

## Mar. 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](http://www.greenpondumc.com)

## Thriving with Five on our Walk with Jesus

by Pastor Barbara Lee

Our mission statement at Green Pond Church says that we are “seeking to grow as authentic disciples of Jesus Christ who love God and welcome all people.” To be a disciple means that we seek to follow Jesus, and though we don't often think about it, to be an authentic “disciple” means that we must be “disciplined.” Now we aren't disciplined in the sense that we are punished or controlled, but in the spiritual life, in the words of Henri Nouwen, to be disciplined means that we make “the effort to create some space in which God can act.”

The problem we all struggle with in one way or another is that so many things, and maybe important things, are competing for our time, attention, and resources. Sometimes, I will sit down to a task (like writing this article) only to realize I have dozens of other tasks and desires competing for space in my brain. The same can happen to us when we long to pray, read scripture, and make our way to a worship service.

This Lenten season, we are exploring five practices or disciplines to help us Worship (including prayer), Study, Serve, Give and Share. Engaging in these five disciplines, which have been practiced by Christians throughout history and are modeled in the Bible, can lead to a healthy Christian life.

Now, I know from pastoring for more than a decade, that every time I preach about spiritual disciplines, a few people come away hearing a message that feels burdensome and adds a weight of guilt—and that message is heard by the wrong people! For example, inevitably, a single mother, barely making ends meet, tells me how badly she feels about not giving more money to the church. Every time, I think, “Oh no, is that what you heard?”

So, as you pray and think about adding or shifting a spiritual discipline in your own life, be compassionate with yourself and others, just as your Heavenly Father is compassionate. Be aware that you are beloved by God, and are surrounded by friends. Be of great courage. Spiritual disciplines are meant to challenge us and enable us to answer the great call on our hearts from Christ, but they are to be a means to an end. The hope is that together we will learn how to better love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

I pray for each one of us on this Lenten journey, trusting always, in the One who walks with us.



## Baking for Blessings—Pam Boddy

During this season of Lent, we are studying Adam Hamilton’s book, “The Walk.” This book focuses on five spiritual disciplines that help us all in our walk with Jesus. It is the foundation of Pastor Barbara’s Lenten Sermon Series, which we are reinforcing with our Lenten small group studies. All this study is wonderful, but we also wanted to put some of these teachings into practice. Pastor Barbara encouraged us to pray five times a day, (when we get up, at each meal, and when we go to bed), a simple prayer of thanks.

For the week of March 12, the spiritual discipline of Service will be the focus, and again, we want to put it into practice. That Sunday, after the service, we will bake some treats, which will be delivered to our members who cannot be with us on Sunday mornings. Some of our long-time members are in nursing homes, or cannot leave the house; this will show them that their church family loves them. We are calling this “Baking for Blessings.” It will be a blessing for those who receive them, and for those who give.

In the lobby, you will find a sign up to assist with the baking or delivery, and also a place to name someone who would appreciate receiving this “Blessing.” May everyone be blessed in the giving and receiving, in the study and the doing, and in the love of Christ for this congregation, and the love we share with one another.

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## Save the Date—Pam Boddy

On June 30, Green Pond UMC is excited to welcome Mark Miller. Mr. Miller is the composer of some of the United Methodist Churches most loved modern hymns. We have sung many of them in our services, including “Welcome”, “Child of God”, and “I Believe” just to name a few. More details will be following, but SAVE THE DATE on your calendar now: June 30!

### Announcements

**Finance Update:** Below is a brief summary of January’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](mailto:schaefferfinancialandtax@yahoo.com)) if you have any questions.

#### GPUMC FINANCE SUMMARY JANUARY 31, 2023

	JAN 2023
INCOME	24,937.50
HOUSING REIMBURSE	1,833.33
EXPENSES	(14,833.91)
GAIN/(LOSS)	11,936.92

	YTD 2023
INCOME	24,937.50
HOUSING REIMBURSE	1,833.33
EXPENSES	(14,833.91)
GAIN/(LOSS)	11,936.92

## **A Time for Fellowship—Pam Boddy**

1 John 1:3-4

*We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete.*

This verse from 1 John links fellowship among believers with fellowship with God. It goes on to link both with joy. On March 19, there will be a special time for fellowship after church, with our annual “Soup and Stew” event. This is one of the tastiest and most joyful gatherings of the year. Please plan to stay and bring a hearty appetite. If you are able, please consider signing up to bring something to share.

As well as nurturing our bodies and friendships, we will take a special offering at this time for UMCOR, the United Methodist Committee on Relief. UMCOR is asking for donations to help alleviate the suffering in Turkey and Syria, which have been devastated by the recent, catastrophic earthquake resulting in more than 50,000 deaths. Wherever there is suffering, Jesus is there; so is UMCOR. This is an opportunity to put the spiritual discipline of Giving into practice.

March 19: a time for fellowship with each other, a time for fellowship with Jesus, a time to give to those in need. This indeed, makes our joy complete.

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## **EAC Announcements: Award, Loans, & Looking for Committee Members—Alex Konya**

### **Attention Graduating High School Seniors & Post High School Students**

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. 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.

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.

Applicants for the Award and these loans must be active church members. 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>, 2023**.

### **Committee Members Wanted**

The Educational Assistance Committee is looking for people interested in helping our youth. To-date, we have helped 48 church members by lending over \$98,000 in interest-free loans. Loans can be used for college, vocational or technical school classes. In addition to the loan program, the Committee also grants the Jack H. LaFever Memorial Achievement Award, a scholarship given to a deserving member of Green Pond UMC who is graduating from high school. We have awarded 31 Memorial scholarships, totaling almost \$25,000. The LaFever Fund has also been used to help the church's youth group.

The Committee usually meets once a year, in May, to discuss our finances and discuss/vote upon loan and Award applications. If you are interested in serving Green Pond and helping its youth, please contact Alex Konya at 610-354-2234 or [alexander.s.konya@lmco.com](mailto:alexander.s.konya@lmco.com) to discuss.

## Children & Youth Ministry Announcements

### Upcoming

Drum Circle Rehearsal  
March 19 & 26 9:30am

Family Game Night  
March 24 at 7pm

Easter Egg Hunt  
April 8 10am to 12pm

Youth Sunday  
May 7

### Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who celebrated Fat Tuesday with us at our Pancake Dinner! We served about 80 pancakes!

### Grow in God's Love!

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

Kid and Teen Worship continue throughout March! 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. Invite a friend!

Our Nursery and Prayground is open for younger toddlers and preschoolers.

#### **Drum Circle**

We're bringing back the drums! Moe Jerant will be leading our children & youth ministry in a drum circle performance on *Sunday, May 7* during the 10am Worship. We will have at several rehearsals to practice our songs beginning in March. The first two rehearsals will be **March 19 and March 26 at 9:30am** in the Kid Worship Room. We hope that you'll join us! No musical experience is needed. See Megan Schaeffer for more details.

### Connect in God's Love!

#### **Family Game Night**

Friday, March 24 at 7pm join the children and youth ministry for a fun game night with your family and friends! Bring a favorite game from home or try something new from our collection! We will meet in the church lobby. Friends welcome! Please RSVP to Jen Biddle ([jenbiddle@greenpondumc.com](mailto:jenbiddle@greenpondumc.com)) or Megan Schaeffer ([childministry@greenpondumc.com](mailto:childministry@greenpondumc.com)).

#### **Easter Egg Hunt**

Our annual community Easter Egg Hunt will return this season! It will be held on our lawn on Saturday, April 8 between 10am – 12pm. The Easter Egg Hunt is for children ages 2 – 10 years. Registration is required and may be completed online: <https://greenpondumc.breezechms.com/form/77be5d13>

Different from prior years, we will not have a group start time. Instead, families may arrive at any time between 10am and 12pm. Kids will be allowed to find a set number of eggs. You may also enjoy our Gospel Train Club model trains and a photo opportunity with the Easter Bunny. Invite your friends!

### Pocono Plateau Summer Camps!

Pocono Plateau has opened up registration for summer camps! There are camps for all ages. Please visit their website for more information:

<https://www.poconoplateau.org/summer-camp/#2023summercamp>