

## ~ Holy Places, Whole Places ~

*“A cheerful heart is a good medicine.”*

~Proverbs 17:22

Dear Members and Friends,

Some years ago, we used to host an annual Comedy Night to raise funds for our Haiti Water Projects. Do you remember those? A “stand-up” would come and do a comedy routine; people would buy tickets, and there was even a moderate amount of drinking. (At first we held our comedy nights at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in order to allow BYOB for those who wanted it. Later, Bower Hill’s session narrowly granted a special exemption to permit drinking in our own building—but only on that occasion.) I don’t remember why, but I only made it to two of the comedy nights. One comedian clearly assumed we were fundamentalists. He ribbed us gently for homeschooling and not believing in evolution! The other comedian was a lot funnier, but he made one outrageously cruel joke about handicapped people. I recall very vividly the awkwardness of that moment. People didn’t want to laugh at the joke; it was too unkind. But the shock value of it got the better of most, and they ended up laughing in spite of themselves. The saintly director of Hekima Place was present that evening, and she glanced at me meaningfully, just to make sure I wasn’t laughing.

Laughter is a—well—a funny thing. Jonathan Edwards, the famed Puritan minister, vowed to avoid laughter because it contains an element of mockery, and it usually comes at someone’s expense. I understand that position, even if I do not share it. Edwards would be aghast that 21<sup>st</sup> century preachers often make jokes from the pulpit—usually about two-thirds of the way through the sermon, when people’s attention spans are starting to flag. Although a theologian, a philosopher, a scientist, and a brilliant academic...a comic Edwards was not. Sadly, the great 18<sup>th</sup> century Puritan is best known for one very humorless sermon, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.”

In contrast, consider this quote from *The Times of India*: “The day laughter enters back into the holy places they will be really holy, because they will be whole.” The article goes on to say, “When you laugh, you are egoless. There is no past and no future. There is nothing but the laughter.” Laughter, some say, is the universal language. Novelist George R.R. Martin said, “Laughter is poison to fear.” Haven’t we all seen laughter serving a holy function every now and again? Haven’t we seen laughter magically dispelling worry, and estrangement, and tension? On one hand, people long for a bit of reverence in their lives, maybe even something or someone to venerate. We thirst for a degree of solemnity, for it honors the mystery and the majesty that we call God. Most people sense within themselves that life, in all its sacredness, is due a deep and sober respect. On the other hand, laughter and joy are so integral to a healthy spirit that they, too, must have a place in our life of faith.

This Lenten Season is considered a somber time by many. The dreary month of March is usually all-too-happy to reinforce that gloomy impression. Lent is seen as a time for deprivations, and night church (which I recall from childhood as an especially dour thing!), and meditation on the sufferings of Christ. In church, during Lent, we’re not supposed to sing any “alleluias” or “glorias.” We do need seasons of solemnity. But really, even this sometimes-somber season is undergirded by joy. Lenten joy bids us put greater thought into the pleasures we take for granted, to look more closely at the things and the ones we love, to consider more attentively “the lilies of the field.” Our night church—or compline—services have been both solemn and joyful, attended by laughter and tears, as we’ve heard the songs and the stories of those church members with whom we share this journey of faith. And so? Enjoy this time of soul-searching and introspection. Give it the seriousness that it needs. But never at any time should you neglect your soul’s deep desire for laughter. It too is a holy thing.

In Christ’s Peace,  
~Brian



**Lenten Compline Services** will continue on Wednesdays during Lent through March 21 at **7:30 p.m.** in the chapel. These services follow the format for evening prayer in the 1946 Book of Common Worship.

Each evening, a different member of the congregation will choose the Scripture readings, as well as three hymns that are significant to his or her faith journey. We will sing the hymns together and hear the story of that person's spiritual life. The services will close with communion. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to take part. Please park in the lot close to Hospice and enter through the Memorial Garden.

### LENTEN DEVOTIONALS

Free daily Lenten devotionals are still available to church members and friends. They can be found on a music stand in the narthex—one per family, please.



**Sunday, March 4: Third Sunday in Lent**  
(Communion) Exodus 20:1-17; John 2:13-22

**Wednesday, March 7: Lenten Compline Service**

**Sunday, March 11: Fourth Sunday in Lent**  
Numbers 21:4-9; John 3:14-21

**Wednesday, March 14: Lenten Compline Service**

**Sunday, March 18: Fifth Sunday in Lent**  
Jeremiah 31:31-34; John 12:20-33

**Wednesday, March 21: Lenten Compline Service**

**March 25: Palm Sunday, Passion Sunday**  
Mark 11:1-10; Mark 14:1-15:47

**The Church office will be closed on Good Friday, March 30 and Easter Monday, April 2.**



### MAUNDY THURSDAY COMMUNION SERVICE

Our annual observance of Maundy Thursday will take place on **March 29 at 7:30 p.m.** We will gather in the Friendship Room (due to Family Promise), just opposite the nursery. This communion service relives the events that took place in the Upper Room on the night of Jesus' arrest. As Jesus and the disciples moved from the table to the garden, the service will move from the Friendship Room to the sanctuary, where it will conclude. Children are welcome to take part.

### GOOD FRIDAY COMMUNITY SERVICE

Good Friday falls on **March 30**. An afternoon service at Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church continues a longstanding tradition in our community. Instead of the three-hour service of previous years, this event now lasts from **12:00-1:00 p.m.** Pastor Snyder and ministers from four other congregations will each share a five-minute sermon on the passion of Christ. A community "super choir" will sing.

### HOLY SATURDAY PRAYER VIGIL

The sanctuary will be open for prayer and meditation on **Saturday, March 31, from 12:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.** Prayer guides will be available in the Narthex, and the older children will prepare "prayer stations" in the sanctuary. Please park in the kitchen parking lot (the handicap lot). Enter and exit the building only via the handicap door.

Our annual Easter breakfast and children's Easter Egg Hunt takes place on **Sunday, April 1, at 8:30 a.m.** Everyone is welcome—bring nothing but your appetite!



The Egg Hunt is for preschool through second grade and takes place on the front lawn. Third and fourth graders will help the younger children hunt for eggs, and the fifth and sixth graders will hide the eggs.

Our Easter worship service follows at **9:30 a.m.** with a **joyful celebration** of resurrection with strings and horns. The **nursery will be open** during the worship service, and our normal Children's Worship will be held for preschool through grade four.

**FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION  
AND YOUTH PROGRAMS**

Amy Grella — [am@bhccml.com](mailto:am@bhccml.com)

**Save these July dates for exciting summer events!**

♦ **Youth Work Trip: July 16-20**

A youth work trip at the Pittsburgh Project is set for the week of July 16-20. This week-long, overnight mission trip is available for all youth grades 6-12. This is the only full-group trip planned for youth group this summer.

♦ **Day Camp / Jr. Day Camp**

Please mark your calendar for the week of July 23-27 for Day Camp and Junior Day Camp. Bower Hill will partner with Crestfield again to offer Day Camp, which is for completed 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> graders. Junior Day Camp is for completed preschool – Kindergarten. Details about how you can volunteer to help and/or contribute supplies will be sent in the coming weeks. Our middle and high school youth are needed to volunteer to help with Jr. Day Camp.

♦ **Crestfield Summer Camps**

It's that time of year when families are looking for camps for the summer. Crestfield Camp and Conference Center is about an hour north of Pittsburgh in Slippery Rock, PA, and they have several new, exciting camps to offer children from completed grades 1-12. The full summer camp brochure is posted on the Youth bulletin board outside the kitchen. For more information, go to [www.crestfieldcc.org](http://www.crestfieldcc.org) and click on summer camps. In addition to financial aid assistance, Crestfield offers early registration discounts if paid in full before April 30.

**DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES**  
Anne Carper Smith—[an@bhccml.com](mailto:an@bhccml.com)



**CHILDREN'S CHOIR REHEARSALS**

Both the Cherub Choir and the new Chorister Choir will rehearsal on **Sundays, March 4 and March 11**. Cherubs meet in the choir room and the Choristers meet in room 103, both from **10:45-11:15 a.m.** An additional rehearsal will be held in the Sanctuary on **March 18**, and both choirs will sing during morning worship on Palm Sunday.



**ADULT EDUCATION**  
Linda James, Committee Chair

There are two options for adult education:

**Faith Formation and Spiritual Development** – This class is different each week; it meets in Room 208. For March the classes will be as follows:

**March 4** – DVD Presentation (*Painting the Stars – Session 6 – Imagining a Future*) will be led by Linda James in a discussion of the impact of science on our faith and how they connect.

**March 11** – For this class, Peter Smith will lead a discussion of the lectionary verses of the week.

**March 18** – For this class, Brian Snyder will lead a discussion with the Confirmation class participants.

**March 25** – We are planning to have a guest speaker on Buddhism.

**Progressive Theology** – This class is intended for those members who have not attended adult education in the past; it meets in Room 206. The class is being taught by Michelle Snyder and Tracy Riggle-Young. They will be using a DVD course, *Living the Question*. The course will discuss subjects that seem to make Christians angry – like homosexuality, evolution, other faiths, and “end times”.



**ARE YOU  
HILL CHURCH?**

**NEW TO BOWER**

Would you like to find out more about our congregation, what we believe, why we do the things we do? If so, Pastor Snyder will be holding a “Newcomers’ Lunch” on **Sunday, March 18**, from **10:45 a.m.** until approximately 1:30 p.m. This is an informal discussion time with the pastor and other newcomers. For those who decide to join the church, this will serve as the new members’ class. However, there is no obligation; this is the proverbial free lunch! Please call or email to reserve a place, to inform us of dietary restrictions, and to notify us if you will need childcare: 412-561-4114 or [br@bhccml.com](mailto:br@bhccml.com).



### COMMITTEE UPDATE

- The Western Pennsylvania Diaper Bank collection resumes deliveries on a quarterly basis in 2018. The first collection will be in March.
- On February 17, BHCC's members participated in a "One-Day Plunge" at the Pittsburgh Project. Mission Facilitation funds covered the adult participants who worked with our youth during this one-day event.
- Mission and Outreach, Adult Ed, Youth Ministries, Christian Education, and Parish Life joined together on February 25 in Fellowship Hall for an intergenerational event providing welcome packages for refugees through AJAPO (Acculturation for Justice, Access & Peace Outreach), a refugee resettlement non-profit organization. The gathering culminated in a meal celebrating BHCC's intergenerational commitment to mission.
- Linda James and Sally Child have graciously agreed to coordinate drivers (Linda) and shopping (Sally) for the weeks that BHCC hosts Family Promise in 2018. Evening meals are coordinated by Darendalease, and overnight hosts are coordinated by Betsy Holfelder. Please consider volunteering to prepare an evening meal, drive one morning or evening, or be an overnight host. Contact one of our coordinators to volunteer or find out more about what volunteering entails. One way to "get your feet wet" is to host an evening meal with another family. Darendalease would be glad to help you get started.

**Family Promise Coordinator, Jean Miewald:** Phone: 412-221-2114; [MiewaldJM@upmc.edu](mailto:MiewaldJM@upmc.edu)

**Dinner Host—Darendalease**, 412-854-4481 or [dlease109@comcast.net](mailto:dlease109@comcast.net)

**Overnight—Betsy Holfelder**, 412-341-1029 or [betsyho@verizon.net](mailto:betsyho@verizon.net)

The schedule is as follows: *March 25 to April 1, June 10 to 17, September 2 to 9, and November 25 to December 2*. The host week always starts on a Sunday afternoon and ends the following Sunday by 8:00 a.m.



### PONDERINGS FROM THE PA

Now that we are in the season of Lent, there are numerous traditions that seem to reinforce this spiritual journey. From a fish fry to the ever-present acts of "giving up", there is a notion that this should be a bleak introspective and often

agonizing time leading up to the Good Friday remembrance of the crucifixion.

As this year's Lent covers the entire month of March, there are other images of which we are aware. Perhaps one that I remember most is the tale that if March comes in like a Lion, it will go out like a Lamb.

Isaiah uses images of lions and lambs getting along to usher in the new day of a new kingdom under a new messiah. It also seems to beg the question of awareness. Will we be aware of the beginning of a new day and a new kingdom.

Just perhaps, a better focus for Lent would be *awareness*. Take time in your day to realize beauty, love and peace where others may only see the ugly, the hatred and the discord. Whether it is in the images we encounter or the people with whom we interact, be aware of the bits of the kingdom that are already in our midst!

*Rev. Dr. Fred Leasure, Parish Associate*

### COFFEE HOUR HOSTING

Even though it's only about 15-20 minutes long, coffee hour is an important time of fellowship in the life of Bower Hill Church. We are grateful to the many families who volunteer to host each week and to provide us with this time of community.



In addition to preparing the coffee and lemonade, the coffee hour host(s) provides snacks such as breads, donuts and mini-muffins. Some will also serve fruit, which is always appreciated, but NOT ESSENTIAL. The church supplies snacks for the kids such as pretzels and goldfish crackers. Currently, we have enough volunteers for each host to serve twice a year, but we always welcome more.

If you would like to serve as coffee hour host, contact Theresa Child at [tree-toowon@yahoo.com](mailto:tree-toowon@yahoo.com) or at 412-429-9519.

## COMMUNITY NOTES

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

### DISTRIBUTION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT

The office has sent an electronic copy of the 2017 Annual Report to all members with an email address on file in the church office. Printed copies will be made available to members during office hours. If you are unable to pick up a copy, call 412-561-4114 to request that it be mailed.



### SENIOR MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP

The senior men's breakfast group will meet again on **Wednesday, March 7**. The meeting time is **8:00 a.m.**, and the location is the Kings Restaurant on Route 50 near the end of Greentree Road, in Scott. 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. Join us!

### UNITY FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION

Our next collection date will be **Sunday, March 11**. The pantry's needs are primarily for boxed cereal (especially Cheerios, which is the only cereal some clients are able to eat), canned soups, and vegetable-only or fruit-only baby food. In addition, for Easter dinner for pantry clients, all-in-one packaged dessert mixes (i.e. that do not require separate icing) and specialty potato mixes (such as mashed potatoes, scalloped potatoes, etc.) are needed.

Donations of any non-perishable food items are also welcomed. Collection bins are located in the hallways outside the church office and the narthex.

### GIANT EAGLE GIFT CARDS

If you do much of your grocery shopping at Giant Eagle, please consider buying their gift cards through the church. Bower Hill buys the cards at a 5% discount, which currently provides us with about \$2,500 in extra income every year. The cards are sold in \$50 and \$100 denominations at a table in the Narthex before and after worship services. Your purchase of these cards is an easy way to help underwrite the annual church budget.



### WESTERN PA DIAPER BANK

The collection of disposable baby and adult diapers for the Western PA Diaper Bank will resume this month on March 18. Collections will be made quarterly on the third Sunday to include March, June, September, and December.

Sizes 4, 5 and 6 are most in need for babies. XL diapers are needed for the geriatric population. The collection container is the Pack'N Play located in the hallway directly outside of the Nursery.

Monetary donations are accepted by making your check payable to Western PA Diaper Bank and mailing it to **2546 Centre Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15219**. Please note our church name on the Memo line of your check.

Please save coupons for disposable diapers that you collect but don't use, and place them in the envelope near the Pack'N Play.



### BOOKWORMS

BHCC's ladies' book discussion group meets monthly on the fourth Tuesday at **7:30 p.m.** in Room 103 for fellowship and discussion of a chosen title. Everyone is welcome to read the book for the month and join the discussion.

**March 27—*Personal History***, by Katherine Graham

**April 24—*Gentleman in Moscow***, by Amor Towles

### SPAGHETTI DINNER FUNDRAISER

Boy Scout Troop 28 is holding a spaghetti dinner in **Fellowship Hall on Saturday, March 17, from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.** Tickets are \$8.00 for adults and \$4.00 for children under 12, and they will be sold before and after BHCC worship services on **March 4 and March 11**. They will also be available to purchase at the door on the day of the dinner. All are welcome!

**REMEMBER to turn your clocks ahead ONE HOUR on Sunday, March 11.**



**Daylight Saving Time Begins**



Please select from the following, and enter the quantity in the box.

EASTER LILY @ \$10.00

TULIP @ \$8.00 . . . . .

DAFFODIL @ \$8.00 . . . .

For Office Use Only

Cash \_\_\_\_\_

Check Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Check Number \_\_\_\_\_

Deadline for orders is Sunday, March 18.  
Orders will also be taken after worship on March 4, 11 and 18.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please use a separate form for each dedication.

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Bower Hill Community Church.

**PLEASE NOTE: PLANTS MUST BE TAKEN HOME FOLLOWING EASTER WORSHIP.**

### MARCH WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

#### COFFEE HOUR

March 4: Carter Family

#### COMMUNION SERVERS

March 4: Nancy Andrews, Mary Good  
Alan and Betsy Hohlfelder

March 11: Tracy & Brad Riggie

March 18: Geis Family

March 25 (Palm Sunday): Harman Family

#### LECTORS

March 4: D.J. Geis  
March 11: Karl Casey  
March 18: Brian Harman  
March 25 (Palm Sunday): Bethany Gibbs

#### FLOWER DEACONS

March 4: Sally Child (Donation)  
March 11: Darenda Lease (LIVE)  
March 18: Phyllis Madden (LIVE)  
March 25 (Palm Sunday): Cynthia Gissin (LIVE)

#### USHER CAPTAIN—Mike Riemer

#### SEXTONS

March 4: Bill Cadwell  
March 11: Glenn Child  
March 18: Dave Hicks  
March 25 (Palm Sunday): Bill Andrews

#### GREETERS

March 4: Smith Family, Jeff Carper  
March 11: Harman Family, Jeff Carper  
March 18: Carter Family, Jeff Carper  
March 25 (Palm Sunday):  
John and Phyllis Yohe  
Catherine Good, Jeff Carper

#### **Questions? Need to switch or reschedule? Please contact:**

Greeters: Andy Druckenbrod

Communion Servers: Donna Williams

Lectors: Rev. Brian Snyder

Coffee Hour: Theresa Child

Sextons: Bill Cadwell

Acolytes: Jean Miewald

Flower Deacons: Cynthia Gissin

Soundboard: Glenn Child

#### ACOLYTES

March 4: Hayden Jones, Leo Geis  
March 11: Helen Carter and Allie Bruder  
March 18: Michela Robbins, Julian Salvante  
March 25 (Palm Sunday): Greta and Chloe Snyder





## BOWER HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

*Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

70 Moffett Street  
Pittsburgh, Pa 15243



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### OUR CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Dr. Brian Snyder, Pastor  
[br@bhccml.com](mailto:br@bhccml.com)

Parish Associate  
Rev. Dr. Fred Leasure

Company of Pastors  
Rev. Tami Hooker  
Rev. Dr. Fred Leasure  
Rev. Dr. Betty Sykes

Amy Grella  
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### THE CHURCH OFFICE

[412] 561-4114

Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m.— 2:30 p.m.

## PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR CARE LIST

**Davis Gray**

**Lauren Kocher**

**Betty Mancini**, Canterbury Place, 310 Fisk St., #507, Pgh., PA 15201

**LuAnne Pattison** (former member)

**Ginny Starr**

**Ethel LaBarbera**, 50 Vanadium Road, #130, Bridgeville, PA 15017



### SUNDAY TRANSPORTATION

**Need a ride** to worship? The deacons would like to provide a ride to worship 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.