

Seine*

The Quarterly Catch: Oct-Dec, 2021

News & Notes from Groome Church

Lewes, Delaware | *Founded 1904*

**a net with sinkers and floats that hangs in the water and used to catch fish...*

Groome Church Disaffiliates from UMC

LEWES, Del. – Groome Church (formerly Groome United Methodist Church) has disaffiliated from the United Methodist Church (UMC).

Groome's exit was finalized in a *Disaffiliation Agreement* negotiated over a two year period with the Peninsula Delaware (Pen-Del) Conference, the governing body of the UMC Northeastern Jurisdiction including the Wilmington (formerly Dover) District to which Groome belonged.

On July 23, 2020 Groome's congregation voted unanimously to leave the Methodist denomination. This was the second vote taken over a ten month period to register the congregation's dissatisfaction with UMC's stance regarding the fundamental rights of the LGBTQ community within the denomination. The congregation was prompted to take action after UMC's 2019 General Conference upheld the prohibition of marriage and ordination of "self-avowed practicing homosexuals."

The decision to disaffiliate from the denomination was affirmed December 2020 in a *Letter of Intent* from Groome to Pen-Del. Since then, involved parties worked to settle issues and obligations (now resolved) between them.

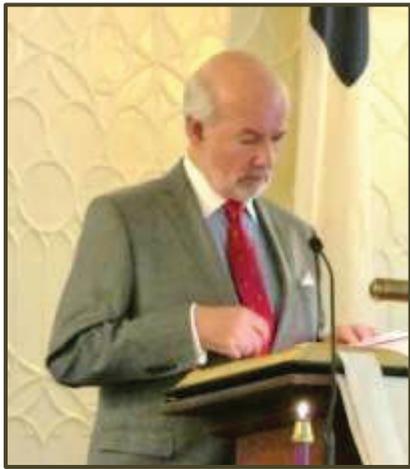
Commenting on the disaffiliation, Pastor Crossan said "...UMC has wrestled with this issue for 50 years, but has repeatedly failed to come to a meaningful resolution." He added, "...the LGBT community is an important and vital part of the greater Lewes / Rehoboth community in which we live; its members are part of our daily life, they are our friends, neighbors, family members, the people we worship with, choose to love, to marry, to do business and play sports with. How can we reconcile the posture of the denomination with our conscience, the calling of our congregation, our ministry, and the commandment of love we believe to be the heart of the Gospel? We can't."



Historic Groome hits Refresh

Mariner's Cross chosen as Groome's new, post-disaffiliation insignia.

The Mariner's Cross, a cross in the shape of an anchor, is one of the earliest symbols in Christianity. The anchor, also referred to as the *Cross of Hope*, is used to signify a fresh start, symbolizing steadfastness, calm and composure. It also serves to remind Christians that one's life needs to be "anchored in faith, hope and love." For Groome's congregation the Mariner's Cross also represents the history and heritage of Cape Henlopen shipbuilders, fishermen, and their families, many of whom worshipped at Groome in the early days of its founding.



From the Pastor's pen...

On the Future of Groome Church

Following its exit from United Methodism, expressing dissatisfaction with the denomination's stance denying the LGBTQ community full participation in all aspects of church life, Groome Church is rebranding itself as a progressive congregation with strong ties to traditional Christian theology. At the root of Christian doctrine are both the worship of the divine author of history, and an adherence to the moral imperatives dictated by the same divine authority. The fundamental role of the church has always been to come to know the nature of God, and subsequently implement God's will for creation in a meaningful and compassionate manner.

It is the long-held belief of the Christian faith that the very essence of God is LOVE. Everything the institutional church does must reflect the ideals of compassion, respect, acceptance and openness of mind that are the rudimentary components of love. In order to achieve this goal, Groome Church is embracing everyone, welcoming all who wish to attend and exhibit a profound respect for diversity and self-expression.

While Groome is a Christian house of worship, we celebrate common values, the remarkably diverse nature of God's people, and strive to set an example of religious tolerance in our community. After all, if the God in whom we believe is capable of creating the universe without any physical labor – rather by pure thought or simple speech – it is more than remotely possible that the same God can reveal itself in innumerable social and historical contexts. Groome Church seeks to share in the value of other great religious traditions and provide an environment in which mutual respect and appreciation for all meaningful moral points of view have value.

Everyone in some fashion is a unique being – a creation of God – and yet we all face the same realities of life, share like ambitions, hopes, and dreams. Why not create a sanctuary amidst this sometimes troubling world where people can come to know and appreciate each other and promote a form of human synergy? This is our attempt to make Christ's admonition to: "Love one another, by this others will know that you are my disciples," a reality.

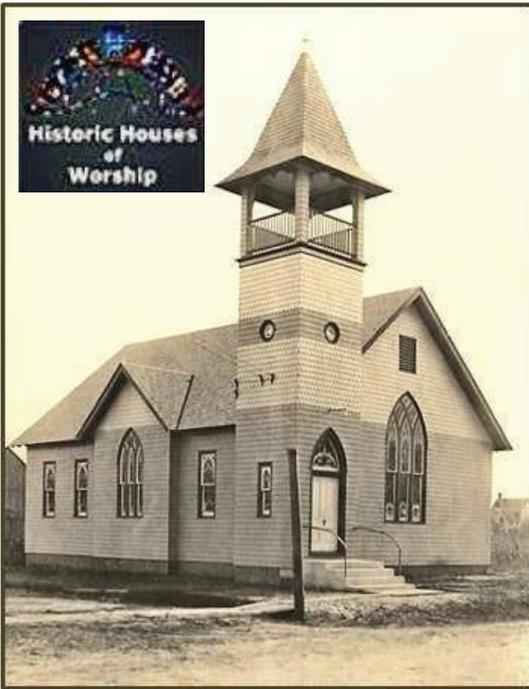
Separation from United Methodism is the congregation's initiative to focus on welcome, acceptance, and the value of diversity, while practicing active engagement in the community. We seek to provide many creative ways in which people can express their spirituality and desire to serve this locale in charity, artistic expression, and critical thought. Groome has not abandoned the fundamental tenants of its founder, John Wesley. Methodism was born as a Christian social justice movement, the leading proponent of social reform in its day. The abolition of slavery, prison reform, freedom of speech, expression, and assembly; as well as the right to privacy, were among the urgent concerns of the denomination's founder. Likewise, providing shelter, food, clothing, education, and health care were principle missions of the founding church. None of these have changed. Groome seeks to enrich the greater Lewes / Rehoboth area with both its progressive outlook and programs. We are looking forward to our future and hope the community will both welcome and participate in our efforts to bring the word of God to an authentic, viable, creative, and meaningful reality throughout the community.

"...if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another..."

I John I: 7

Celebrating the Past Looking to the Future

IMPORTANT DATES IN EARLY DAYS OF GROOME From the Groome Archives



THE METHODIST PROTESTANT.

November 25, 1908

Lewes, Del. - Groome Memorial M. P. Church is about complete. The furniture is all in and set up. The ladies are putting the carpet down, and we are preparing for the dedication on next Sunday, November 22. Rev. Dr. W. R. Graham, of Pocomoke City, and Revs. H. O. Keen, of Georgetown, G. R. McCready, of Milton, J. D. Smith, of Chincoteague, and D. L. Johnson, of Georgetown, are to be present all-day. We extend a general invitation to all who can come. We are praying for a good day. May the presence of our God be with us. Our extra meetings will be in progress next week. We are expecting a great revival. God says, "Ask and ye shall receive." Pray for us. - W. W. Johnson, Pastor. November 16, 1908.

MORTGAGE

1908 - 3 July (404-31, Sussex County) from Groome Memorial Methodist Protestant Church, Inc., to Sussex Trust Company, \$1200. Signed by Jesse W. Wilson, president of the church; attested by William H. Steel, secretary.

1912 - 2 January - Mortgage Burned.

Groome Ledger Entry (right): "Paid in full Jan. 2, 1912

Mortgage was burned Jan. 2, 8-10 PM, by Bro. W. H. Steel
Chairman of the Board of Trustees"

A photograph of a handwritten ledger entry on aged paper. The text is written in cursive and reads: "Paid in full¹² Jan. 2, 1912 Mortgage was burned Jan. 2, 8-10 P.M. by Bro. W. H. Steel Chairman of the Board of Trustees".

In The Members' Corner: Hazel Downs Brittingham

Historian, guest speaker, writer, author, and chronicler of all things Lewes, Sussex County, and Delaware, Hazel is an activist, and longtime member and friend of Groome Church. She is also a community treasure; in short, the *real deal*. Thank you Hazel!

The Seine recently posed the following *short-answer / favorite-thing* questions to Hazel:

Q: Book? / A: "Only Love Today" by Rachel Mary Stafford.

Q: Movie? / A: Gone With the Wind.

Q: TV show? / A: Jeopardy, twice a day.

Q: Color? / A: Blue, ALL shades.

Q: Area restaurant? / A: Bob Evans.

Q: About Lewes? / A: Proximity to water...the Bay, Canal, the Ocean!

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For information on Groome visit www.groomechurchlewes.org / to make a comment email: gumc1@hotmail.com

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Happening at Groome!

Music's Brewing Again At the Coffee House!



Join us for a *cup o' Joe*
& Live Entertainment as
Anchor Presents:

Bryan Scar

Saturday, October 16

Singer-songwriter guitarist beautifully
Blends Country, Folk & Americana.
www.bryanscarmusic.com

Delmarva Ramblers

Saturday, November 20

The Peninsula's Favorite
Traditional & Gospel Bluegrass Band!
www.facebook.com/DelmarvaRamblers

Charlie Zahm

Saturday, December 18

Songs of Christmas
With a blend of the Celtic and Maritime.
www.charliezahm.com

Admission:

OCT 15, NOV 20: \$10

DEC 18: \$15

Historic Groome Church

Founded in 1904

Anchor Coffee House

...by the numbers!

In 2017 Groome Church members Mike and Lorraine Messitt established Anchor Coffee House; a venue for concerts, seminars, storytelling events, yoga, and other activities. Over the past four years Anchor has become a popular, valued and much enjoyed part of Groome.

The numbers tell the story:

No. of concerts - 30

No. of acts booked - 19

No. of performers - 48

No. of concert goers - 1,526

No. of storytelling events - 5

No. of story tellers - 33

No. of story listeners - 70

No. of yoga classes - 16

No. of yoga participants - 192

And no. Cups of Coffee – 1,849!

For information: 302.645.6256 /
www.facebook.com/theanchorcoffeehouse

Join instructor **Sue McCarthy** for
YOGA at GROOME!

Tuesday & Thursday / 5-6 PM.

Doors open at 4:45 PM.

\$10 (cash) at the door.

Drop-in / No reservations needed.



Open to ALL 50+

Bring a mat & wear comfortable clothes!

601 Savannah Road, Lewes, DE
[Please use side entrance on Dewey.]

For more information:
www.lewesyoga.com / 302.245.6133