

THE GARDEN

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

June – July 2026
Newsletter

Inside This Issue:

Q&A with Pastor Jen

Announcements

Farewell and Welcome

McBride Legacy Gift

2026 Jack H. LaFever
Memorial Achievement
Award

Children & Youth Ministry
Announcements

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

Green Pond United
Methodist Church

www.greenpondumc.com

A Call to Ministry and Beyond: Q&A with Pastor Jen by Mary Anne Constable, SPRC Chair

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” Romans 8:28 (NIV)

A call to ministry is the feeling a person experiences when they get the sense that they are being called by God to a specific position or ministry within a church. Sometimes a call to ministry might come through witnessing a miracle or hearing God's voice. Other times it may come through life experiences within a church or through a strong passion to serve others.

Pastor Barbara Lee felt a tug toward ministry as a teen when she attended United Methodist Church camp but put off pursuing her call for many years. After attending seminary classes in her early 40s in a church denomination that did not allow women pastors, she began a season of prayer and had a surprise meeting with a United Methodist District Superintendent who encouraged her to pursue her call to lead and preach. Pastor Jennifer Miller's call to ministry occurred during a serious medical emergency she experienced while in college, something that she will share with us as part of her first sermon here at Green Pond.

The congregation at Green Pond UMC is blessed that both of these women pursued their callings and then through their service and ministry have been led to us. We have had several wonderful years under Pastor Barbara's spiritual guidance and care and we wish her all the best as God puts forth his plans for her future. And now, we look forward to the years ahead as we welcome Pastor Jen to our church family.

In a previous issue of this newsletter, I wrote a piece that was more of a formal announcement and introduction of our appointed new pastor. This time, please enjoy getting to know Pastor Jennifer Miller through her answers to the following questions I posed to her:

What is your go-to comfort food?

TACOS! I love tacos so much that the first thing I did when I found out about the reappointment was check to see how far away Chipotle was.

What is your favorite way to spend your free time?

I take off for Jacktown three times a year. We set up our five antique engines, ride the train, and spend the weekend watching the tractor pulls.

Who are your favorite authors and books?

I love “who done it” mystery books even though I rarely solve it before the conclusion. I also really enjoy local history! I am currently reading “The History of Wayne, Pike and Monroe County” Written by Alfred Matthews in 1886.

Announcements

GPUMC FINANCE SUMMARY APRIL 30, 2026

	APR. 2026
COLLECTION	
OTHER	17,670.26
INCOME	29,469.54
HOUSING	1,833.33
REIMBURSE	
EXPENSES	(33,814.00)
GAIN/(LOSS)	15,159.13
	YTD 2026
COLLECTION	64,862.28
OTHER	
INCOME	33,393.54
HOUSING	
REIMBURSE	7,333.32
EXPENSES	(105,096.95)
GAIN/(LOSS)	492.19

What is a cause you are passionate about?

My older sister is Mentally Disabled with a mindset of a three-year-old. My heart aches for adults with special needs because there are very few programs and opportunities for them within the community. I have always wanted to help change this. I have been a "buddy" for individuals with disabilities, assisted with the Special Olympics and I weekly provide assistance with CARES.

Who has had the biggest influence on your life?

My grandfather Flick was my biggest inspiration. I had a very rough childhood, and he was always "my constant". He taught me how to swim, ride a bike, and he was always there when I needed him the most.

What was your very first job?

I started my first job at Big Star Drive-In when I was 13 years old and I worked there until I was 20. My love for ice cream developed in that little building as I spent every shift trying all the flavors.

What is your favorite aspect of being a pastor?

Pastoral Care is my favorite aspect of ministry. I enjoy celebrating alongside people during their important moments, and walking alongside them with their heartache.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about yourself before officially coming to GPUMC?

I put my entire heart, body and soul into ministry, and I pray that I will serve Green Pond UMC in a manner that praises our Lord and Savior. However, try not to stand next to me while singing as I will hurt your ears.

Farewell and Welcome—Mary Anne Constable

Farewell...

Pastor Barbara's last worship service with us will be on June 14th. Please plan to stay after worship for a special Farewell Luncheon in her honor and to offer your well wishes to her as she says goodbye.

Welcome...

Pastor Jennifer Miller's first worship service with us will be on July 5th. Please plan to stay after worship for a special time of Fellowship to welcome Pastor Jen to our family at Green Pond UMC.

In between pastors, messages will be shared with us by Jim Cyr and Pam Boddy. Pastoral care will still be available if needed as well.

Thank you to all who are working to make this a smooth and graceful transition of pastors. Special thanks to the members of SPRC, Outreach, and the Pastoral Transition Team.

McBride Legacy Gift—Bob Constable

Green Pond UMC recently received a wonderful surprise—an unexpected gift of nearly \$24,000! The gift came from the estate of Gerald McBride, who passed away in January 2025. He and his wife, Shirley (who passed away in 2024), were faithful members at St. Paul UMC in Hellertown. Pastor Barbara got to know Gerald and Shirley in their later years when Pastor Barbara was the pastor at Fritz UMC, through many joint activities of the two congregations. The McBrides were also former members at Asbury UMC, Allentown.

The McBrides were long-time, devoted Methodists, who gave generous gifts to their former churches, but also chose to give to Green Pond UMC and other United Methodist churches and ministries. Because the gift was not specific to one object or activity, the funds were deposited to our General Fund for every day operating expenses, and they arrived at an opportune time. A harsh winter and high inflation created financial challenges this year, and yet because of the generosity of this unexpected gift, we are better able to meet our expenses.

This kind of charitable giving is called “planned giving” or “legacy giving.” We are so grateful that the McBrides had conversations with an estate planner and gave careful thought to what kinds of ministries they hoped would live on after them. What a wonderful surprise that they included Green Pond UMC in their planning!

Have you ever considered what ministries you hope will live on after you? Do you hope the ministries and community will carry on through our youth and young adults, and will continue to attract new people? Would you like to have a conversation about a special gift to Green Pond UMC, now or in the future? If you would just like to talk about some of your options, please feel free to reach out to the Finance or Trustee committees to discuss your dreams and hopes. There are many options for legacy gifts, and we would love to help you with your planning.

We are grateful to the McBrides, who chose to bless others through the blessings God gave them.

2026 Jack H. LaFever Memorial Achievement Award—Alex Konya

The Educational Assistance Committee is pleased to announce to the Congregation that Andrew Biddle, the son of Jen and Steve Biddle, is the 2026 recipient of the Jack H. LaFever Memorial Achievement Award. He is the 32nd recipient of this Award, which honors the memory of Jack LaFever, a life-long member of First UMC. The Award is given to a graduating high school senior from Green Pond UMC, in recognition of their church, community and school activities and scholastic achievement.

Andrew graduated from Easton Area High School with a grade point percentage of 100.22 out of 100, ranking in the top 8% of his class, and was named as a Student of the Month. He was on the High Honor Roll all four years and a member of the National Honor Society.

Andrew played football for Easton. He was second team all-area in 2024 and first team in 2025, part of Easton’s East Penn Conference championship team both years and District XI champions in 2025. Andrew served as a team captain last season. Both years they defeated Phillipsburg on Turkey Day. He also played varsity lacrosse, earning first team EPC in 2025. They were EPC and District XI champions in 2024 and 2025.

In his spare time, he worked at Giacomo’s Italian Market in College Hill and was flag football referee. At Green Pond, he participated in Sunday School, Teen Worship, Youth Group, Safe Harbor food program, Easter Egg Hunt, VBS, Advent Night, Ash Wednesday and regular church services.

This fall, Andrew will pursue a bachelor’s degree in Exercise Science at Shippensburg University, with plans to attend graduate school and become a physical therapist. He earned a \$5,000 Red Raider scholarship to Shippensburg. Please join us in congratulating the 2026 Jack H. LaFever Memorial Achievement Award recipient: Congratulations Andrew and Good Luck at The Shipp!

Children & Youth Ministry Announcements

Vacation Bible School 2026: "Rolling River Rampage: Experience the Ride of a Lifetime with God"

Dates: Monday, July 13 – Thursday, July 16

Time: 9:30 am – 12:00 pm

Ages: 4 – 15

Join us this summer for an exciting Bible adventure! Each day, children and youth will embark on a thrilling river journey where they discover that life has twists, turns and rapids, but God is with us every step of the way.

Participants will enjoy Bible stories, worship songs, interactive games, crafts, hands-on science activities, and daily snacks.

Rolling River Rampage is a fun-filled adventure of faith, and friendship, perfect for both new and returning participants. Invite your friends and mark your calendars!

Registration is now open! [Register Here](#)

Kid & Teen Worship

The final Sunday for Kid & Teen Worship will be June 7th. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all participants, volunteers, church leadership, and everyone who helped and supported throughout the year.