



## ~ Talking about Tomorrow

*“Without counsel, plans go wrong, but with many advisers they succeed.”*

~Proverbs 15:22

Dear Members and Friends,

Church members sometimes ask me what I love about my job. Most of them don't really know what I do aside from what they see on Sunday mornings. There's much to love about being your pastor, but mostly it's the day-to-day things that keep me contented and engaged. I love working with words and the ancient Scriptural texts; old as they are, their meanings are always fresh. I love journeying alongside people, learning their stories, discovering truth with them. I love leading worship, even if I do sometimes miss sitting in the pews. I love baptizing a child and seeing that child grow into a real part of our congregation: one more unique personality, one more distinctive spirit added to the rich mix that makes up Bower Hill. One of my fondest wishes as a minister is to officiate at the wedding of a child I baptized. I'm not sure if it will happen. (People don't marry as young as they used to, and when I retire, all bets are off.) This may sound odd to some, but I love working in a beautiful space like Bower Hill Church. I love sermon-writing...as long as I don't put it off until Saturday night, which admittedly happens all too often. Writing sermons, and lessons, and prayers appeals to the failed English teacher in me...who, like many English teachers, is a bit of an unpublished novelist. I could happily measure out my life from Sunday to Sunday, Christmas to Christmas, sermon to sermon, baptism to baptism, with communion Sundays once a month to break up the routine... No future but next week's lectionary. What a life!

But alas, a church—like any organization—must be about the additional task of planning for years to come. Many churches are loath to prepare for tomorrow until the sun is about to set on their today. They do not plan until the eleventh hour, and by then it's often too late. They end up like me on some Saturday nights, scrambling to put together a sermon before cockcrow. Such is not the case for us! Bower Hill Church is thriving, growing, and doing well today, and so now is the time to prepare for the future that God holds for us. The old adage says, “Make hay while the sun shines.” As faithful stewards of all that God has entrusted to us, this is what we must do.

Where do you fit in at Bower Hill Church? What about our church makes you feel a sense of belonging or pride? Are there things that make you feel left out? Where do you see our church headed in the next ten years? Twenty? If you could describe our church in a single sentence—differentiating it from other churches—what would you say? What strengths define us? And since all strengths have their “shadow sides,” what are our weaknesses?

We are going to begin a series of church-wide conversations about questions like these. It's not necessarily “change” that we're looking for, but we do need to come together as a congregation and figure out ways to coalesce around our shared core ideals. These conversations will be fun, low-key, stress-free, and above all, multigenerational. The outcome will be a clear sense of identity and direction for the future, one that can be expressed in a single, succinct declaration of purpose. This statement will tell us and the world who we are and what we are about. It will be used to guide all our efforts in worship, education, fellowship, and evangelism.

These conversations are called **“Talking about Tomorrow,”** and the first one takes place on **Sunday, February 26**, at a brunch potluck during second hour. Childcare will be provided, but the youth and adult classes will be canceled so that all ages can participate in the conversation. This event will begin at 10:45 a.m. and end at 12:15 p.m. Please plan to attend, and don't be surprised if I pester you until you agree to be there! We will need to know who is coming so that we can seat church members with people they probably do not know. See the bulletin board to sign up, or call the church office at 412-561-4114.

Talking about tomorrow is not a favorite thing for most people. It's easier just to drift through today. But thinking ahead can also be enjoyable and enlightening. It's an exciting time to be Bower Hill Church. Our yesterday has been blessed; our today is bright; our tomorrow is alive with God's promise. It's my joy to make this journey with you.

~Brian

## 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



### 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.

### WALLACE FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION

The next collection date is **Sunday, February 12**. Currently, the food pantry's greatest need is for canned tuna or chicken, canned dinners (such as ravioli, spaghetti, beef stew), cold cereal, canned fruit, and white rice.

Wallace Food Pantry is grateful to the Bower Hill Church community for their faithful monthly support, which enables them to provide ample, nourishing food to hundreds of men, women, and children in our community.

Collection bins are located in the hallways outside the church office and the narthex.

### WESTERN PA DIAPER BANK

Our next collection date for disposable diapers will be **Sunday, February 19**. 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.



Tax-deductible monetary donations can be made by a check payable to Western Pennsylvania Diaper Bank and mailed to 2546 Centre Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15219. Please note our church name on the Memo line of your check.

Please remember to save diaper coupons that you collect but don't use, and place them in the envelope near the Pack'N Play.



### THE SENIOR MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP

will meet again on **Wednesday, February 1**. The meeting time is **8:00 a.m.**, and the location is 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!

### LIFE, DEATH, AND REINVENTION

Copies of Michelle Snyder's book, *"Life, Death, and Reinvention: The Gift of the Impossibly Messed-up Life"* are available on the counter in the church office and can be purchased any Sunday. Please simply leave a check for \$17, payable to Michelle Snyder, and take one.

**(Bookworms)** is planning to read and discuss this book as their chosen selection for May.)

### BOOKWORMS



This group meets monthly on the fourth Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. in the Friendship Room (201) for fellowship and discussion of a chosen title.

Everyone is welcome to read the book for the month and join the discussion.

#### February 28

*The Secret Chord*, by Geraldine Brooks

#### March 28

*Last Bus to Wisdom*, by Ivan Doig

#### April 25

*Becoming Amish*, by Jeff Smith

### BUILDING & GROUNDS COMMITTEE

In order to conserve the Sanctuary's heat on cold Sunday mornings during the winter months, we plan to restrict access through the front doors in the Narthex. Therefore, **when the orange cones are blocking the sidewalk, please proceed to the entrance to the hallway outside Fellowship Hall.** Thank you.



**ADULT EDUCATION**  
Cathy Morgan, Committee Chair

Adult Education meets in the Friendship Room from **10:45—11:45 a.m. on Sunday mornings** after worship and a time for fellowship. You'll find stimulating ideas and conversation. Please be aware that this is not your traditional "class," but an opportunity to explore what it means to be people of faith in this ever-challenging world. Our schedule for the month of February is as follows:

**February 5:** BHCC member Peter Smith, Religion Writer for the Post-Gazette, will lead the first of three classes on spirituality and theology in our lives and the life of the church.

**February 12:** Elder Bill Cadwell will review the book *Raising the Floor: How a Universal Basic Income Can Renew Our Economy and Rebuild the American Dream*.

**February 19:** The Rev. Dr. Brian Snyder will continue his series on spirituality and theology in our lives and the life of the church.

**February 26:** Annual Congregational Meeting  
No Adult Education

**FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE**

The office will be closed on Monday, February 20, in observance of Presidents' Day.



**FEBRUARY WORSHIP PLANS**

**February 5—Epiphany 5A**  
Communion

1 Corinthians 2:1-12; Matthew 5:13-20

**February 12—Epiphany 6A**  
1 Corinthians 3:1-9; Matthew 5:21-37

**February 19—Epiphany 7A**  
1 Corinthians 3:10-15, 21-23; Matthew 5:38-48

**February 26—Transfiguration**  
2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9



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

**Cherub Choir** will rehearse at 10:45 a.m. in the choir room on the following Sundays:

**March 5, 12, 19, 26 and April 2**

They will sing in worship on **Palm Sunday, April 9**. We look forward to working with our Cherubs again!



**1950's Dinner Dance**

Dust off those cardigan sweaters and poodle skirts and brush up on your hand jive moves! We are taking a step back in time...to the 1950's. Relax and enjoy your favorite oldies while dining with your church family. And if you get bitten by the jitter bug, you can boogie-woogie the night away! This will be a fun-filled event for all ages.

Be sure to mark your calendars now so that you don't miss it. Tickets will be on sale outside of the sanctuary each Sunday during the month of February. If you are unable to purchase tickets at church, please contact Sheri Geis by email ([sheri.geis@yahoo.com](mailto:sheri.geis@yahoo.com)) to RSVP by the deadline of Sunday, February 26. The cost is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children, and ages 4 and under are free.

**SATURDAY, MARCH 4**

**5:00 - 8:00 p.m.**  
**Fellowship Hall**



### NEWS FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND YOUTH PROGRAMS

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


#### **TWEENER RETREAT SIGN-UPS**

Youth in grades 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> are encouraged to sign up for the Tweener Retreat at Crestfield Camp and Conference Center from **Saturday, April 29—Sunday, April 30**. Come enjoy 24 hours of fun! This retreat is specially designed to introduce the importance of retreating to young people. The 24 hours will give kids a chance to start exploring their relationship with God and what it means to be a Christian in an ever-changing world. The sign-up sheet can be found on the bulletin board across from the kitchen.

If you have any questions, please contact Amy @ [am@bhccml.com](mailto:am@bhccml.com) or (412) 801-3723.

#### **SAVE THE DATE for Day Camp / Jr. Day Camp**

Please mark your calendar for the week of **July 17-21** 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> – 6<sup>th</sup> graders. Junior Day Camp is for completed Preschool – Kindergarten.

  
Church Day Camp

Details about how you can volunteer to help and/or contribute supplies will be sent in the coming weeks.



[tacklehunger.org](http://tacklehunger.org)

#### **YOUTH MISSION: SOUPER BOWL OF CARING**

This year, for the first time, Bower Hill youth are collecting dollars and canned goods for the “**Souper Bowl of Caring**” collection drive now through **Sunday, February 5**. This collection drive is a national movement of young people working to fight hunger and poverty in our own communities around the time of the Super Bowl football game. Canned goods can be placed in the large plastic bins outside of the Narthex, and youth will be collecting monetary donations. 100% of what is collected will be given to SHIM food pantries. Thank you for supporting Bower Hill youth!

#### **30-HOUR FAMINE RETREAT - MARCH 10-12**

This school year, Bower Hill youth have been focused on learning about and helping combat hunger. Youth grades 5 and up are encouraged to attend Camp Crestfield for the 30-hour Famine Retreat. The retreat will allow us to gather, pray, reflect, serve, go without, worship, play, question, wrestle with realities and make a difference. We will join with others who are completing the fast and experiencing the very same hunger, and end the fast with communion, reflecting on the meaning and the first meal of hope and remembrance. A service project is also completed during our stay. This is a “do not miss” opportunity! Check your email for full details and the link to sign up.

#### **SOUND BOARD OPERATORS NEEDED**



We are recruiting additional sound board operators. Currently, we have two people that perform that duty. Additional people would allow for spreading out the work and, more importantly, give us backup. An additional two people would allow for each person to run the sound board once a month. Even if you can't commit to a regular schedule, having a backup to fill in occasionally would be helpful.

While the equipment, especially the audio mixer, may seem intimidating, it's much easier than it looks. If you are interested, sit down with the operator some Sunday morning and see how it's done. For more information, please contact Glenn Child or Bill Andrews.



### PONDERING FROM THE PA

The name of our church contains the word “Community,” which I believe to be the most significant part of its name. It is not there to just be a good catch phrase for marketing purposes. But rather it carries with it both an understanding of our identity and our goal. The word is derived from the Latin *communis*, which is the root for the word *common*.

As a called out Christian community of faith we are focused on the common goal of following the Christ. To strive for that goal implies that we are yoked with each other not only in faith, but also in daily living. When we remember those that are listed in our weekly bulletin in prayer, we are affirming our need to care for each other in many ways.

True communities celebrate joys, concerns, sorrows, and all of life’s transitions. At Bower Hill, we do that reasonably well in the context of Sunday morning. That was one of the many factors that enticed Amy and me to become a part of this church.

As we enter into month of February, when we remember our love on Valentine’s Day, our forefathers on President’s Day...and not to forget the groundhog...let us consider how we can deepen our sense of community by getting to really know someone and celebrate our common faith together!

Rev. Dr. Fred Leasure, Parish Associate

### PLAY AND PANEL DISCUSSION...FEATURING YOUR PASTOR:

Maybe you were present in Adult Education recently to hear Anya Martin talk about The Hiawatha Project, “using the arts to promote social justice.” The HP, a Pittsburgh-based performance company, will be putting on the following play:

#### ***John Henry: An American Legend Who Died with a Hammer in His Hand***

**Sunday, February 12, 3:00 p.m., at the August Wilson Center**

Members of Bower Hill Church can attend this performance at a reduced rate by visiting the following website: [www.hiawathaproject.org/tickets](http://www.hiawathaproject.org/tickets). Please use the code FAITH1617. Also, you may call 412-456-6666. The play will be followed by a thirty-minute panel discussion—“*People of Faith, People of Change: How can our hearts lead us to justice?*” The panel will be made up of a variety of religious leaders representing Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Evangelical Christianity, and YOURS TRULY representing Mainline Protestantism! Don’t miss it! (Oh, you didn’t really think I was acting in the play, did you?)

~Brian

If you are unable to attend on February 12, but you are interested in seeing the play, the performance dates are February 9-18.

You can read more about this play and view a video at the website [www.hiawathaproject.org](http://www.hiawathaproject.org).



# F E B R U A R Y

## WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

### COMMUNION SERVERS

February 5: Dick & Carolyn Westerhoff  
Bill Cadwell  
Nancy Criswell

### LECTORS

February 5: Kara Pepicelli  
February 12: Steve Grier  
February 19: Alan Hohlfelder  
February 26: Darendra Lease

### GREETERS

February 5: Mary Beth Waine  
Doris Olinger  
February 12: Carter Family  
February 19: Jim & Joan McAnulty  
February 26: Mary Good, Bill Cadwell

### USHER CAPTAIN—Kent Jones

### ACOLYTES

February 5: Graceann Foster, Estelle Smith  
February 12: Kemp Carter, Avery Saba  
February 19: Henry & Clara Druckenbrod  
February 26: Julian Salvante, Ruby Siefken

### COFFEE HOUR

February 5: Belardi Family  
February 12: Andrews Family  
February 19: Johnson Family  
February 26: Snyder Family

### FLOWER DEACONS

February 5: Sally Child  
February 12: Josie Sheldon  
February 19: Beth Robosky  
February 26: Kathy Philson

### SEXTONS

February 5: Bill Cadwell  
February 12: Bill Andrews  
February 19: Glenn Child  
February 26: Tim Lease

### **Questions? Need to switch or reschedule?**

#### **Please contact:**

Greeters, Communion Servers—Andy Druckenbrod

Lectors and Sextons: Rev. Brian Snyder

Acolytes: Jean Miewald

Coffee Hour: Pat Jacobs

Flower Deacons: Cynthia Gissin



1—Nancy Geis

February 3—Jaime Lease

February 4—Nathan Gray

February 8—Susan Hicks

February 9—Dianne Scott

February

February 10—Lauren Kocher  
Beth Wilson

February 11—Brianna Brown

February 13—Nathan Ivey  
Glenn Williams

February 14—Rachel McElroy

February 15—Dennis Geis, Sr.

February 16—Jim Kane

February 18—Karl Casey

February 20—Sarah Cannon  
Taylor Linaburg

February 22—LuAnn McNickle  
Mary Ryfun

February 24—Scott Olinger  
Val Watterson

February 26—Chris Robbins

February 27—Nick Gibbs  
Norma Grubb  
Chris May

February 28—Ginny Mason

February 29—Emily Chin

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. Please call 412-561-4114 or email [office@bhccml.com](mailto:office@bhccml.com).





## BOWER HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

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

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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  
Director of Christian Education  
and Youth Programs  
[am@bhccml.com](mailto:am@bhccml.com)

Anne Smith, Director of Music Ministries  
[an@bhccml.com](mailto:an@bhccml.com)

Dianne Scott, Financial Secretary  
[di@bhccml.com](mailto:di@bhccml.com)

Karen Reynolds, Office Administrator  
[office@bhccml.com](mailto:office@bhccml.com)

### THE CHURCH OFFICE

[412] 561-4114

Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m.— 2:30 p.m.

## PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR CARE LIST

**Marian Brannan**, 1300 Bower Hill Rd., #1128, Pittsburgh, PA 15243  
**Louise Burroughs**, 2160 Greentree Rd., #307W, Pittsburgh, PA 15220  
**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  
**Larry Sirinek**, 220 Woodhaven Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15228

### 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.