

Aug.-Sep. 2023
Newsletter

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

Green Pond United
Methodist Church

www.greenpondumc.com

Faith through Our Five Senses by Pastor Barbara

As many of you know, our family recently took a vacation in Alaska and spent time in Denali National Park, where our youngest daughter is working for several months with the team of botanists. I was reflecting on how this vacation was truly a feast for our five senses, as often is the case when we go to a place that is new for us.

Katie pointed out many of the wildflowers and plants, which she now knows well, and I took my time to closely look at their intricate features and take in their smells. (The state flower is the bright blue forget-me-nots). The landscape of snow-capped mountains was breathtaking, and changed through a series of vibrant colors until the sunset at 11:30 PM. I took in the sound of rushing water as the Savage River with all of its strangely shaped rivulets rushed by in a constant state of change. At the restaurants, I felt certain I had never tasted salmon so fresh as I noted its bright pink color. And we took in the many textures of the crisp air, wood, rocks, and the thick fur of the friendly, energetic sled dogs that work carrying special equipment loaded on sleds throughout the park in the winter.



As a mother of adult women, it never seems like I have enough time around each of my daughters anymore. As babies and small children, there was a time when I was immersed in their constant care, and knew every birthmark and feature of their tiny bodies. As grown women, of course, this relationship changes, but I still love anytime I get to pull them into a tight hug, smelling the different shampoos in their hair, taking note of how the sun has brought out their freckles again, or that they are wearing fun earrings or sporting new glasses. I love the twinkle in their eyes as they recount stories from their lives.

As we traveled, I reflected that the thoughts that run constantly through our minds are important, but in truth, our lives are lived to the fullest—through our bodies. A recent book by the popular author Gretchen Rubin called *Life in the Five Senses*, is not a religious text, but it inspired me to consider how our faith is also lived out through our bodies, both in our experiences of God and the work of our faith.

“Rally Day” on September 10 is a traditional time to invite a friend to church. That Sunday, we will begin a new sermon series I have called, “Faith through Our Five Senses,” where we will explore what the scriptures say about using our five senses to experience God. I hope you will plan to be there each Sunday to experience the work of God as well as take in the preciousness of each person in our Green Pond church community. We will celebrate Rally Day with our traditional “Potato Bar” luncheon after church. Mark your calendars and let us live our faith to the full!

Reflect, Reconcile & Rejoice—Micah Gary-Fryer

The year of 2023 is moving fast, and I can hardly believe the summer is coming to an end and students and teachers will be returning to school in the next couple of weeks. I have tried to take some time to rest and relax this summer, and my mantra has been Reflect, Reconcile and Rejoice.

After a busy school year, I am thankful and proud of Green Pond UMC for pulling out all the stops and presenting Mark Miller and Friends this past June 30. Many thanks to the worship committee, Bill and Karen Jahn, Maxine, Pastor Barbara and especially Mary Ann Constable for helping to make my dreams come true of having the heavenly music of Mark Miller in Easton, Pennsylvania. This was not just the concert of the year, but a spiritual service with music and Mark's message of family, social justice, and God's faithful Love. It was not only a family reunion for Miller family, but GPUMC, the Drew Theo family, the friends, colleagues and clergy members of Pastor Barbara and the Eastern PA district, including District Superintendent Rev. Dr. Hun Ju Lee. This experience showed the earthly side of heaven and what joy we can share right now.

July was also the month that Green Pond UMC extended inclusive hospitality to our friends and neighbors at the annual Church Picnic, featuring the Easton Municipal Band. This was the second year of presenting this amazing group of musicians and their families. Many thanks to the Trustees for the strenuous set-up and the Outreach Committee for overseeing the blessings of all the "potluck" dishes donated by our generous members. A special thanks to John Gerbino for securing the church's new grill, Tom's expertise in everything and John Gary-Fryer preparation and purchase of the all the meats, hot dogs, buns, and accessories! God truly blessed us with a beautiful day (one of the best of this summer). I am extremely grateful for our church family, which always rises to share generously with great joy!

Save the Date: In October, Sunday the 15th, we are presenting Janene Otten, a fabulous local singing artist of the Leigh Valley. Janene will be the feature singer of the day and will bring friends like Andrew Dunn to help us have Spirit led worship service. Off Minor will also accompany her and LifeSong is very excited about joining this group of talented musicians to rejoice our Lord and Savior. Save the date and enjoy the remaining days of summer, thanks again, peace be with you.

Announcements

Finance Update: Below is a brief summary of June's balance, as well as our Year to Date balance, from our Finance Team. As always, feel free to contact Brad Schaeffer (schaefferfinancialandtax@yahoo.com) if you have any questions.

GPUMC FINANCE SUMMARY JUNE 30, 2023

	JUNE 2023
INCOME	15,459.13
HOUSING	
REIMBURSE	1,833.33
EXPENSES	<u>(27,066.61)</u>
GAIN/(LOSS)	(9,774.15)
	YTD 2023
INCOME	102,858.55
HOUSING	
REIMBURSE	11,000.07
EXPENSES	<u>(135,405.75)</u>
GAIN/(LOSS)	(21,547.13)

Updates on the Church—Pam Boddy

Changes to “The Garden”: Going forward, we will be producing a new issue of “The Garden” every other month. Next issue will cover October/November.

Leadership Changes: We recently honored Matt Matulewicz for his many years of service to the church, leading Church Council and the Finance Committee. As he and Laura will be enjoying retirement and traveling in their RV, we look forward to hearing about their adventures. We are fortunate to have continuity in leadership, with Deanne Gade becoming head of Church Council, and Bob Constable becoming chair of church Finance.

Trustee Update: Although we consider our church to be on holy ground, we didn’t exactly mean it to include sinkholes! We recently had to fix a sinkhole at a cost of \$8,000. Many thanks to our Trustees for addressing this so promptly.

Community Outreach: On July 23, we invited members of our local community to join our church picnic while listening to the Easton Municipal Band. A great time was had by all. We will continue a summer of community engagement by participating in Palmer Township Community Days on Aug 17-20 Followed by Forks Township on Sept 15-17. Also in September, we will welcome LVCC back to our sanctuary on Tuesday nights as they rehearse for another season.

Save the Date: Rally Day Sept 10

2023 Jack H. LaFever Memorial Achievement Award—Alex Konya, Educational Assistance Committee Chair

The Educational Assistance Committee is pleased to announce to the Congregation that Abby Biddle, daughter of Steve and Jennifer Biddle, is the 2023 recipient of the Jack H. LaFever Memorial Achievement Award.

She is the thirtieth recipient of this Award, which honors the memory of Jack LaFever, a life-long member of First United Methodist Church, who was killed in a 1986 automobile accident, at the age of 23. The Award was established with the money donated to the church by family and friends in loving memory of Jack and is given to a graduating high school senior from Green Pond UMC, in recognition of church, community and school activities and scholastic achievement. The presentation of the Award was made during the Student Recognition service on Sunday, June 11, 2023.

Abby graduated from Easton Area High School with a 97.66 Grade Point Average, ranking her in the top 12% of her class. She was in the National Honors Society and National Society of High School Scholars. She participated in DECA, Girl Up, MiniTHON and UNICEF, where she served as treasurer. She dances, plays recreational soccer, and worked at Philly Pretzel Factory.

Abby grew up in this church, attended and assisted with Sunday School, volunteered in the nursery with Miss Peggy and with VBS programs, and attended youth retreats. She served many Safe Harbor meals with the Youth Group and her family. She had roles in worship service, including May’s Youth Worship service.

This fall, Abby will attend West Chester University, majoring in Marketing.

Please join us in congratulating the 2023 Jack H. LaFever Memorial Achievement Award recipient – Abby Biddle. Congratulations Abby and Good Luck in your future!!

Children & Youth Ministry Announcements

Upcoming

Kid & Teen Worship
resume Sept. 10

Grow in God's Love!

Kid Worship & Teen Worship

Mark your calendars! Invite your friends! Kid and Teen Worship resume for the season on Sunday, September 10. 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 5th 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.

Connect in God's Love!

Family Game Time

A Family Game event will be held in September! Stayed tuned for a date and time! See Jen Biddle or Megan Schaeffer for details!

Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who helped out with Vacation Bible School this summer! We had 17 kids and 11 volunteers.
It's safe to say everyone had a great time!

