

# THE GARDEN

---

“...some of the seed fell on good soil” Mark 4:8

---

April - May 2024  
Newsletter

**Inside This Issue:**

Pastor's Article

Announcements

Gazebo Dedication

Educational Assistance  
Committee  
Announcements

Upcoming Activities

Johnny Walsh Returns to  
Green Pond!

Children & Youth Ministry  
Announcements

**Pastor Barbara's Office  
Hours:** Available  
Mondays, Wednesdays,  
and Thursdays by  
appointment.

Green Pond United  
Methodist Church

## Make Every Day, “Earth Day” by Pastor Barbara

As the calendar turns to April, I've been giving some thought to “Earth Day,” observed every year on April 22. The theme for 2024, “Plastics vs. Planet,” is a truly daunting one. One estimate I read last year around this time said more than 171 trillion pieces of plastic are now floating in our oceans, killing fish and sea animals. I can only imagine how much plastic has been dumped in our soils. Each of these pieces of plastic will take hundreds of years to break down into less harmful materials. The problem is so staggering that it's easy to lose hope.



The original “Earth Day” was launched as a bipartisan effort by Democratic Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin and Republican Congressman Peter McCloskey of California back in 1970. The day was intended to raise awareness of our need to care for the earth and be good stewards of our resources.

In the account of Creation in Genesis 1, human beings are created and given “dominion” over the earth. To be honest, I have never been comfortable with the way many people seem to interpret this “dominion” to mean “control” and “have power over.” Jesus teaches us that he came to usher in an upside-down kingdom, where the first are to go to the back of the line, and the vulnerable are given priority. When we think about the environment, we often think about national and global policies, debates and regulations—and as Christians we should seek to influence these as best we can with the goal of protecting the most vulnerable people and creatures on the planet. However, there are dozens, even hundreds, of decisions we make each day that effect the environment.

Personally, I am constantly seeking to learn new ways to take care of the earth. For example, I've tried buying cleaning supplies in metal cans rather than plastic, driving a small hybrid car, and use more energy efficient light bulbs. I'll admit that some days, what I do doesn't feel like enough. But when I seek to turn each of these choices into an act of prayer and worship of the God who created our beautiful world, I feel the strength to persevere. And as I remember to turn off the lights, I pray for thoughtful national and world leaders, who can effect change on a large scale. Let's pray and think together about how “the earth is the Lord's” (Psalm 24:1) and open our hearts to the ways we can bless the One who gave us our beautiful earth to inhabit and enjoy.

## Announcements

### GPUMC FINANCE SUMMARY FEBRUARY 29, 2024

	FEB. 2024
INCOME	14,948.38
HOUSING	
REIMBURSE	1,833.33
EXPENSES	(21,931.34)
GAIN/(LOSS)	(5,149.63)
<hr/>	
	YTD 2024
INCOME	39,532.38
HOUSING	
REIMBURSE	3,666.66
EXPENSES	(41,892.02)
GAIN/(LOSS)	1,307.02

**Earth Day Clean Up:** All ages are welcome to join us for an Earth Day Mission on Saturday, April 20 at 9am. We will meet in the parking lot next to Sam's Club on route 248 in Lower Nazareth Township. We will be picking up garbage collected in the field between the highway and the shopping center. Garbage pickers and bags will be provided. Bring your own work gloves and wear appropriate shoes. Please see Megan Schaeffer or Tom Dittmar to let us know you can help or if you have questions.

## Gazebo Dedication—Pam Boddy

Gazebo dedication May 5<sup>th</sup>



## Educational Assistance Committee Announcements—Alex Konya

### Attention Graduating High School Seniors

If you are a graduating high school senior and an active member of the church, you may apply for the Jack H. LaFever Memorial Achievement Award. Jack was a life-long member of First UMC who died in a car accident in 1986, at the age of 23. An applicant for this Award must be an active church member. Selection is based on church and community service, scholastic achievement and extra curricular activities. You do not have to be considering post high school education to be eligible for the Award. Applications may be picked up in the church office or from Alex Konya ([alexander.s.konya@lmco.com](mailto:alexander.s.konya@lmco.com)) and must be returned to the church office no later than **April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024**.

### Attention Post High School Students

Church members planning to enroll or continue in college, vocational or technical school, or those who are currently enrolled, and need help with the cost of furthering their education, should apply for an interest-free loan from the church's Educational Assistance Fund. Loans are based on the availability of funds and must be repaid in full. An applicant for this loan must be an active church member. Applications may be picked up in the church office or from Alex Konya ([alexander.s.konya@lmco.com](mailto:alexander.s.konya@lmco.com)) and must be returned to the church office no later than **April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024**.

## Upcoming Activities—Pam Boddy

Looking Ahead: Dates in April-May

Friday, April 19-Sunday, April 21: Confirmation Retreat

Saturday, April 20: from 9-11am, Earth Day - Join the youth of the church as we gather to clean up trash in our local community. Meet at Sam's Club, located in Northampton Crossings (3796 Nazareth Road. Park near the Sam's Club Tire Service Center in the back. Please see Megan Schaeffer or Tom Dittmar with questions or to let us know that you'll be joining.

Tuesday, April 23: Election Day. We serve our community as a polling location. Church office will be closed that day.

Friday, April 26: Pasta Dinner, 6 - 8 pm. Pasta, meatballs, garlic bread, salad, dessert. Gluten free pasta available, also take-out. \$10.00 per person (age 13 and older) children \$5.00. Proceeds will support our Outreach activities.

😊 *Don't forget; those who forget the pasta are doomed to reheat it.* 😊

Sunday, May 5: dedication of the Gazebo.

"...come and take shelter in my shade." Judges 9:15

Beginning in April, please welcome organist Mark Dennis to our accompanist team, joining pianists Roberto Jelks and Linda Schreiber, and Off Minor (our jazz band).

---

## Johnny Walsh Returns to Green Pond!—Bill Jahn

Pianist extraordinaire, Johnny Walsh brings his talent to Green Pond June 1<sup>st</sup> at 4 PM. He will perform The Year '37 Gershwin & Glass Concert which features popular works by George Gershwin, including his three preludes and his iconic "Rhapsody in Blue," celebrating its 100th anniversary. In addition, selections from Philip Glass' score to the movie "The Hours," starring Meryl Streep, will also be performed.

Johnny has performed at our church three times prior to the pandemic and was grandly applauded. He has a large local following so our sanctuary will be overflowing. The concert will not be ticketed, general admission will be offered with a Free Will Offering. Let's all turn out for this delightful afternoon!



## Children & Youth Ministry Announcements

### Upcoming

Confirmation Retreat  
April 19 – 21

Earth Day Clean Up  
April 20 at 9am

Confirmation Sunday  
May 19

### Grow in God's Love!

#### **Kid Worship & Teen Worship**

Kid and Teen Worship will continue throughout April and May. All ages will begin in the sanctuary with their families at 10am. Around 10:15am, the kids and teens will be dismissed from the service to attend Kid & Teen Worship for age-appropriate activities and discussion. Kid Worship is ideal for students in Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Teen Worship is designed for students in grades 6 through 12.

As always, our Nursery and Pray-ground is open for younger toddlers and preschoolers.

#### **Confirmation Class**

The confirmation class will be attending a retreat at Pocono Plateau April 19 to 21. Confirmation will be held during our worship service on Sunday, May 19. Please pray that our confirmands have an enriching experience.

### Connect in God's Love!

#### **Summer Camp at Pocono Plateau**

Pocono Plateau has released their 2024 summer camps brochure. If you are interested in sending your child to camp this summer, please check out their website: <https://www.poconoplateau.org/summer-camp/#2023summercamp>. If you need financial assistance, please see Megan Schaeffer or Jen Biddle.

**Thank you to everyone who helped with our annual Easter Egg Hunt!**

