
~ Building Towers ~

“Which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it?”

~ Luke 14:28

Dear Members and Friends,

A man with a parrot on his shoulder attended services at his local synagogue on the first day of Rosh Hashanah. As people mingled prior to the service, the man went through the congregation saying, “This parrot’s a great singer, and he knows Hebrew. Why, he can sing the service better than the cantor!” When people expressed disbelief, he asked them to bet. Some placed bets of \$10. Others bet \$100 or more. Just as the cantor emerged, the parrot was set to fly to the front of the sanctuary and sing the service in his place. But when the time came, the bird just sat on the man’s shoulder, blinking, cocking its head, glancing about. When the two got home, the man couldn’t contain his rage at the parrot. “You stupid bird! You cost me almost \$2000!” The bird responded coolly, “Yes, but think of the odds we’ll get now on Yom Kippur!”

Of course, our faith tradition calls gambling as “an abdication of stewardship.” And I’m not suggesting that we place bets on any aspect of our worship services. (Though the musicians do make wagers on which of the seven preachers will talk the longest at our community Good Friday service.) And yet, there is always a small degree of risk—not to say “chance”—when it comes to church. Investing in programs and personnel for children and youth is a gamble; what if those seeds don’t grow? Sinking money into a large building is a gamble; what if it becomes more an albatross than a tool for mission? Such frankness may not befit a newsletter, but it’s November—a season of gratitude and stewardship—so let’s put the topic out there: Our church has changed and grown much over the past seven years, but our budget has stagnated. Although we have far more children and youth than at any time in recent memory, financial giving has not kept up with that growth. As a result, we find ourselves trying each year to do more and more with the same small pot of funds.

This coming year is especially challenging because we enter it with all those “growing pains,” and a potential shortfall to boot. If pledges remain at the same level as they have for the past seven years, we will be faced with a gap of up to \$50,000. This is due in part to the loss of a lucrative tenant: the DART preschool that used to occupy a portion of the South Wing. We’ve spread back out into that space quite nicely. We’ve got three classes meeting in rooms that, last year, were either occupied by DART or vacant. It’s nice to have those rooms back, but we could do without them. Ideally, we would find a new tenant to move in—and if you know of anyone who’s looking for space, please contact me! But in the meantime, this season of growth and revitalization presents immediate risks. Giving needs to increase by about 20%. Are there ways you can help with that? Might you consider increasing your pledge? Or making a one-time gift? Have you ever considered putting the church in your will? Or could you do as Michelle and I are doing: Continue giving to the church the same amount that you gave during the capital campaign—even though that extra pledge is all paid off?

It’s all a gamble, isn’t it? The call of Christ is never to ease and safety. It entails risk. We’re building towers, as Jesus says in Luke. As we branch out to become the church that we are called to be in these times, we must think in new (perhaps uncomfortable) ways about how to finance the construction of those towers. My philosophy of church finances has always been, “Don’t talk about money. If people are satisfied and feel a sense of ownership, they’ll give.” I trust this axiom mainly because gifts to the church are not really about money; they’re an expression of our gratitude to God, a return on the overflow of abundance that God lavishes on our lives. And yet, in these exciting times at Bower Hill Church, we need to think hard about how we’re going to pay for the towers—the ministries—that we’re putting up, stone upon stone. I’m confident that we’ll rise to the occasion, for I’ve never seen this congregation fail to meet the risks of faith. It’s one of the things I love about you.

In Christ’s Peace,
~Brian

In other news, congratulations to the Rev. Tami Hooker, a member of Bower Hill’s Company of Pastors, who has been named prison chaplain of the year. This is a statewide award!



ADULT EDUCATION

Linda James, Chair
Adult Education Committee

FAITH FORMATION & SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

The outline for Adult Education in Room 204 is listed below:

November 5 - DVD Presentation (Painting the Stars) leading to a discussion of the impact of science on our faith and how they connect. The discussion will be led by Linda James.

November 12 - This class will be led by Peter Smith who will conduct a Bible discussion on the lectionary verses of the week.

November 19 - This class will be led by Brian Snyder with the participants of the Confirmation Class.

November 26 - This class will be on one of the world's religions to be determined.

Connect & Converse

There are two spaces, the Friendship Room and Room 202, that can be used for fellowship and conversation following coffee hour.



DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND YOUTH PROGRAMS

Amy Grella — am@bhccml.com

NOVEMBER YOUTH CALENDAR

Saturday, November 4, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Working in the kitchen for the *Women Helping Women Vendor Fair*.

Help Needed for this event

The youth group has volunteered to serve in the kitchen to sell meals during the vendor fair. Two work shifts are available – 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, and 12:00 noon until 2:00 p.m. Please sign up for one of the shifts on either the youth bulletin board or on-line. (See the email from Amy for more information.)

Sunday, November 12, 6:00—8:00 p.m.

Sunday Night Live will be held in Fellowship Hall.

November 17-19 – Middle school retreat at Crestfield.

November - Sunday morning "2nd hour" XP3

Be sure to join us Sunday mornings during second hour for XP3 in the youth lounge. We will do a two-part series called *Playing with Fire* on November 5 and 12.

NOTE: XP3 will not meet on November 19 (due to the Middle School retreat), or on November 26 (due to Thanksgiving).



FALL GIVING TREE FOR SHIM

Like last year, our Tree of Giving for SHIM will be before the holiday season. We are collecting cash/check donations or \$25 gift cards instead of specific gifts. These donations will allow SHIM families to purchase gifts themselves and thus participate in the joy of Christmas shopping for their loved ones.

Our youth have prepared a "*Fall Giving Tree*" to raise funds to purchase gift cards for SHIM before their distribution date in early December. The tree is on display in the hallway outside the Friendship Room. Pick a leaf and make a donation of \$25 in cash, check or gift card. **The deadline for collecting gift cards is Sunday, November 12.**

Based on input from the families SHIM serves, the most requested gift card was for Walmart. Therefore, this year we are requesting Walmart or Visa/MasterCard gift cards only. Your cash/check donations will be used to purchase Visa gift cards using Giant Eagle cards sold by the church.



"EARTH DAY" CLEANUP **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

On **Saturday, November 11, from 9:00 a.m. until approximately noon**, we are looking for people of all ages and skill levels to come to BHCC and spend the morning sprucing up the church grounds. Who knew yard work could be this much fun!



In conjunction with BHCC's "Earth Day," the garden beds and paths will be refreshed. The scouts will also help, but feel free to stop by and join in if you have some time to give. Questions?—ask Mary Good and Dave Hicks.

Thank you!

NOVEMBER

WORSHIP PLANS

November 5

All Saints Sunday — Communion
1 John 3:1-3; Matthew 5:1-12

November 12

23rd Sunday after Pentecost
Matthew 25:1-13; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

November 19

Commitment Sunday
Rev. Dr. Fred Leasure preaching

November 26

Christ the King Sunday
Matthew 25:31-46; Ephesians 1:15-23

ADVENT IN THE MORNING!

Make your Advent season of preparation more meaningful this year with an early morning Bible Study! **Beginning Thursday, November 30**, and continuing for the four Thursdays of Advent, Fred Leasure, our Parish Associate, will lead a Bible Study entitled *The Light Will Shine*. Each session will stand alone, so you can come for one or all four weeks. **An early bird session will begin at 6:30 a.m. in the lounge** and will include coffee, tea and sweets. For those who don't believe God is up that early, **a second session will follow at 10:00 a.m.** Both gatherings will conclude after 45 minutes.

November 30

"Watchful Expectancy" — Isaiah 64:1-9 / Matthew 24:36-44

December 7

"John the Baptizer" — Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 / Matthew 3:1-12

December 14

"The Fulfillment of Promises" — Micah 5:2-5 / Matthew 1: 18-25

December 21

"The Dawning of Day" — Isaiah 52: 7-10 / Luke 2:1-20

Capture the joy and deepen your focus in the busy days of preparation!

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES



Anne Carper Smith—
an@bhccml.com

Cherub Choir will rehearse

from

10:45-11:15 a.m. in the choir room on the following dates:

November 19 and 26

December 3 and 10.

They will sing in worship on

December 17. We are looking forward to rehearsing with them again!

STEELER/YINZER PARTY



Thanks to the members of the Parish Life Committee and to all those who helped with the set-up and breakdown, and made food and cookies,

for the Steeler/Yinzer Party held on October 15. All the hard work paid off—we had a turnout of about 60 people, and the Steelers beat the Chiefs, 19-13!

PONDERINGS FROM THE PA

Rev. Dr. Fred Leasure

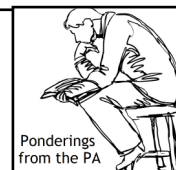
One of my favorite hymns is titled
"Come, ye Thankful People, Come"

It has long been used as a Thanksgiving hymn and became popular when our country was far more dependent on successful harvests to provide vegetables and fruits to last over the winter. It was written by an English clergyman, Henry Alford, in 1844. At the time he was the rector of Aston Stanford church in Buckinghamshire. The first verse is perhaps the most meaningful:

*Come, ye thankful people come, raise the song of harvest home;
All is safely gathered in, Ere the winter storms begin;
God our Maker doth provide for our wants to be supplied;
Come to God's own temple, come, raise the song of harvest home.*

From the time of the wilderness wanderings, God has attempted to convince us of two important facts: 1.) God is the source of our essentials, and 2.) We owe our thanksgiving to God who provides many expressions of the harvest.

As an agrarian society, we were more willing to equate the harvest with the One who provided both sun and rain. In our post industrial and highly technically dependent culture, the source is not so obvious. In this month of colder and shortening days, let us remember we are safe from the storms of life as we give thanks to God.



HAITI WATER TEAM UPDATE:

Betsy Hohlfelder, Brian Snyder, Chris Robbins, Darenda Lease and Karl Cassey leave for Haiti November 15. For the next seven days, we will be meeting with site leaders in Carrfour Feuilles, Vernet, Vallere, Torbeck, Maison de Naissance, Chaveneau and Camp Perrin. Our goal is to listen to these leaders and their water committees as they discuss ways they can better utilize their water purification systems. We hope to help them discover how more clean water can be distributed to those in need in their village and surrounding villages, and how they can become more accountable for maintenance expenses and other costs associated with water distribution. Please hold us in your prayers as we travel, and as we begin this process of discovery to building stronger beneficial relationships with these sites. We are most thankful for the Haiti support team that we have at BHCC. You are the most important part of this mission, and without you there would not be those seven working water purification systems. What a blessing you are!

Darenda Lease

**RESPONSES NEEDED:**

Commitment Sunday

If you have not already done so, we encourage you to prayerfully consider the needs of our various ministries as you complete your ***Commitment Card for 2018***.

If you have misplaced your card, there are additional cards on the table in the narthex of the sanctuary. Commitment Sunday is November 19th and we ask that you place your completed card in the offering plate on that Sunday. If you prefer, you may turn it in to the Financial Secretary prior to that Sunday. **We ask that all cards**

be completed no later than Monday, November 20.

In order to know the volunteer activities that would interest you, we encourage you to complete the Talent Survey either online or by filling out the yellow sheet that was in your bag. Additional copies are available in the narthex.



At Christmas Time

Kids Night Out — Parents Night Off

HOSTED BY MT. LEBANON HIGH SCHOOL GIRL SCOUTS AT BOWER HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

Enjoy time for Christmas shopping, a date night or just relax during this busy season. Parents are welcome to pack a lunch or dinner for their child and drop the kids off with some enthusiastic teenage Girl Scouts and adult leaders. We will have a nurse attend most nights. Kids enjoy games, crafts, a snack, songs and fun!

Dates and Location: First three Saturdays in December in Fellowship Hall

December 2 — 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

December 9—4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

December 16—12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Children who are potty-trained through age 12 are invited!

Cost: \$20/first child and \$15/additional children for 4 hours of babysitting.

Please register using this online form. Space is limited. Reservations required.

Sign up at: <https://goo.gl/forms/LdUSIW3Pr2xB6042>

Questions? Kristen Westbrook, Troop Leader (412) 818-8333 or wstbk@gmail.com

Girl Scout Troop 50287 is working toward a community service project in tropical Costa Rica this spring to protect endangered sea turtles.

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

SENIOR MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP

Date Change

The meeting day for senior men's breakfast group will change to the **first Wednesday of the month, beginning November 1**. The meeting time remains at **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!

UNITED FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION

The next collection date will be **Sunday, November 12**. The pantry's needs are primarily for boxed cereal (especially Cheerios, which is the only cereal some clients are able to eat), canned soups, canned tuna, and white rice. A new need is for all-fruit or all-vegetable baby food, which is a special need of several of the children in our client families. As always, donations of any non-perishable food items are welcomed.

COFFEE, CAKE & CONVERSATION will meet again in Fellowship Hall on **Tuesday, November 28**.

This monthly afternoon discussion group returned with a new format. Replacing the former unstructured discussion will be a brief presentation on a variety of subjects followed by group reactions and discussion. The November topic is *"What makes a good life? Lessons from the longest study on happiness."* Refreshments will be served. All are welcome!



Remember to "fall back" and turn your clocks back one hour on Saturday night, November 4.



November 5 begins Eastern Standard Time.

VETERANS DAY

Friday, November 10

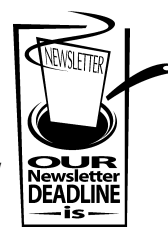
THANKSGIVING

**Thursday/Friday
November 23 & 24**



PLEASE NOTE!!

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the article submission deadline for the December Newsletter is NO LATER than Friday, November 10. It will be mailed on Friday, November 17.



WESTERN PA DIAPER BANK

Our next collection date for disposable diapers will be **Sunday, November 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, which is located in the hallway directly outside of the Nursery.

Tax-deductible monetary donations are accepted and payable to WPA Diaper Bank, and mailed to **2546 Centre Ave., Pgh. PA 15219**. Please note our church name on the Memo line.

Please save disposable diaper coupons that you collect but don't use. Place them in the envelope near the Pack'N Play.

BOOKWORMS

Bookworms is our ladies' book discussion group, which meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month 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. There is NO meeting in December.

November 28

Rex, by Cathleen Lewis

January 23

One in a Million Boy, by Monica Wood

February 27

84 Charing Cross Road, by Helene Hanff
Duchess of Bloombury Street, by Helene Hanff



**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and Bower Hill Community Church Present:
WOMEN HELPING WOMEN—CRAFT AND VENDOR FAIR
Benefitting Family Promise of SWPA**

Saturday, November 4 — 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Bower Hill Community Church, 70 Moffett St., Mt. Lebanon 15243

See what's new for the holidays in Fashion, Accessories, Jewelry, Skin Care, Cosmetics, Home Decor, Sweet Treats, Basket Raffle, 50/50 Raffle, and Great Food!

Free Admission and Parking — FOR MORE INFORMATION: 412-276-2446

Flea Market



HELP NEEDED

The Fall Flea Market will be held on **Saturday, November 18**, and there are many opportunities to help. Here's the scoop:

NEW THIS YEAR!

There are many more items than ever, so the unpacking will be spread out over two days!!

Wednesday and Thursday, November 15-16,

Saturday, November 18

**8:30 a.m. — 3:00 p.m.
Fellowship Hall**

**Questions?
Contact Theresa Child
412-429-9519
treetoowon@yahoo.com**

9:00 a.m. to ??

UNPACKING BOXES

Help us unpack for an hour or two or stay all day and really get a workout! Typically, we're finished between 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. We've got lots of stuff, so we'll need lots of help to unpack it all. Snacks will be provided but if you're planning to stay all day, you may want to bring a bagged lunch.

Saturday, November 18, 8:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m. — SALE DAY

The Flea Market opens at 8:30 a.m., and shoppers will be arriving early, as usual. We're hoping to use the extra room for children's items again, so extra help will be needed throughout the day. However, the most help is needed in the first two or three hours.

SNACK BAR UPDATE

Business at the Snack Bar has been growing over the past few years, and we have been running out of soup and baked goods early. Therefore, more baked goods are needed, and we are looking for two gallons of each type of soup.

SOUP COOKS AND BAKERS NEEDED, TOO. Bakers are needed to make items for the snack bar such as mini muffins, cookies, and brownies. Baked goods can be dropped off at the cart outside of the office on **Friday and Saturday, November 17-18**, sometime between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. We would also like to have TWO gallons of each of the following soups — Chicken Noodle, Potato and Chili. (Note: Potato soup is already covered) Containers can be provided. Soup, along with the baked goods, may be dropped off in the office refrigerator on Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. or brought to the kitchen by 9:30 a.m. on the day of the Flea Market.

If you can help, SIGN UP SHEETS FOR "Day-of-Sale", soup cooks, and bakers will be outside the Sanctuary following the worship services on November 5 and 12. You may also let Theresa know where and when you can help.)

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 fall flea market a success.

BOWER HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

70 Moffett Street
Pittsburgh, Pa 15243



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OUR CHURCH STAFF

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Company of Pastors
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Rev. Dr. Fred Leasure
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Karen Reynolds, Office Administrator
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
Matt Dunfee, 800 N Pennsylvania St., #109, Denver, CO 80203
Ethel La Barbera, 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.