



~A Grain of Wheat~

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”

~John 12:24

Dear Members and Friends,

I always welcome the long, slow season of summer here at the church. In the wake of the 75th anniversary celebrations, I'm ready for a lighter workload for just a few weeks. I'm no fan of summer's heat and light, but the season affords me an opportunity to be a pastor for all the reasons I wanted to be one in the first place. My administrative tasks slacken a bit, allowing me to concentrate on the stuff I love: preaching, teaching, and pastoral care.

And yet...and yet. Things are a little different this year because we live with the recent memory of our 75th anniversary speaker series, "Faith Forward: The Future of Congregational Life." If I were to distill the complexity and the richness of that series into just a few sentences, I might say this: People in 21st century America are pulling away from religion because it no longer feels relevant enough to warrant its messiness and cost. They've only got so much free time, and they want to invest it into things that provide a visible (and immediate) payback. Many people experience God in their lives, but they no longer see our staid traditional churches as good places to lean into the power and the mystery that they understand God to be. In other words, our churches are just not spiritual enough. People want places in their lives where they can think and talk about their life's questions and mysteries. We've got meaningful religious traditions, rituals, and language, but they're not user-friendly and don't make sense to people.

As Jesus says in the gospel of John, shortly before his crucifixion, "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit." Unwanted junctures can feel like little deaths. We didn't want COVID, but if not for the pandemic, would our worship be online yet? If not for COVID, would we have bothered with live-streaming and Zoom meetings? Sometimes the present day drags us kicking and screaming. But once we arrive—against our loud protestations—at the new place where the present day has taken us, we usually don't regret the reluctant journey. Often, we'll wonder, "What took us so long? Why didn't we start doing this years ago?" And so, what is our calling in such a time as this? Christ's church will live on, for Christ will always call people to himself. Our message of love and grace is unchanging, but the ways we live into that message will change from year to year. From our speaker series, I got: Take better care of each other, and be more spiritual.

Here's what we're gonna do: First, watch the videos of our speaker series! The first one is here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xfb66kxuBNs>. Other videos will appear on our website shortly. Second, take part in the pastor's Bible study! Most summer Sundays, starting July 12, I will be conducting a Bible study in my office at 11:00 a.m. (If we outgrow my office, we'll move.) We'll be exploring the epistle to the Philippians. Come when you can; skip when you must. Third, share your testimony! We need to hear each other's stories. We need to hear about the faith that brings our fellow church members out on Sunday. Would you be willing to share the story of your faith journey for just 3 or 4 minutes during summer worship? Fourth, just for the summer, we're going to let people come to the microphone to share their joys and concerns. Fifth, and this one is hardest for me: we're going to let the passing of the peace go on until it stops. Change... We hate it, we love it, we need it. Please let me know if you'd be willing to share your faith journey in worship. If no one steps up, I'll have to come looking.

Christ's Peace,
~Brian



Worship Plans

July 5

No Communion

Brian Vertz is preaching

July 12

Communion

Genesis 25:19-24

Romans 8:1-11

July 19

Genesis 28:10-19a

Matthew 10:24-39

Romans 8:12-25

July 26

Genesis 29:15-28

Romans 8:26-39

August 2

Communion

Genesis 32:22-31

Romans 9:1-5

August 9

Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28

Romans 10:5-15

August 16

Genesis 45:1-15

Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

August 23

Exodus 1:8-2:10

Romans 12:1-8

August 30

Joint Worship with the Baptists



Sanctuary Flower Dedications

If you are interested in purchasing flowers or making a donation to the charity of your choice as a dedication in memory/honor of a loved one, please contact the church office to request a form or information.

Lighting the Steeple

Requests should include: the date(s) you would like to sponsor, the reason you want to sponsor (in honor, in memory, etc.), the name of the person(s) or the event as you want it to appear in the bulletin, and your name. Email your request to: Kim Digman at office@bowerhillchurch.org. MULTIPLE sponsors can share the SAME DATE.

July 11

In honor of all who have served, by Susan Watson

August 11

In honor of all who have served, by Susan Watson

August 25

In loving memory of my mother, Dorothy Earlandson, by Kay Allen.

August 25

In honor of my son, Rob Allen, by Kay Allen.



Mission & EJT News

With a rousing celebration of our 75 years, and a new session year starting, it's a good time to think of our future and how we can grow spiritually and in showing love. To that end, the Eco-Justice team has been folded back into Mission, from whence it came. This does not mean that BHCC is abandoning efforts to deal with the environment and associated problems. After all, environmental disasters lead to humanitarian needs such as those traditionally addressed by our commitment to mission.

For instance, the recent *Children's Climate Risk Report* issued by UNICEF found that almost every child around the world, including those from high-income countries, is now exposed to at least one hazard, while "half of the world's children are now living with at least three overlapping climate threats shaping their daily lives." We have seen it in dangers to our friends at Hekima and in Haiti, as well as our neighbors in Bridgeville and Carnegie.

Let this be the summer you volunteer for one of our mission projects, such as the Carnegie Free Fridge, the Carnegie Carryout Dinners, the Hope House in Charleroi (serving the Haitian community there), or our new food delivery project with Casa San Jose. You've read about them in bulletins, newsletters, and heard about them in Minutes for Mission. Now's the time to get involved! Also, look for our soon-to-be updated newsletter.

Unity Food Pantry Collection

July 12 & August 9

As we prepare to give families with children more food for the summer since kids won't be having school breakfasts and lunches, our greatest need right now is for jelly, boxes of mac & cheese, and pouches of tuna fish. But as always all non-perishable food items are welcome!

Western PA Diaper Bank

Remember to save coupons for disposable diapers and feminine hygiene products that you collect. You can drop them off at the church office during regular business hours or send them with your weekly offering.

Stay Connected This Summer

As you continue to enjoy the summer, there are several ways to continue to connect with Bower Hill. Contact the church office to get connected with these opportunities.

Small Jobs & Fellowship Visits

Do you have a project that might be overwhelming to tackle by yourself, or work that would be easier with a few helping hands? Bower Hill Youth would love to connect with you! Simply call the office, or [use this link to tell us about your request](#), and we will contact you to schedule a visit. Also, if you are an adult with time to spare, we'd love to have you join or organize a service team.

Jr. Day Camp Youth Decorating Days

All crafty/creative adults and youth leaders are welcome to transform Fellowship Hall stage for Jr. Day Camp. No RSVP necessary...just join us! The remaining days are:

Tuesday, July 7 - 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Tuesday, July 14 - 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, July 12 - 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Sunday, July 26 - 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Volunteer as a Bower Hill Ambassador at Jr. Day Camp July 27–31.

This summer, our Day Camp has been reimagined as a wonderful opportunity for outreach and hospitality within our community, and the good news it's working! We have more first-time campers registered for Jr. Day Camp than previous years. As we welcome new children and families into our church, we are looking for people who can help create a warm, joyful experience throughout the week, and especially at check-in around 9:15 each day that week.

Carnegie Carryout Dinners ~ July 12 & August 9

Carnegie Carryout Dinners is a mission partnership between Bower Hill Community Church and Carnegie Presbyterian Church. Together, we prepare and package free carryout meals at Bower Hill before delivering them to Carnegie Presbyterian's New Hope Worship community for distribution. This ministry typically takes place on the fourth Sunday of each month, with participating churches sharing the responsibility. During the summer, however, meals will be served on both the second and fourth Sundays, and Bower Hill will be responsible for preparing meals on the second Sunday each month.

Casa San Jose Emergency Food Program - August 23

Help us be the hands and feet of Jesus by serving our neighbors through a new partnership with Casa San Jose. Every five weeks, volunteers will shop for groceries at Aldi, unpack and sort the food at Bower Hill into individual bags, and deliver them to Casa San Jose for distribution to families that are unable or afraid to shop for themselves. To learn more or volunteer, please see Jean Miewald or email her at miewaldmac@gmail.com.

Update from the Director of Education Ministries – Amy Grella

Register now for our ALL-NEW KIDS CAMP - July 27 - 31

Our annual VBS is getting an exciting makeover as a community outreach opportunity — creating a fun and welcoming place for kids to grow in faith, friendship, and service. The registration experience has been upgraded to a brand-new website... check it out! [Click here](#) to register.



Jr. Day Camp \$25 for completed preschool-2nd graders from 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Campers will explore a fun “weird animals” theme and learn how Jesus’ love is one of a kind through games, crafts, music, and stories. First-year campers in this age group attend FREE, a great reason to invite a friend.

Day Camp \$75 for completed 3rd-5th graders from 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Big kids love to help! Full-day campers will participate in a service-learning track. During the morning, campers learn compassion and service through real community impact. Kids will do hands-on mission projects led on-site by outside organizations like the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank and SHIM. Kids bring their own lunch, and then spend the afternoon doing group games, crafts and activities just for them. Cost includes snacks and supplies for the daily mission projects. If your child only plans to stay for the morning, you can opt out of the afternoon session.

Youth Volunteer \$25 for completed 6th-12th graders from 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Students entering grades 6 and up can earn service hours in our Youth Leader Track, helping mentor younger campers while building leadership and teamwork skills with one of the camp tracks and have the option to stay in the afternoon doing structured games, crafts and activities.

Save the Date for the Youth Group Fall kick-off picnic at Bird Park

The Faith Formation Committee is planning an all-family potluck picnic dinner to kick-off youth groups (for kids in MS and HS) on Sunday, August 30, at Bird Park from 4:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. This event is for the entire family. We will do a parent meeting while youth play games and do a scavenger hunt. Details to follow, but please save the date!

Weekly Youth Group Kicks off in September

Exciting news! This fall, we're launching a weekly youth group that will meet every Sunday evening. Students in grades 6–12 will gather for fellowship, fun, and learning before breaking into age-appropriate small groups for discussion. We're looking for passionate and caring adult volunteers to join a small group of leaders to launch this ministry. If you're interested in serving, please reach out to Brian or Amy for more information.

UPCOMING

Fellowship Events

Get Outdoors

August 1
September 5

July - No hike - Due to several conflicts I have in July, we will not be hiking this month.

August 1 – Moraine State Park – Hilltop Loop

On the South Shore of Lake Arthur, the Hilltop Loop trail in Moraine State Park passes by different stages of forest regeneration, cavity-nesting bird boxes, and the remains of a springhouse. The trail includes flat grassy areas and gradual inclines that lead to fields high above the highway and lake. This trail is labeled as more difficult which probably implies some hills to deal with. Depending on the time spent on Hilltop Loop, we will probably add Pleasant Valley or Sunken Garden Trail. Moraine Trail Map

September 5 – Friendship Hill National Historic Site

Friendship Hill is a National Historic Site located on the Monongahela River near Point Marion. It was the country estate of Albert Gallatin. Albert Gallatin is best remembered for his thirteen-year tenure as Secretary of the Treasury during the Jefferson and Madison administrations. In that time, he reduced the national debt, purchased the Louisiana Territory and funded the Lewis & Clark exploration. Gallatin's accomplishments and contributions are highlighted at Friendship Hill. We will hike some of the 10 miles of trails on the 661-acre park. If the group wishes, we can take the self-guided tour of the house.

We will meet at 9:00 a.m. in the main parking lot and carpool to the hike. The trailhead should be about an 80-minute drive. The hike should be about 2 hours. So, we will be home around 2:00 p.m. If it rains, we will reschedule. Please email me at gstchild@yahoo.com or call so we don't leave without you.

Hooks & Needles

July 18
August 1 & 15
Friendship Room

Hooks 'n Needles meet at the church in the Friendship Room. We meet on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

We would like to have more members, so if you enjoy any kind of needlework, please feel free to join us. Just park in the handicapped parking lot and come in the kitchen door and down the hall.

Senior Men's Breakfast

July 7 & August 4
8:00 a.m.

Join us at Denny's restaurant at 2180 Greentree Road, near Swallow Hill Road. No reservation is required, and conversation is spontaneous. The regular meeting date is on the first Tuesday of each month. All men are welcome. Any questions or comments, contact Glenn Child at gstchild@yahoo.com.

Bookworms

July 28
August 25
1:30 p.m. via Zoom

This is an open invitation to anyone attending Bower Hill Community Church, friends and family members, to join Bookworms, the Church Book Club. Reading and discussing books since 2001, members have enjoyed the variety of perspectives readers bring: from 'loved it', to 'yuk', to everything in between.

The group reads fiction, non-fiction, memoirs, biographies, really anything the group suggests. The conversation is assisted by online reader guides. Different perspectives create great discussions. All opinions are welcome. A list of the books read by the group is available on the church website. (<https://www.bowerhillchurch.org/books-read>). Check out the variety!

The group currently meets by Zoom on the fourth Tuesday, January through November, at 1:30 p.m. We met in the evening at the church until Covid made meeting in-person impossible. Virtual contact is still comfortable for most attendees, although that could change in the future.

Please consider joining the group to discuss any book that interests you. Reading every book and attending all the discussions is not mandatory to be a member. Come try us out. We may 'worm our way' into your reading routine. To join the group for the next meeting, send your requests to Sally Child at sa.child@yahoo.com.

July 28 - Matrix by Lauren Groff

August 25 - March by Geraldine Brooks



Rev. Dr. Brian Snyder, Pastor
 brian.snyder@bowerhillchurch.org

Company of Pastors
 Rev. Dr. Betty Sykes

Amy Grella
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Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

www.BowerHillChurch.org



PLEASE PRAY
 FOR OUR CARE LIST

Bower Hill Church Members
 Nancy Green, Joan McAnulty
 Barb Oram



- | | |
|---|--|
| July 1: D.J. Geis Jr. | August 3: Emmalyn Gray |
| July 2: Craig Frock | August 4: JoAnn Goode Mary Beth Waine |
| July 4: Glenn Child Jennifer Gardner | August 7: Peter Smith Art Thomas |
| July 5: Henry Carter | August 10: Zoey Dickey Amanda Gray Christian Stakich |
| July 7: Alison Sehgal | August 13: Amber Grier Sophia Lansbery |
| July 9: Victor Colaiaco | August 14: Nancy Green Craig Grella |
| July 12: Scott Bruce Andrea Colaiaco Holly Smith | August 15: Noelle Grella |
| July 13: Debbie Seifert | August 16: Monette Shuttleworth |
| July 18: Ray Henney, III | August 18: Sandra Caffo Emma Hicks |
| July 19: Adaline Gray | August 21: Bill Cadwell |
| July 20: Linda Johnson Kristoffer Lansbery Matthew Linaburg | August 23: Ella Belardi |
| July 22: Mandy Belardi Poppy Marsteller | August 28: Michela Robbins |
| July 24: Wyatt Gray Dave May Phyllis Yohe | August 30: Andrew Smith |
| July 29: Karen Cooper Dawn Kane Ruth Robbins | August 31: Jean Miewald Catherine Morgan |
| July 30: Jim Burke | |

THE BIRTHDAY BLESSING:

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

Have we missed YOUR birthday? If your name is not listed, it is because the church office does not have your information. Please call the office administrator at 412-561-4114 with updated information.

JULY 2026

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|---|---|--|--|--|
| 28 Crestfield Elementary Overnight Camp 8:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship (Coffee) 11:00am First Baptist Worship 12:30pm Compassionate Friends (Rm 101,105,110,FR) 2:00pm Carnegie Carryout Dinners Mission Project (Kitchen) | 29 Crestfield Elementary Overnight Camp | 30 Crestfield Elementary Overnight Camp 7:15pm OA Meeting (Rm 105) 7:30pm Troop 28 & 9028 (FH) | 1 Crestfield Elementary Overnight Camp 7:00pm Mayfair on Moffett (110,105) | 2 Crestfield Elementary Overnight Camp 5:00pm Events & Outreach Committee (Zoom) 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack 28 (FH) | 3 | 4 |
| 5 8:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship (Coffee) 11:00am First Baptist Worship | 6 | 7 8:00am Men's Breakfast Group - Denny's 12:00pm Day Camp Decorating Days 7:15pm OA Meeting (Rm 105) 7:30pm Troop 28 & 9028 (FH) | 8 7:00pm Mayfair on Moffett (110,105) | 9 | 10 | 11 Get Outdoors - See weekly E-Blast |
| 12 Unity Food Pantry Collection 8:30am Worship 10:30am Day Camp Decorating Days 10:30am Fellowship (Coffee) 11:00am First Baptist Worship 2:00pm BHCC - Carnegie Carryout Dinners Mission Project (Kitchen) | 13 7:00pm B&G Meeting (Rm 101) | 14 12:00pm Day Camp Decorating Days 7:00pm Communications (Rm 101) 7:15pm OA Meeting (Rm 105) 7:30pm Troop 28 & 9028 (FH) | 15 Newsletter and Session Report Deadline 7:00pm Mayfair on Moffett (110,105) | 16 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack 28 (FH) | 17 | 18 1:00pm Hooks & Needles (FR) |
| 19 Crestfield Service Adventure Camp for kids ages 12-17 9:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship (Coffee) 11:00am First Baptist Worship | 20 Crestfield Service Adventure Camp for kids ages 12-17 | 21 Crestfield Service Adventure Camp for kids ages 12-17 7:15pm OA Meeting (Rm 105) 7:30pm Finance Meeting (Virtual) 7:30pm Troop 28 & 9028 (FH) | 22 Crestfield Service Adventure Camp for kids ages 12-17 7:00pm Mayfair on Moffett (110,105) | 23 Crestfield Service Adventure Camp for kids ages 12-17 | 24 Crestfield Service Adventure Camp for kids ages 12-17 | 25 |
| 26 8:30am Worship 10:30am Day Camp Decorating Days 10:30am Fellowship (Coffee) 11:00am First Baptist Worship 12:30pm Compassionate Friends (Rm 101,105,110,FR) 2:00pm Carnegie Carryout Dinners Mission Project (Kitchen) | 27 VBS | 28 VBS 1:30pm Bookworms (Zoom) 7:15pm OA Meeting (Rm 105) 7:30pm Troop 28 & 9028 (FH) | 29 VBS 7:00pm Mayfair on Moffett (110,105) | 30 VBS | 31 VBS | 1 Get Outdoors - See weekly E-Blast 1:00pm Hooks & Needles (FR) |

AUGUST 2026

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|--|---|---|--------------------------------|---|
| 26 9:30am Worship 10:30am Day Camp Decorating Days 10:30am Fellowship (Coffee) 11:00am First Baptist Worship 12:30pm Compassionate Friends (Rm 101, 105, 110, FR) 2:00pm Carnegie Carryout Dinners Mission Project (Kitchen) | 27 VBS | 28 VBS 1:30pm Bookworms (Zoom) 7:15pm OA Meeting (Rm 105) 7:30pm Troop 28 & 9028 (FH) | 29 VBS 7:00pm Mayfair on Moffett (110, 105) | 30 VBS | 31 VBS | 1 Get Outdoors - See weekly E-Blast 1:00pm Hooks & Needles (FR) |
| 2 9:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship (Coffee) 11:00am First Baptist Worship 12:30pm Eagle Court of Honor (FH,K) | 3 7:00pm Worship Committee (Rm 101) | 4 8:00am Men's Breakfast Group - Denny's 7:15pm OA Meeting (Rm 105) 7:30pm Troop 28 & 9028 (FH) | 5 7:00pm Mayfair on Moffett (110, 105) | 6 5:00pm Events & Outreach Committee (Zoom) 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack 28 (FH) | 7 | 8 |
| 9 Unity Food Pantry Collection 9:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship (Coffee) 11:00am First Baptist Worship 2:00pm BHCC - Carnegie Carryout Dinners Mission Project (Kitchen) | 10 7:00pm B&G Meeting (Rm 101) | 11 7:00pm Communications (Rm 101) 7:15pm OA Meeting (Rm 105) 7:30pm Troop 28 & 9028 (FH) | 12 7:00pm Mayfair on Moffett (110, 105) | 13 | 14 | 15 Newsletter and Session Report Deadline 1:00pm Hooks & Needles (FR) |
| 16 9:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship (Coffee) 11:00am First Baptist Worship | 17 | 18 7:15pm OA Meeting (Rm 105) 7:30pm Finance Meeting (Virtual) 7:30pm Troop 28 & 9028 (FH) | 19 7:00pm Mayfair on Moffett (110, 105) | 20 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack 28 (FH) | 21 | 22 9:30am Boy Scouts Bike Run (north parking lot) |
| 23 9:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship (Coffee) 11:00am Casa Emergency Food Delivery 2:00pm Carnegie Carryout Dinners Mission Project (Kitchen) | 24 7:00pm Session Meeting (FR) | 25 1:30pm Bookworms (Zoom) 7:15pm OA Meeting (Rm 105) 7:30pm Troop 28 & 9028 (FH) | 26 7:00pm Mayfair on Moffett (110, 105) | 27 8:00am Montessori | 28 8:00am Montessori | 29 |
| 30 9:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship (Coffee) 11:00am First Baptist Worship 11:30am Compassionate Friends - Butterfly Release (Sanctuary, Kitchen, FH) | 31 8:00am Montessori | 1 8:00am Men's Breakfast Group - Denny's 8:00am Montessori 7:15pm OA Meeting (Rm 105) 7:30pm Troop 28 & 9028 (FH) | 2 8:00am Montessori 4:00pm Montessori Year Kick-Off Event (FH) 7:00pm Mayfair on Moffett (110, 105) | 3 8:00am Montessori 5:00pm Events & Outreach Committee (Zoom) 6:30pm Cub Scout Pack 28 (FH) | 4 8:00am Montessori | 5 Get Outdoors - See weekly E-Blast 1:00pm Hooks & Needles (FR) |