

## Jan. 2020 Newsletter

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### Jan. Save the Dates:

- January 9—BELONG, 7 PM
- January 12—Kid & Teen Worship Resumes; Movies with Micah, after services
- January 16—BELONG, 7 PM
- January 19—Concert, after services
- January 23—BELONG, 7 PM
- January 24-26—Youth Group Winter Retreat
- January 27—Church Council Meeting, 7 PM

Green Pond United Methodist Church

[www.greenpondumc.com](http://www.greenpondumc.com)

## Different Voices by Pastor Scott

Happy new year everyone! Another year come and gone. Another year to look forward to.

I Corinthians 14:10 KJV: “There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification.”

This January we will be hearing from different voices in the church. I will be preaching on Simeon the first Sunday 1/5/2020. This will be followed by Pam on 1/12/2020, and then Micah on 1/19/2020. Meagan Ackerman will preach sometime in February. And we have a special preacher on the last Sunday of January. Rev. Tom Robinson will be preaching on January 26, 2020. He will also be presenting his new book called *Your God Path*, which will be available for sale here at GPUMC that day.

We want to give voice to the diversity here at GPUMC, and explore what God is trying to tell us through our learned scholars. Our preachers have been in prayer and discernment for several months now, as we are approaching this great opportunity to hear from God through them. Though Paul might have been struggling with how to spread the word of God in a first century world where they knew of 70 languages, how is it we hear from God, speaking the same language, but through different lenses.

Even though we live in the same community, how is it we attempt to understand each other? How is it we attempt to understand God? In my experience, in the Lehigh Valley, a large number of Christians believe that the Bible is to be taken *literally*. However, most of us look at the Bible through the lenses of *interpretation*. That has been our way of understanding the Bible, and its teachings.

When we use *interpretation* we ask, “Who wrote the text? Why was it written? What was happening when the text was written?” We also consider the *literary form*. “Is the text a narrative story, a book of laws, or a book of songs or poetry, a letter? Was it written by an eyewitness, or is it the collection of writings by different people? Is it a coded text, filled with symbolism and allegory, addressing a specific people at a specific time? Was it written to address a specific need?”

This perspective in no way invalidates the wisdom of the Biblical text and the relationship of God with humanity. Our preachers use this type of approach in their preaching, and will be sharing with us God’s profound truths as we go into 2020. And it is even more important that you hear from others how God is at work amongst us.

## **Announcements**

**Finance Update:** Below is a brief summary of November's balance, as well as our Year to Date balance, from our Finance Team. We have also included our Budgeted Expenses for the year and month for comparison. As always, feel free to contact Brad Schaeffer (schaefferfinancialandtax@yahoo.com), our Financial Advisor, if you have any questions.

### **GPUMC FINANCE SUMMARY NOVEMBER 30, 2019**

		NOV 2019
INCOME		14,630.42
*EXPENSES		(18,227.06)
GAIN/(LOSS)		(3,596.64)
		YTD 2019
INCOME		168,840.02
*EXPENSES		(215,575.78)
GAIN/(LOSS)		(46,735.76)
*BUDGETED		21,095.47
EXPENSES		
NOV 2019		
*BUDGETED		
EXPENSES		
YTD 2019		232,050.18

## **Fellowship through the Arts—Micah Gary-Fryer**

As we look back on 2019, we give thanks to GOD for all things; family, friends and our church community; as we look ahead to 2020, we also extend prayers for the new year. Green Pond United Methodist is doing new things with the Holy Spirit guiding our path! It has been a pleasure and delight to serve as your Minister of Liturgical Arts (MOLA). I thank you for all of the support and love that you have provided me and my family. Please take a moment to extend a hand, give a smile, and invite someone to the upcoming Evangelism concerts that we are presenting in 2020. Starting on January 19, we will be hosting James Rufflin and the Joyful Sounds Gospel singers for a mini concert immediately after the service in which I will preach and reflect on the community service of Dr. Martin Luther King. On Friday, February 14, our newest friend to the music ministry, Lou Pompilio will be sharing a full evening concert, as part of our "Love Italian American" style. This event will have an Italian dinner for two, all for \$20, on Valentine's Day. In March, we will be presenting our own Linda Schreiber, sharing her beautiful piano skills and talent. We are also awaiting the long-anticipated piano concert by Nathan Gallo, in April. May has opened up recently, but thanks to Megan Schaeffer, I would like to survey the members about having a spiritual drum circle... hmm? What do you think? And, June will finish the concert season with Nadine Edwards with her wonderful youth choir and friends! So, the year looks exciting and entertaining, all for the glory of God.

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## **Movies with Micah—Micah Gary-Fryer**

In October of 2019, I initiated "Monthly Movies and with Micah" and we had great response to the Mr. Roger's documentary, and in November the Holy Spirit moved us with "The Shack". In December, I shared the original story from The Waltons, "Homecoming". On January 12, I will present a recommendation from one of our members for the movie "Fireproof". Celebrating Black History month, we will go to the Great Debaters. I would like to invite everyone to consider their favorite movies for more recommendations for April, May and June. We will take a summer break and come back in September. All the movies and fellowship are part of John Wesley concept of accountability and small group meeting within fellowship, community and Christian education. I hope we are meeting your needs in some way, but do not hesitate to give the worship team your feedback and suggestions! Many blessings through the Holiday season, and Happy New Year!

## **Christmas All Year Round**—Fred Clark

The following is from an article by Fred Clark. Thank you to Bryan Drake for sharing it:

The first December I worked at the newspaper, a local family lost their home and all their possessions in a house fire just a few days before Christmas. I said something to one of the veteran copy desk editors about how awful it was for this to have happened to this family “at Christmas.” He explained that this was actually the best time for such an awful thing to happen. We would run a big front page story about this unfortunate family who lost everything they owned just before Christmas and our readers would respond with an outpouring of generosity and “Christmas spirit.” Area businesses would chime in to donate services and goods the displaced family would need. A local hotel would provide the family with a place to stay, free of charge.

Witnessing the effects of such “Christmas spirit” can be encouraging. It can also be disheartening. Seeing this “Christmas spirit” at work is encouraging because it demonstrates that we’re capable of it. It proves that generosity and sympathy and magnanimity and charity are possible as a way of being together in this world. It shows that we can, in fact, choose to be overwhelmingly kind and gracious to one another.

But it also demonstrates that we’re not able — or perhaps not willing — to sustain such grace and generosity. We can heed the better angels of our nature, but only once a year and only for a very brief period. We tend to spend the rest of the year refusing to be generous or merciful because, come on, it’s not Christmas

What I think it boils down to is this: the better angels of our nature are real, but they need a lot of help. We can, sometimes, be “better than this.” But we have a hard time keeping that up for very long, even if all of us, on some level, wish we could. And so it’s always tempting to just give up.

But I think most of us want to be better at being better than this. And maybe, because we all share that pipe dream, maybe we’re capable of more than just brief spurts of “holiday spirit.” That holiday “spirit” is, at least, a hint that we know what being better than this would look like.

So how do we get there? I don’t think we can do it on our own. We have to help each other. We have to make promises to each other to hold one another to it. By doing that, I think, we might be able to be better than this. We might be able to reform ourselves and to reform our lives together in a way that would make our reformed selves something that could continue even when it’s not the holidays.

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## **Our Mission Statement**—Pam Boddy

Do you know our mission statement? It appears on our website, but reading the above article reminded me that we could all use a refresher course. Our mission:

“Reach out and transform lives to build a compassionate community of faith.”

## **People Talk**

Do you or someone you know need a ride to church on Sunday mornings? Contact Debbie Norgard (863-660-2454) or Tina Kantong (484-542-2320) to sign up for our ride share program. Volunteers willing to drive others may also sign up with them.

Busy Hands made some beautiful scarves and caps to donate to Safe Harbor. Thank you from Tina Kantong (and the rest of us) for your thoughtfulness and hard work, Busy Hands!

In December, we celebrated the marriage of Jen Schuler and Brian Poplawski. Congratulations!

Raylene Frankenfield will be leaving us for sunny Florida until May. Thank you for all you do, safe travelling, and we’ll see you in the spring!

Did you know there’s a Women’s Bible Study group? We meet in the evenings at members’ homes. Contact Laura Matulewicz for more information.

## **Children & Youth Ministry Announcements**

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### **Ongoing**

Kid & Teen Worship will be held Sunday mornings during the 10am worship service from January 12 – June 7, 2020 during the 10am worship service.

Our nursery will continue to be available throughout the school year during both service times. Our nursery is for children aged 6 months to 6 years.

### **Upcoming**

Youth Group Retreat at Pocono Plateau will be held January 24 – 26, 2020. Registration was due Dec. 29. See Megan Schaeffer for questions.

### **Grow in God's Love!**

**Kid Worship & Teen Worship** resumes with a new series on Sunday, January 12 during the 10am Worship Service! Kid Worship is for students in grades K – 5<sup>th</sup>. Teen Worship is for students in grades 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>.

Our theme for January is knowledge. God is the author of knowledge. Everything we know to be true about the world is because of God. Knowing God is the most important Person to know. And while we may never know all there is to know about God, God gives us lots of ways we can know Him. We can know Him best through Jesus, who showed us how much God loves us. We can pursue knowing more about God through Jesus, who showed why knowledge is so important. The more we know God, the better we can live His way each day. *“The Lord gives wisdom. Knowledge and understanding come from his mouth.” Proverbs 2:6, NIRV*

### **Proud Moment!**

Thank you to the following kids (and their families) who participated in the Kid's Hand Bell Choir on Dec. 22: Ethan Carlberg, Lena Carlberg, Emily Drake, Conor Eaton, Derek Eaton, Brayden Loxley, Andrew Pugliese, Joshua Pugliese, and Mia Schaeffer. Congratulations on a joyful performance!