

906 N 1st St, Groton, SD 57445

...Pastor Rob's Ponderings

CHANGE

A cliché says, "Times they are a-changin'." I would add that word to another cliché which says, "There are three things you can count on in life—death, taxes and change."

In our area we are in the middle of change as harvest season continues, temperatures start dropping, mosquitoes are dying, and the winds come more from the North than from any other direction. Fall is my favorite time of year. The colder temperatures, mosquitoes dying, Thanksgiving and Christmas are around the corner, mosquitoes are dying, basketball season is getting ready, mosquitoes are dying. Did I already say that? It really is a season of change. Driving around the countryside, what was once green and colorful is now yellow, gold and harvested. The other day in church someone was "thanked" for "cleaning up the flower beds;" it was another reminder of the changing seasons.

The comment also reminded me of one of my favorite bible verses. Peter quotes Isaiah 40:8 as he writes in I Peter 1:24-25, "The grass withers; the flowers fade but the Word of the Lord remains forever." Change has been part of our lives since the day we were conceived. I drove past a billboard not long ago which reminded me the human heart



starts beating about five weeks after conception. And there's more than a few more weeks until the baby is born! A lot of things can change in those weeks. I viewed a post on Facebook recently from a friend celebrating her son's last high school football game. In the post she shared pictures of her son playing pee-wee, junior high, and high school football. The son is unrecognizable from one stage to the next.

We have been in the Gospel of Luke in recent weeks in church. One person who is always recognizable is Jesus, the Word. Did you know John starts his gospel by saying, "In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God and the Word was God." He's talking about Jesus, not just simply the word we think of as the Bible.

What I'm learning and realizing is Jesus is the Bible. It's all about Him. Jesus told the religious leaders of the day, "You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the scriptures point to me! (John 5:39) You want to know what Jesus thought about a certain issue? Read the Word. You want to know what will happen tomorrow? Read the Word. You want to try to find the purpose to all the change we go through? Read the Word.

Did you know of the 300 questions Jesus asked people in the Gospels, the most common question was, "Have you not read?" (asked 7 different times)

I realize this might sound a bit "old-fashioned." After all, most people have cell phones or "smart phones," even my 84 year old mother

has a smart phone. Yesterday I walked into an office and one of the older people in the office was actually playing a game on his smart phone while trying to take part in a conversation. Times certainly have changed but the importance of knowing the word of God and more importantly, the Word of God has not. If you need resources to better get into and read God's Word, I hope you reach out to me. Many bible resources are free and easy to access, even from your smart phone.

Change might be, and certainly is, happening all around us, but the Word of the Lord remains forever.

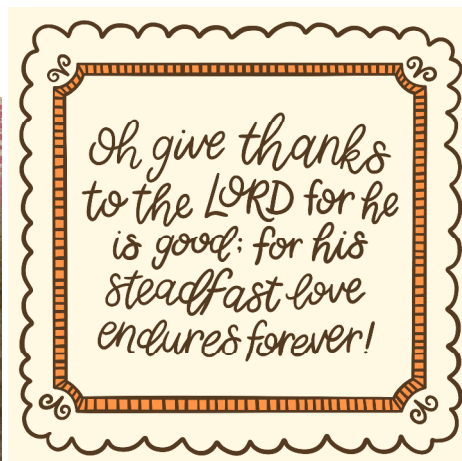
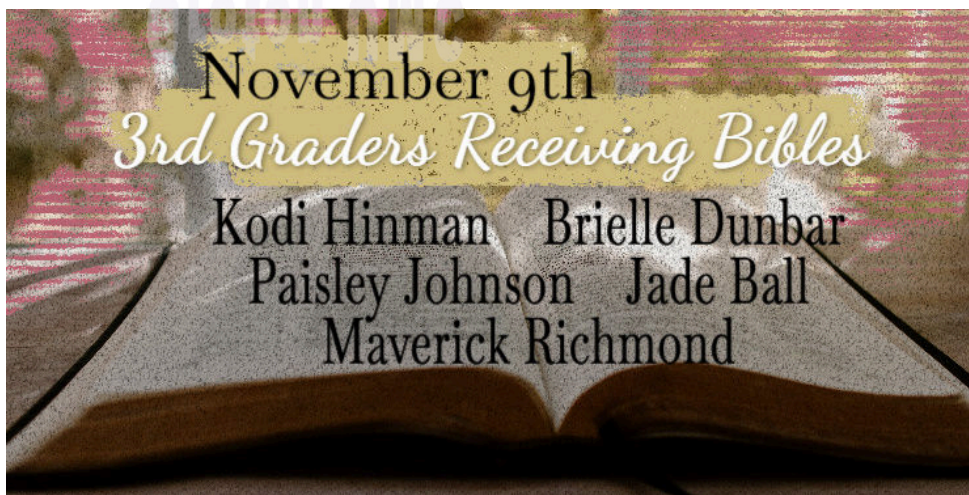
See you in church!



Pastor Rob
In Office
Tuesday &
Thursday
Evenings
6-8 pm

Monday
Day Off

Groton UMC



Conde MISSION STATEMENT

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



2025 Confirmation Schedule

Groton UMC

Class will be at 5:30 pm in Fellowship Hall at Groton UMC

Nov 5 – Class 8 – "Our Church"

Nov 12 – Class 9 – Prep for Confirmation

Nov 16 - Confirmation Sunday

Groton Tues 10 AM Bible Study

We are starting our Christmas Study on November 11. Adam Hamilton's "The Journey" Please join us!

We are also reading the book "The Red Tent" over Christmas Break. If this book interests you, please contact Kay. When we come back in the new year, we are watching the movie on the book, have a discussion on

the movie and a potluck.

Then we are going to study Revelations as a historical document. This will be a slow and in-depth study. If interested, please let Kay know you will be coming. We have a lot of fun learning together.

Church Information

Pastor Rob Moorlach

Office Phone 605-397-8270

Parsonage Phone 605-397-4538

Pastor Email: pastorrob@nvcnet

Secretary Email: grotonumc@nvcnet

Website: www.grotonumc.org

Facebook: [facebook.com/grotonsdumc/](https://www.facebook.com/grotonsdumc/)

906 N 1st St Groton, SD 57445







Dear Beloved in Christ,

Grace and Peace to you in the name of the one who brings forth the harvest and invites us to be co-laborers in sowing God's abundant love.

This past month, the appointive cabinet had the opportunity to hold our monthly meeting at the United Methodist Church in Wall, SD. While I was there, I happened to thumb through an old hymnal that was in our meeting room and discovered a hymn I was not familiar with, "God, Whose Farm is All Creation." It begins with these words:

*"God, whose farm is all creation, take the gratitude we give;
take the finest of our harvest, crops we grow
that we may live."*

Each year, Thanksgiving invites us to pause, to notice God's abundant provision, and to respond with hearts of gratitude and generosity. We are reminded that all we have—the resources we steward, the relationships we care for, the talents we engage, even the very breath in our body—is a gift from our Creator who tends the vast "farm of all creation."

This year, as we reflect on the many blessings that sustain us, I invite you to consider how we might extend that blessing to our neighbors through the 2025 Thanksgiving Offering.

Across North and South Dakota, families are struggling to meet their most basic needs. Many are uncertain where their next meal will come from, how they will afford their heating bill this winter, or

how to pay for critical medical care.

When we pray, "Take our plowing, seeding, reaping, hopes and fears of sun and rain," we are offering to God not just the fruit of our labor but our compassion for those whose harvests have been lean. We are praying that God would use our gifts—our time, our energy, our resources—to cultivate hope where scarcity has taken root.

As part of this year's Thanksgiving Offering, I encourage you and your congregation to give generously and serve faithfully. Consider partnering with local organizations in your community that address food insecurity, provide energy assistance, offer healthcare support, or meet other basic human needs. These are tangible expressions of God's love—ways of tending all of God's creation together.

As you do so, we invite you to share those examples and stories with us through the form linked below and your social media platforms so we can amplify our collective witness. Tag the Dakotas Conference of The United Methodist Church on Facebook or Instagram by adding the hashtag #DKUMCHarvestOfGratitude. Together, our collective witness will tell a powerful story of love in action across the Dakotas.

If you would like to participate in our shared, connectional effort, you can also give through the Dakotas Conference Thanksgiving Offering. This year, your gifts will support Feeding South Dakota

and the Great Plains Food Bank, vital ministries that provide nourishment to thousands of our neighbors across the Dakotas. You may share your gifts online through the Dakotas Conference website or by mail (1331 W. University Ave., P.O. Box 460, Mitchell, SD 57301).

Additional information about the 2025 Thanksgiving Offering and resources to help promote this opportunity are available on the Dakotas Conference website. Please invite the members and friends of your congregation to experience the power of our United Methodist connection through this expression of ministry and generosity. Together, we can embody Christ's command to "go and do likewise"—to see, serve, and love our neighbors as ourselves.

In the words of the hymn's final verse:

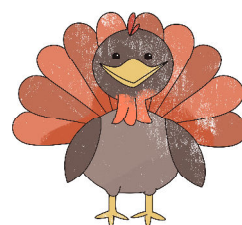
*"All our labor, all our watching, all our calendar
of care,
in these crops of your creation, take, O God:
they are our prayer."*

May your gratitude this Thanksgiving overflow into acts of grace. May your table be full, your hearts be open, and your offering—of time, treasure, and love—become a prayer that ripens into God's abundance for all.

With thanksgiving and hope,



Bishop Lanette Plambeck,
Resident Bishop
Dakotas-Minnesota Episcopal
Area of The United Methodist
Church

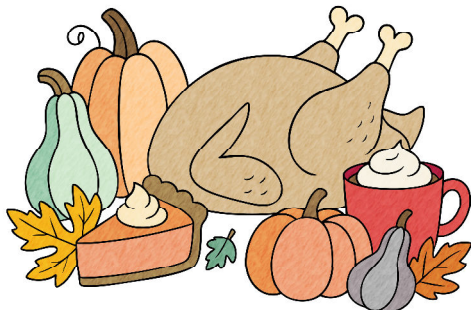




GROTON UMC
Nov. 2 – SS 9:30
9 – SS 9:30
16 – SS 9:30-10:30 (Christmas Parts Out)
23 – SS 9:30-10:30 (Christmas Practice)
30 - NO SS
Dec. 7 - SS 9:30-10:30 (Christmas Practice)
14 – SS 9:30-11:30 (Christmas Practice)
21 – Sunday School Christmas Program 9:30



NOV 12 AT 5:50 PM
MEET IN ARENA LOBBY
FOR A FOOD DRIVE
AT THE HIGH SCHOOL



GROTON UMC OFFERING STATISTICS

	Offering Received	Needed for Budget	Average Attendance	Received for Building Maintenance
2025 Month				
January	5,521	9,249	44	255
February	5,753	9,249	42	205
March	8,209	9,249	55	405
April	20,718	9,249	61	505
May	5,964	9,249	65	280
June	5,876	9,249	29	280
July	5,528	9,249	37	280
August	1,287	9,249	37	255
September	5,428	9,249	63	205
October				
November				
December				
YTD Totals	64,284	83,241		2670

Charge Conference Minutes

Groton/Conde/Britton United Methodist Churches

The Groton/Conde/Britton Parish- es of the United Methodist Church held its annual charge conference at the Groton church on October 11, 2025, at 12:00 pm. Those in attendance were: Northeast District Superintendent Rev. Kris Mutzenberger; attending from Groton were Pastor Rob Morlach, Carna Atherton-Pray, AM & Laurie Mitchell, Linda Thurston, and Jeanne Wanous; attending from Conde was Patty Knoll; and attending from Britton were Ron Binger and Deena Heitmann.

The meeting opened with a devotional scripture from John 4:7-12 and Matthew 28:18-20. Rev. Mutzenberger asked each person in attendance to share how their congregations have loved boldly; how God has been at work in their church or community; how we are all being called to serve in mission in our communities; and where we are all raising a hallelujah for what God is doing.

After a prayer, Kris began the Business Meeting of the Charge Conference by asking each church to discuss and plan our respective church's missions and action plans for 2026.

The balance of the business meeting included:

- ♦ Review of membership rolls for all three churches.
 - ♦ Some corrections were made to Britton's membership list
 - ♦ The corrected membership list was adopted and all members voted YES.
- ♦ Review of all 2026 leaders for Groton, Conde, & Britton.
 - ♦ Leaders voted yes to all leaders listed.
- ♦ Pat & Loren Siefke were voted to

continue as lay leadership.

- ♦ The Parish budget was reviewed. There were no budget changes except for an increase in Pastor Rob's salary, which was approved by all present.
- ♦ Members present Voted YES on a total of \$57,000 annual compensation for Pastor Rob and in favor of designating \$4000 as a housing exclusion.
- ♦ The Parish Budget was adopted as listed.
- ♦ It was noted that all churches completed their annual audits.
- ♦ The Conde & Britton church budgets were approved by all present.
- ♦ The Groton Ad Council still needs to complete a vote of approval for their 2026 budget.
- ♦ All three churches are reminded to review their "Safe Sanctuary" Policies and document approval.

Rev. Kris Mutzenberger closed the Annual Charge Conference with a prayer.

Jeanne Wanous,
Groton Ad Council Secretary



Thankful garland

Celebrate the season of gratitude by creating a colorful Thankful decoration.

What you need:

- Construction paper in a variety of fall colors
- Pencil, marker, or crayons
- Yarn, ribbon, or raffia
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- Spray bottle filled with water
- Real leaves (Optional)
- Wooden or plastic beads, cereal with holes (Cheerios, Froot Loops, etc.), or any dried pasta with a hole (Optional)

What you do:

1. Draw or trace leaf shapes onto construction paper.
2. Lay the paper flat and spray with water until the paper is completely wet.
3. Crumple the wet paper into balls.
4. Open the paper and let the sheets dry flat.
5. When dry, cut out each leaf.
6. On each leaf, write the name of one person or thing you're thankful for.
7. Punch a hole in each leaf.
8. Lace the leaves, beads, cereal, and pasta onto the yarn, ribbon, or raffia.
9. Tie the ends and hang your garland.

Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NIV)

Groton Family Committee - DECEMBER

December 2025 Chairpersons

Carna and Cliff Pray

Doris and Ron Anderson

Doris and Ron Anderson

Pernell Graf

Charity and Scotty Hinman

Nancy Hinrichs

Yvonne Lorenz

Anita and John Lowary

Brenda and Tony Madsen

Belinda and Joe Nelson

Chris and Tyke Nyberg

Jesse Overacker

Roger Overacker

John Padfield

Carna and Cliff Pray

Marjae and Dan Schinkel

Jenna and Nick Strom

Carol Strom

Eugenia and Dwight Strom

Jeanne Wanous

- 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
- 1 Greeter for each Sunday
- Straighten the Sanctuary Pews
- Change the banners as needed as per schedule in back of this book.
- Maintain the Altar Flower Arrangements
- Change decorations on tables in fellowship hall with the seasons
- Help decorate church with November committee
- Prepare Candle table for Christmas Eve Service
- Setup table and lay out candles for Christmas Eve and put them away after the service.
- Shovel snow from doorways before Church
- Potluck 2nd Sunday - give church secretary details for bulletin

Honorary Members

Sharon Wheeting

Louise Thoreson

Betty Strom

Curtis Krueger



December 2025

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			

A Thanksgiving Hymn That Sees God's Hand Everywhere

For a hymn that captures the beauty and gratitude of Thanksgiving, All Things "Bright and Beautiful" is a perfect choice. Its lyrics paint vivid pictures — flowers opening in the morning sun, birds singing, golden sunsets, purple-topped mountains and rivers rushing by. It all leads to this joyful reminder: *"He gave us eyes to see them, and lips that we might tell: How great is God Almighty, who has made all things well."*

The hymn was written by Cecil Frances Alexander (1818–1895), an Irishwoman with a passion for teaching children about God. She wrote many hymns for her Sunday school class, later collected in *Verses for Holy Seasons*.

But her ministry went beyond music — she spent her life serving the poor, comforting the sick, and caring for the grieving. When she passed away, "a great throng" gathered to remember her, honoring both her faith and the beauty she shared with the world.

Our Church Celebrations...

GROTON

Nov 2 Andrea Eisenbeisz
Nov 3 Jon & Gayleen Voss
Nov 7 Marva Gellhaus
Nov 8 Kodi Hinman
Nov 13 Lindsey Tietz
Nov 14 Sydney & Trent Kurtz
Nov 15 Fred & Elaine Wolken
Nov 17 Delaney Atherton
Nov 18 Luverne Strom
Roman Bahr
Nov 19 Crystal Strom
Garrett Heitmann

Nov 21 Pastor Rob

Ava Strom
Trey Tietz
Nov 22 Calli Wilkinson
Nov 23 Dwight & Eugenia Strom
Francine Sippel
Nov 24 Ian & Karen Rose
Ian Rose
Nov 25 Raven Bahr

CONDE

Nov 8 Dorothy Sanderson
Nov 21 Pastor Rob
Nov 25 Bud Bruckner
Nov 25 Betty Geist

BRITTON

Nov 6 Tiya Schott
Nov 7 Jim Bush
Nov 21 Pastor Rob



Groton Ad Council - Oct

Chairman, AM Mitchell, called the meeting to order. In attendance were Pastor Rob Moorlach, AM Mitchell, Jeanne Wanous, Lon Gelhauss, Cliff & Carna Atherton-Pray, and Linda Thurston. Pastor Rob shared a prayer prior to the discussion of business.

Both the agenda and the previous minutes were approved.

Committee Reports

Membership—Anita Lowary: no updates

Memorial—Linda Thurston shared that the annual All Saints Day will be observed on Sunday, Nov. 2, during our normal worship service. Linda will also be sharing information on the Bibles the Groton UMC presents to our children annually. Funding for these Bibles comes from the Memorial fund.

Missions - Val Baker/Carna Atherton-Pray: Carna reported that the coat collection has ended, and our Groton collection will be added to the Aberdeen North Highlands collection. Groton's next project will be Spirit Lake.

Caring Team—Jolene Townsend: no report

Pastor/Parish Relations: Carna noted that this committee is done with their work for the year.

Trustees—Cliff Pray: no updates

Treasurer's Report:

Church Treasurer—Jeanne Wanous:

Church Mutual Insurance is redesigning their billing system, giving us more control over billing.

MGT Insurance Company's annual premium is set for auto-withdrawal on Nov. 6. There were some questions regarding coverage under the policy as well as current premiums. Pastor Rob volunteered to investigate the specific questions.

Tax Exempt Form: We are required to complete an updated tax-exempt form

periodically for the Director of Equalization. Pastor Rob kindly volunteered to complete this form.

Financial Secretary—Allen Walter: no report

Pastor Parish—Meri Erickson: no report

Administrative Report: Pastor Rob

Pastor Rob reviewed confirmation plans and an upcoming service for these students on November 16, 2025. Plans are also being made for a service in early 2026 for those who want to join the Groton UMC.

Our church is required to review our current Safe Sanctuary policy which was approved in 2008. Pastor Rob stated that there is now a new recommendation to update our policy to meet suggestions under the Safer Sanctuary suggestions & requirements. Pastor Rob recommended that a task force of himself, Carna Atherton-Pray, and Meri Erickson be appointed to complete a review and author suggestions for an updated policy. Linda Thurston motioned to appoint a three-person committee consisting of Pastor Rob, Carna Atherton-Pray, and Meri Erickson to review our current policy and make suggestions for an updated policy as well as report their findings and proposals at the November 2025 Groton UMC Ad Council meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

Old Business:

The BAGS program transfer from Groton UMC to Groton Area School Anita Lowary, who has managed the BAGS program for the Groton United Church since approximately 2011, reported that all management and bank accounts have been turned over to the Groton Area School as both parties had agreed to do. She noted that over approximately 13 years the BAGS program had spent approximately \$18,000 on food for the pro-

gram. Total assets rolled over to the Groton Area School was \$14,400. The Groton UMC would like to thank Matt Johnson for his many hours of help with groceries through Kens Fairway over these 13 years. Matt will continue to assist the Groton Area School in the same capacity.

New Business:

Pastor Rob shared that the Brown County Child Protection Services has asked Groton UMC if they could utilize the children's playroom at our church for a two-hour session on Monday's from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm through May of 2026. After discussion, Carna Atherton-Pray motioned to allow the request. Lon Gellhaus 2nd the motion and the motion was approved. Any further details will be managed through Pastor Rob.

Groton UMC 2026 Budget: Roger Rix, Finance Chair, will need to review the proposed budget with the Finance Committee and submit their proposal at the November 2025 Ad Council meeting to be voted on.

Ad Council meeting time for the winter months: AM Mitchell proposed changing our monthly meetings to daylight hours through the winter. Members will revisit the suggestion at the November meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 pm.

Secretary,
Jeanne Wanous



NOVEMBER 2025

2  21st Sunday after Pentecost (white or green) All Saints Sunday Communion in Worship (white) Daylight-Saving Time Ends 8:15am Conde Worship 9:30am Groton Sunday School 9:30am Groton Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour 11:15am Britton UMC Worship	3 11:00am The Pantry at Groton Community Center	4 10:00am Bible Study 3:00pm Common Cents Community Thrift Store Downtown 4:00pm The Pantry at Groton Community Center	5  9:30am Community Coffee Hour 5:30pm Confirmation	6 10:00am Sunday Items Due for Secretary	7	8 10:00am Common Cents Community Thrift Store Downtown
9  22nd Sunday after Pentecost (green) 8:15am Conde Worship 9:30am Groton 3rd graders receiving Bibles 9:30am Groton Sunday School 9:30am Groton Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour 11:15am Britton UMC Worship	10 11:00am The Pantry at Groton Community Center	11  Veterans Day 10:00am Bible Study New Christmas Study 3:00pm Common Cents Community Thrift Store Downtown 4:00pm The Pantry at Groton Community Center	12  9:30am Community Coffee Hour 5:30pm Confirmation	13 10:00am Sunday Items Due for Secretary	14	15 10:00am Common Cents Community Thrift Store Downtown
16  23rd Sunday after Pentecost (green) 8:15am Conde Worship 9:30am Groton Sunday School Christmas Program Parts HandOut 9:30am Groton Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour 11:15am Britton UMC Worship	17 11:00am The Pantry at Groton Community Center	18 10:00am Bible Study 3:00pm Common Cents Community Thrift Store Downtown 4:00pm The Pantry at Groton Community Center	19  9:30am Community Coffee Hour 7:00pm Groton Ad Council	20  Newsletter Items Due 10:00am Sunday Items Due for Secretary	21	22 10:00am Common Cents Community Thrift Store Downtown
23  Christ the King Sunday (white) 8:15am Conde Worship 9:30am Groton Sunday School Christmas Program Practice 9:30am Groton Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour 11:15am Britton UMC Worship	24 11:00am The Pantry at Groton Community Center	25 10:00am Bible Study 3:00pm Common Cents Community Thrift Store Downtown 4:00pm The Pantry at Groton Community Center	26  9:30am Community Coffee Hour	27  Thanksgiving Day 10:00am Sunday Items Due for Secretary	28	29 10:00am Common Cents Community Thrift Store Downtown
30  1st Sunday of Advent (purple or blue) Advent 8:15am Conde Worship 9:30am Groton Worship 9:30am NO Groton Sunday School 10:30am Coffee Hour 11:15am Britton UMC Worship	1 11:00am The Pantry at Groton Community Center	2 10:00am Bible Study 3:00pm Common Cents Community Thrift Store Downtown 4:00pm The Pantry at Groton Community Center	3  9:30am Community Coffee Hour	4 10:00am Sunday Items Due for Secretary	5	6 10:00am Common Cents Community Thrift Store Downtown

November 2025

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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						



Our Church Happenings...

- | | |
|--------|--|
| Nov 9 | Groton 3rd graders receive their Bibles |
| Nov 11 | Veteran's Day |
| Nov 11 | Groton Tues 10 AM Bible Study starting new Christmas Study
by Adam Hamilton "The Journey" |
| Nov 16 | Groton Confirmation Sunday |
| Nov 16 | Groton Sunday Beginning Christmas Program Practices |
| Nov 20 | December Newsletter Deadline |
| Nov 23 | Christ the King Sunday |
| Nov 30 | First Sunday of Advent |