

~ Everybody's Family is Weird ~

*And looking at those who sat around him, Jesus said,
"Here are my mother and brothers!
Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."*

~Mark 3:34-35

Dear Members and Friends,

I wrote this sermon introduction some years ago, but then I chickened out and never used it:

Many years ago, I was engaged to a woman who would console me sweetly by saying, "It's okay. Everybody's family is weird." Was she right about that? I don't know. In the case of her family and mine, she was! Our engagement came to naught, but I still tease myself with her well-intended words. "Everybody's family is weird." I think she meant to say that all families have their quirks, and entanglements, and hidden histories; it takes years for an outsider to master them all.

As a rookie pastor, my parents and siblings made "easy pickings" for sermon illustrations. And yet, I quickly discovered that stories about the minister's relatives are embarrassing for congregations. Oh, but indulge me just for today; none of them are here! I come from a family of five children, and I fall in the dead middle, like Peter Brady. My only sister is the oldest, and we four brothers are as different from each other as April, July, October, and January. Because both our parents worked while we were growing up, our sister was in charge. And boy was she ever! To this very day, whenever the seven of us find ourselves together, my sister remains very much in charge. Even my parents do as they are told. My brothers and I used to say that when the boogeyman goes to sleep, he checks first to see if our sister is hiding under his bed. If you remember Pip's older sister from the wonderful novel Great Expectations, by Dickens, then you've got the idea. In fact, I believe that book sounded such an echo in my heart that it nudged me toward a degree in English instead of commercial art.

Well, Michelle and I are hosting the family Easter celebration today. My sister usually hosts, but her nursing job occasionally requires her to work on holidays. And as I think about the inevitable events that will transpire around the dinner table this afternoon, I am both excited and already a little bit troubled. No need to read the text; I know the song by heart. Without my sister present, no one knows how to interact with each other. My mother will ask us all once, "How are you?" She won't listen to the answer, then she'll remain unresponsive to any attempts at further conversation, except to call my children by the names of my older brother's kids and ask them in baby-talk how school is. My father will tell the same stories and jokes that he's been telling since I was a child. The two brothers in attendance will say nary a word. Not one. Each time Michelle leaves the table to fetch a salt shaker or a butter dish, all chit-chat will grind to a halt. I'll feel the need to fill that silence with affable chatter—a draining task for an introverted minister on Easter afternoon—and everything I say will be heard through the old "ear trumpet" of family history, which is filled with decades-old landmines. The relationships around the table are laden with ancient booby-traps, like the ones that the pyramid-builders laid for grave robbers, still waiting to snap into action, still waiting to snare their prey. It's exhausting. It's messy. But it's family...and I love them, and it's entirely worth the effort.

Is everybody's family weird? Is yours? Each family comes with its own internal rules, and codes, and unspoken assumptions. There are locked rooms, and secret doors, and back staircases. But being in relationship is worth the effort. Church families can seem strange to newcomers, too. As visitors become more a part of our regular worship experience, I hope each of us will do more than just greet them cordially. Invite them to sit with you. Welcome them to coffee hour or to class. Encourage them to sign in on the pew pad. Strike up a conversation. Every family can feel kind of weird and a little disconcerting for a newcomer...but being family is always worth the effort.

In Christ's Peace,
Brian

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION INFORMATION

Did you know???

Did you know that ALL of our volunteers and staff who work with our children are Approved Adults?

This means the volunteer has taken the time to obtain all child abuse clearances and sign an Approved Adult Application.

Why does Bower Hill Community Church require this from our volunteers and staff?

To ensure both parents and children of Bower Hill Community Church feel welcomed, safe, secure and loved.

Did you know that on any given Sunday, Bower Hill Community Church has 15-20 preschoolers!

YES! 15-20 preschoolers!!! We need MORE Approved Adults!!

The process is painless and simple and may cost you nothing! In the state of Pennsylvania, if you volunteer in a school, church or other non-profit organization, child abuse clearances are FREE!

If you are a young parent looking for a way to connect into children/youth ministries or a person who has a heart for children, PLEASE consider becoming an Approved Adult. Most times there is no prep work: you just need to show up and be present in our young people's lives.

For more information on becoming an Approved Adult, please contact Marla at ma@bhccml.com or call 412-561-4114.

OTHER NOTES:

- Normal Sunday school classes resume on April 3.
- Please send a jacket with your child to Kids Care. They will be on the playground when weather permits.

EAT AND MEET — GRADES 5 AND UP, our monthly traditional youth group meeting, will meet again on **Sunday, April 10**, from **6:00-8:00 p.m.** in Fellowship Hall. Dinner, games and Bible study are included.

KIDS CARE DURING ADULT EDUCATION

This is a reminder that during the Adult Education hour, children attending childcare in Room 110, lounge across from music room, must be signed in and out by an adult responsible for their care. **Unattended children will not be permitted to stay** and will be sent back to find an adult to sign them into Kids Care. Thanks for your cooperation.



Spring is here, and with it a sense of renewal in the air. Why not expand your horizons this spring and join us for the Adult Education sessions in the Friendship Room from 10:45-11:45 a.m. on Sunday mornings following worship and fellowship time. If you've never attended a session, give it a try. These are not classes or lectures! You'll find stimulating ideas and conversation as we explore what it means to be people of faith in this ever-challenging world. Steve Boisvert is the Committee Chair and can be reached at sdboisvert@verizon.net.

The following is the session schedule for April:

April 3: Dr. Drew Smith from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary leads a class on how our denomination has and does address separation of church and state in America.

April 10: The Rev. Dr. Sheldon Sorge, General Minister to Pittsburgh Presbytery, will lead a class on the Seventh-Day Adventist Church.

April 17: The Rev. Dr. Brian Snyder will continue his series on spirituality and theology in our lives and the lives of the church.

April 24: Rev. Ayana Teter from Pittsburgh Presbytery will be sharing Presbytery's church planting efforts.

May 1: Todd Behanna, Human Resource Specialist at the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf, will discuss "deaf culture" employing American Sign Language. Elder Cathy Morgan will interpret his presentation into spoken English.

MUSIC DIRECTOR NOTE

Happy Easter, and thank you to all who made the music of Lent and Easter special here at Bower Hill. Thank you especially to the Cherub Choir, who did a fabulous job leading us in worship on Palm Sunday. Special thanks to Jason Rising, Chris Robbins, Jason Robosky, and Margaret Zabo for all of their hard work.

FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

As you participate in the life of Bower Hill, think about those individuals, **INCLUDING YOURSELF**, that would be ready, willing and able to provide energy and support while serving as an Elder on Session, a Deacon or a member of the Nominating Committee.

Nominations may be submitted to the church office or by talking to one of the members of the committee. This year's committee includes the following: Theresa Child-Chair, Joan Bridges, Bethany Gibbs, Pat Jacobs, Carol Knox, Rob Mackey, and Anne Mitchell.

As Chair, I am also available to answer any questions. Please contact me at 412-429-9519 or at via email at tree-toowon@yahoo.com.

Not ready for Session or Deacons? Consider joining a committee. In addition to contacting one of the Session representatives for more information, specifics on the duties of each committee can be found on the church website, in the annual report or by contacting the church office.

Administration and Personnel Committee

—Rick Jacobs, Dick Headley

Adult Education Committee

—Steve Boisvert, Cathy Morgan

Building and Grounds Committee

—Lynn Foltz, Cathy Morgan

Subcommittees—House Committee, Kitchen Committee, and Architectural Integrity Committee

Capital Campaign Committee

—Jason Rising, Gordon Mitchell

(Children's) Christian Education Committee

—Marla Kemmler, Sarah Cannon

Subcommittees—Church Library Committee and Preschool Operations

Communication Committee

—Glenn Child, Jim Cannon, Theresa Child

Finance and Stewardship Committee

—Mike Riemer, Jason Rising

Subcommittees—Flea Market Committee and Memorial Gift Committee

Mission and Outreach Committee

—Jean Miewald, Keith Mason

Parish Life Committee

—Sheri Geis, Pat Jacobs

Worship and Music Committee

—Andy Druckenbrod, Jason Robosky

Subcommittees—Organ Committee & Worship Design Team

Youth Ministries Committee

—Alan Hohlfelder, Jim Cannon

APRIL

WORSHIP PLANS

April 3: Second Sunday of Easter
Communion

Baptism of Camden Ridley
John 20:19-31; Acts 5:27-41

April 10: Third Sunday of Easter
John 21:1-19; Acts 9:1

April 17: Fourth Sunday of Easter
John 10:22-30; Revelation 7:9-17

April 24: Fifth Sunday of Easter
Revelation 21:1-6; Acts 11:1-18

GREETINGS FROM OUR BHCC INTERNS

The sun is shining and the birds are chirping at Crestfield. And with the changing of weather come some springtime symptoms. A stomach bug has been going around for a week now, and it has put some of our work on hold. One Sunday, Tyler was unable to get to Bower Hill Church because of this, but a few worked together and got through the day because of being a very connected and well-functioning team. Jeremiah is dealing with this same thing now so we are still fighting it, but there is light at the end of the tunnel!

We got through our Tweener retreat before we started getting sick, however, and that went without a hitch. Many churches including Bower Hill were involved in this, and they seemed to have had a blast. We had a free activity time where some of our church kids got to shoot archery, climb the rock wall, go on a hike, and play fun engaging games including building a tower out of straws, newspaper, tape and sticks. The speaker for that weekend was Paul Humphreys, and he did a fantastic job in leading well thought-out and interactive discussions about what it means to be a superhero.

Sincerely,
Tyler Musher & Jeremiah Wagner

APRIL WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

COMMUNION SERVERS

April 3: Steve & Debbie Boisvert, Cynthia Gissin, Nancy Criswell

LECTORS

April 3: Alan Hohlfelder

April 10: Debbie Boisvert

April 17: Lynn Foltz

April 24: Keith Mason

ACOLYTES

April 3: Henry & Clara Druckenbrod, Hayden Jones

April 10: Graceann Foster

April 17: Avery & Sydney Saba

April 24: Lindsay & Allie Bruder

USHER CAPTAINS

April 3, 10: Mike Riemer

April 17, 24: Peter Morgan

GREETERS—TBD weekly

COFFEE HOUR

April 3: Geis Family

April 10: Watterson Family

April 17: Snyder Family

April 24: Olinger / Gissin Families

FLOWER DEACONS

April 3: Kathy Philson

April 10: Doris Olinger

April 17: Sally Child

April 24: Josie Sheldon

Questions? Need to switch or reschedule? Please contact:

Greeters, Communion Servers—Andy Druckenbrod

Lectors: TBD

Acolytes: Jean Miewald

Coffee Hour: Pat Jacobs

Flower Deacons: Darendra Lease

PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE EVENT

You are invited to join us at PNC Park to cheer on the
Pirates vs. Rockies
Sunday, May 22, at 1:35 p.m.

in support of the 4th annual
Foundation for Ichthyosis and Related Skin Types
 fundraiser hosted by the Kocher family!

As some of you may know, Matt and Lauren's four-year-old son, Calvin, was born with a rare genetic skin disorder called ichthyosis. He has extremely thick, dry and scaly skin which causes many complications. His condition affects approximately 1 in 300,000 children. At this time there is no cure and few treatment options. To learn more about ichthyosis and the FIRST organization, please visit:

<http://www.firstskinfoundation.org/>.

Fundraisers like this one are so important to raise money for promising research and to allow FIRST to be a huge resource for families affected by this condition.

Let's show our love and support as a congregation for the Kocher family by joining them at the Pirates game this year! We will also be tailgating prior to the game. Details to be announced soon! Don't miss out on all of the fun!! **To order tickets or to make an additional donation, please contact Lauren Kocher or Sheri Geis.**

This event is open to anyone, so invite your friends to join us!! The seats are located in section 131 and cost \$30. Children under 32 inches do not require a ticket.

We encourage you to purchase your tickets by Tuesday, April 5, to ensure seating with the group. We hope to see you there!



April 3 — Pat Neurnberg

April 4 — Elise Gibbs

George Freas, Jr.

April 6 — Mark Mezyk

April 7 — Christie Cole

April 8 — Marian Brannan

April 11 — Scott Ryfun

Theresa Child

April 13 — Mimi Starr

April 15 — Hayden Jones

April 19 — Ainsley McDonough

Pete Fenton

April 20 — Theodore Grier

April 21 — Bea Watterson

April 22 — Owen Geis

Linda Stewart

April 23 — Kirsten Bruder

April 24 — Margaret Zabo

April 25 — Alan Hohlfelder

Benjamin Carter

April 26 — Barb Hughes

April 29 — Clara Druckenbrod

Please take a moment to read through the names, pray for them, and offer them your best wishes!

If your name is not listed, it is because the church office does not have your information.

COMMUNITY NOTES

Want to be included on this page? Submissions are due the 15th of every month for the next month's publication. 412-561-4114 or office@bhccml.com

WALLACE FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION

The next collection day is **Sunday, April 10**. The Pantry collects food items needed to provide supplies to all their client families. Currently, the greatest needs are for canned tuna or chicken, canned soups, and boxed cereal. A special, ongoing need is for adult men's protective undergarments, size medium. As always, any donations of non-perishable food items, toiletry items, and paper products are welcomed. On behalf of the families served by Wallace, they would like to thank the Bower Hill congregation for their support of this ministry!

DIAPER COLLECTION — WESTERN PA DIAPER BANK

Our next collection of disposable diapers is **Sunday, April 17**. Sizes 4, 5 and 6 are most in need for babies. XL diapers are needed for the geriatric population.



Our first collection from February produced over 800 diapers! For the month of March, 1,010 diapers were received from Bower Hill Church's generous donors, and all but 32 of them were for babies. Thanks to all who contributed!

The collection container is the Pack'N Play which is located in the hallway directly outside of the Nursery. Your diaper donation this month will be greatly appreciated!

HIGHMARK WALK FOR FAMILY PROMISE — MAY 14

Bower Hill Community Church has been entered as a team on the Highmark Walk page to walk on behalf of Family Promise on May 14. To incorporate theological roots, we are officially the "Bower Hill Mad Calvinists." Our slogan, thanks to Jean Miewald, is:

"You are predestined to be on our team"

Please log into and join the team and tell your friends. More to come in the near future. Many thanks.

Link is <http://www.walkforahealthycommunity.org/whc3/index.shtml>

(Our team contact person is Keith Mason, who can be emailed at krmason057@gmail.com.)



SENIOR MEN'S GROUP

The senior men's breakfast group will meet on **Wednesday, April 6**, at **8:00 a.m.** at Kings Restaurant on Route 50 near the end of Greentree Road. The group will switch to the first Tuesday of each month beginning in May. The group meets in the room to the left of the cashier, and no reservation is necessary. Usually 6-10 church members attend and are welcome to an unstructured discussion of any topic that comes to mind.

BOOKWORMS UPDATE

Below is the listing of books for the next five months as decided by the group at our last meeting. We missed a lot of you but had a great discussion. It is important that you get your name on the request list for the May and July selections now.

As an accommodation requested by the "Ladies" from Concordia, it was decided to move the Bookworms meetings to the fourth Tuesday of the next few months. Hopefully that does not conflict with too many schedules. Please respond to Margaret Zabo if you are unable to meet on this newly-changed date.

—Margaret Zabo

April 26

Station Eleven by Emily St. John Mandel

May 24

Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates

June 28

Our souls at Night by Kent Haruf

July 26

Being Mortal by Atul Gawande

August 23

Breakfast with Buddha by Roland Merulle

COFFEE, CAKE & CONVERSATION will meet again on



Tuesday, April 26, at 2:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. This group provides an opportunity to extend our fellowship time from fifteen minutes on Sunday mornings to two hours once a month. Coffee and cake will be provided: the conversation is up to you! Contact Bill Cadwell for more information.

Flea Market



It's time for the **Spring Flea Market** and there are many opportunities to participate.

Here's the scoop:

Items will be collected from now through Sunday, April 3. All items must be clean and in working condition.

PLEASE do not include clothes.

If you are able, please take all items directly upstairs to the loft, otherwise leave them on the benches outside Fellowship Hall.

FINAL PRICING — **Sunday, April 3**, from 10:45 a.m. until ???

UNPACKING THE BOXES — **Thursday, April 7**, from 9:00 a.m. until ???.

Help us unpack for an hour or two or stay all day and really get a workout. We are typically done between 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. Snacks will be provided, but if you plan to stay all day, you may want to bring a bagged lunch.

SALE DAY — **Saturday April 9**, from 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

The Flea Market opens at 8:30 a.m., and we usually have shoppers arriving early. We will need the most help during the first few hours.

SOUP COOKS AND BAKERS NEEDED. We are looking for bakers to make items for the snack bar such as mini muffins, cookies, and brownies. Baked goods can be dropped off in the kitchen or on the cart outside of the office on **Friday, April 8**, and on Saturday sometime between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. We are also looking for a gallon of each of the following soups: chicken noodle, potato and chili. Containers can be provided. Soup can be dropped off in the kitchen on Friday from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. or by 9:30 a.m. on the day of the Flea Market.

Don't forget that flea market helpers get first crack at all merchandise!!

If you have any questions, contact Theresa Child at 412-429-9519 or at treetoowon@yahoo.com.

Thanks in advance for all your help to make this year's spring flea market a huge success.



April 3
Baptism—Camden Ridley

Saturday, April 9
Spring Flea Market

Sunday, April 17
Baptism—Noelle Grella
April 24—May 1

Sunday,

Family Promise at BHCC

Saturday, May 14
Highmark Walk for Family Promise

Sunday, May 22
Pirates vs. Rockies Fundraiser

July 24—31
Family Promise at BHCC

September 25—October 2
Family Promise at BHCC

December 25—January 1, 2017
Family Promise at BHCC



PENN'S CORNER FARM ALLIANCE

Hello Bower Hill Community Church!

I am honored to introduce you to **Penn's Corner Farm Alliance**, a farmer cooperative in Southwestern Pennsylvania. As a group of about 30 member farms, we deliver local fruits, vegetables, meats, cheeses, eggs, honey, bread, and other farm fresh products to the Pittsburgh area through our pre-order, online Farm Stands. Beginning in April, Bower Hill Community Church will be the site of our Mt. Lebanon Farm Stand pick-up! We are thrilled to offer these quality products to Mt. Lebanon residents, and begin a partnership with you and your church!

Ordering from the Penn's Corner Farm Stand is a great way to support your local farmers while having easy access to delicious, fresh and healthy foods! Anyone can order from our online market, and there are no order minimums or requirements. Download the Penn's Corner Farm Stand mobile app, or look for the Farm Stand storefront on our website (www.pennscorner.com) to order!

Ordering is open every Monday afternoon through Thursday afternoon for pickup the following Monday pickup at Bower Hill Community Church (as well as five other pickup locations around town) between 4:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

You may email farmstand@pennscorner.com for more information or to be added to our weekly Farm Stand email list. Hope to see you soon!

—The Penn's Corner Farm Alliance Staff

SANDI'S GARDEN



Last year Sandi's Garden produced over 450 pounds of fresh, organic produce. Spring is finally here, and BHCC is once again participating in SHIM's efforts to provide fresh, organic produce to the families who participate in its Food Pantry. Every year we have added more garden space and this year is no exception. This year SHIM is adding a new food pantry and our contribution will be needed more than ever.

Sandi's Garden provides opportunities for all members of the congregation to participate. Members can help make this year even more successful than last year by doing the following:

- Donating seed packets of swiss chard, bush beans, pole beans, sweet and hot peppers, zucchini, and winter squash seeds.
- Donating sweet and hot pepper plants.
- Donating regular or Thai basil plants. Fresh herbs are always welcome at the Food Pantry.
- Signing up to water the garden beds for a week.
- Helping with harvesting produce.
- Volunteering to deliver the produce on Monday mornings.

We are blessed to be part of a congregation that is committed to the call to serve others in so many ways. Sandi's garden provides an opportunity to enjoy the long awaited warm sunny days of spring and summer, knowing that our little plot of land is part of a wonderful mission. Many thanks to all who have been part of this mission project in the past and who continue to support it.



I want to thank you all again, our Bower Hill Community Church Family, for all your prayers, cards, love and caring, that you have extended to me and my family during my battle with cancer. I could not have gotten through it without your support. I am done with my chemo now and currently in remission. I still have some testing to get through, and need to regain my "get up and go"!!!! Denny and I, and DJ and family, are so blessed to be part of this church's family. Thank you all.

—Nancy Geis

BOWER HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

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OUR CHURCH STAFF

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Rev. Fred Leasure
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ff26emt@gmail.com

THE CHURCH OFFICE

[412] 561-4114

Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m.— 2:30 p.m.

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR CARE LIST

Matt Dunfee, 966 Worthington Woods Blvd, Worthington, OH, 43085

Ethel La Barbera, 50 Vanadium Road, #130, Bridgeville, PA 15017

Alma Johnson, 13 Charles Street, Dravosburg, PA 15034

Pat Nuernberg, Friendship Village Health Center, 1290 Boyce Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15241

SUNDAY TRANSPORTATION

Need a ride to worship? The deacons would like to provide a ride for members who need one. Please contact the Church Office several days before Sunday worship, and someone will help schedule your ride.

ARE YOU WILLING TO GIVE A RIDE?

The deacons are compiling a list of people who might be **willing to give rides** to church. There are several people who do not drive who might come to church if they had a ride. If you would be willing to offer rides, please call the church office at 412-561-4114.

