

## ~A Christmas Parable~

*"Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light; the  
hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight..."*

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Members and Friends,

I don't know if this really happened, but I know this story is true:

Back in the days when cars were smaller and nobody had a cellphone, a certain fellow got caught in a snowstorm. This took place—if it happened at all—not far from the spot where you're sitting. In fact, I think you've been there... Oh, he should have known better. There was a yellow and black sign to warn him "No Winter Maintenance" on the old gravel road. He was almost out of gas, too. But he didn't want to change course; he had new snow tires, and he really thought he could make it. Alas, soon enough, his car skidded off the road and got lodged in a ditch. Snowblind and stuck, with temperatures dropping into the teens, he decided to wait out the storm in his car. The gas ran out and the heater quit just as the blizzard was getting started.

But the fellow remembered that his wife had stashed one of those seven-day candles in the trunk, in hopes of placing it by her mother's grave for Christmas. He ducked out into the snow to fetch the candle, stuck it in the coffee holder and lit it. He sat in his car and shivered by the light and the scant heat of that candle.

An hour or two passed when he heard someone rapping at his window. "I saw the light coming from your car," a stranger called to him. "I wrecked my car, too. Can I come inside and wait out the storm with you? Please," the stranger begged. "I have some peanuts and pretzels that I'll share with you." Now, the man with the candle was suspicious of the stranger; he talked funny, dressed funny, belonged to a different race. But in life-and-death circumstances, even a racist and a homophobe can feel compassion. He wouldn't put a dog out into a night like this, and so the man with the candle invited the stranger inside. While the blizzard raged all around them, the two men huddled together in the little car, lighted and heated by a single candle. To pass the empty hours, the men talked, told their stories, and discovered that though the world outside had taught them to be enemies, at a time and a place like this...they were friends.

The snowstorm raged colder and longer than anyone expected. But with two men hunched together in a small space, the seven-day candle produced just enough heat to keep them from freezing. Later, after they were rescued, everyone marveled at the tale they would tell: On a dangerous night, two enemies joined forces against the darkness and the cold. When death drew near, two strangers found that they were friends. Two men had lived to tell the tale—and tell it with repentance—of how they'd been saved from their own foolish choices, rescued from the deadly night, brought together, given a second chance...and all because of a single candle, burning in the dark, one lonely candle, burning in the cruelest night! Celebrate the light!

~Brian

## 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 GROUP: WEDNESDAYS

Senior men's breakfast will meet *first Wednesdays* through April 2015. The group convenes at 8:00 a.m. at Kings Restaurant on Rte. 50, Washington Pike near the end of Greentree Road, in Scott. There is no agenda other than good fellowship and interesting conversation. No invitation or reservation is needed. We meet in the room to the left of the cashier. Typically six to 10 men attend. Join us.

### BOOKWORMS

Bookworms is our ladies' book discussion group. It meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in Room 103 at BHCC, for fellowship and discussion of a chosen title. Everyone is welcome to read the book for the month and join the discussion.

No Meeting in December!

January 20: *Transatlantic* by Colum McCann

February 17: *All the Light We Can Not See*  
by Anthony Doerr



### YOGA OFFERED FOR ALL ABILITY LEVELS

All-Levels Yoga is offered in the Lounge on Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. Please bring a yoga mat and a beach towel. The cost is \$8. Proceeds from the class will be donated back to the church. For additional information, please contact Carla at 704-258-4900 or follow on Facebook at "Carla Ann Drummond Yoga."

### FOOD DRIVE: EVERY SECOND SUNDAY EACH MONTH

Wallace Food Pantry collects food items that they will need to provide supplies to all their client families. The primary need is for cream-, vegetable-, and beef-based soups (but of course, as always, all non-perishables are useful). They are also starting to collect dessert mixes for Christmas dinner bags. When bringing in desserts, please donate a complete kit (cake plus icing, for instance).



### GAME NIGHT: SAVE THE DATE

Join the Parish Life Committee on January 17th for All-ages Snow Play Day and Game Night.

Watch the bulletin for details!

### SANDI'S GARDEN UPDATE

Winter, if not officially here, has provided us with a preview of coming attractions and Sandi's Garden has succumbed to the cold weather. Not, however, before exceeding last year's production! Our final tally was 314 pounds of fresh, organic produce. This is even more impressive when you realize that this year we grew large amounts of lighter Swiss chard, beans and

hot peppers instead of heavy tomatoes. SHIM reports that the Food Pantry clients were very appreciative of our produce, especially the hot peppers.



SHIM's Boaz Fields project helps its food pantry provide food insecure families with one of the most expensive items in a food budget: fresh, organic produce. BHCC once again, from the youngest on up, was an important part of this ministry to our brothers and sisters in the South Hills who depend on it to feed their families. A small plot of land made an important contribution to SHIM's Food Pantry efforts. Thank you to all who, in many ways, answered the call to serve others.

### ADULT EDUCATION SPEAKER RESPONSE

Below is a note from Dr. Wayne Walters, Principal at Pittsburgh Obama 6-12 and newly appointed Assistant Superintendent of Pittsburgh Public Schools, who presented how his school has become an urban success story in East Liberty at our November 2 class:

*Steve,*

*Thank you so much. It was truly my pleasure sharing the Pittsburgh Obama Academy story with such an engaging and progressive group. I was welcomed into your congregation in such a heartfelt fashion that it spoke volumes to the mission and work of your church. Thanks again.*

*Wayne*

### FROM THE HOUSE COMMITTEE

In order to keep the narthex clear of plastic bins for the collection of food pantry items, clothing donations and other such material during Holiday season, they have been moved. Bins are now located to the left of the right-hand door into the sanctuary. There are also bins outside the church office. Please contact the office with any concerns.

### Great Coffee, Tea, and Cocoa for a Great Cause



For over a decade Bower Hill Community Church has served Fair Trade coffee and tea during Fellowship Time and other church events. In addition, Fair Trade coffee, tea and cocoa is being sold the first Sunday of each month during Fellowship Time. Jim McAnulty will have regular and decaf coffee in both 12 ounce bags of ground drip and 12 single serve cups as well as an assortment of 20 tea bag boxes with and without caffeine. With cold weather coming, be sure to stock up on organic cocoa.

Our coffee, teas, and cocoa are all from Equal Exchange worker cooperatives. Through Equal Exchange, small scale farmers not only receive a significantly larger share of the profits, but also have a say in how the organization is run and how the cooperative profits are returned to their communities. Communities decide whether their share of the profits will help build a school, a community health center or another community need. PCUSA's Enough for Everyone Program has collaborated with

Equal Exchange since 2001.

If you haven't been supporting this program, please consider purchasing some of our Fair Trade products. Coffee is \$8.00 per 12 ounce bag or box of 12 single serve cups. Teas are \$4.00 for a box of 20 tea bags and cocoa is \$6.00 per can. If you miss Jim on the first Sunday of the month, we also have an honor system where you can pick up your coffee, tea and/or cocoa in Room 202 on the way from the sanctuary to Fellowship Hall. Please place your check or cash in the offering plate marked "Coffee/Tea/Cocoa." Fair Trade products are a great way to help small-scale farmers around the world support their families with pride and dignity.



December 3: Ashley Holdsworth  
Katie Philson

December 5: Noah Eliason

December 6: Joan McAnulty  
Steve Boisvert

December 7: Bill Andrews  
Rich Salvante

December 8: Sophie Hicks

December 10: Kathy Philson  
Christine Henney

December 11: Jason Robosky

December 14: Betsy Prine  
Tim May  
Leo Geis

December 18: Robert Mackey, Jr.

December 22: Beth Gardner

December 28: Catherine Good

December 31: Betsy Hohlfelder

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.

**ADULT EDUCATION**

*Adult Education meets from 10:45 - 11:45 a.m. Sunday mornings following worship and a fellowship time. If you are a regular attendee, you've come to expect a wide variety of stimulating ideas and lively conversations that help us explore what it means to be a people of faith who believe we are called to be involved in this ever-challenging world. We believe that if you've never attended a class and give us a try, you'll be glad you did. Elder Steve Boisvert is the Chair of Adult Education.*

**December 7:** Doris Nagle, who heads SHIM's family assistance programs, will present a session on how SHIM provides support to families in the South Hills.

**December 14:** The Christmas Story - Angels, Shepherds and Magi became the inspiration for artistic expression throughout the centuries. Join art historian, Elaine Wertheim, for the journey to the manger.

**December 21:** The Rev. Dr. Brian Snyder will continue his series on spirituality and theology in our lives and in the life of the church.

**December 28:** Christmas: No Adult Education

**January 4:** "De-deck the Halls" - No Adult Education

**DECEMBER WORSHIP INFORMATION**

**December 7: 2nd Sunday of Advent,  
Love Sunday, Communion**

Mark 1:1-8; Isaiah 40:1-11

"What Shall I Cry?"

**December 14: 3rd Sunday of Advent  
Joy Sunday**

John 1:6-8, 19-28; Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

"Repair the Ruined Cities"

**December 21: 4th Sunday in Advent  
Peace Sunday, Children's Pageant during worship**

Luke 1:26-38 ; II Samuel 7:1-11, 16

"A House for the Lord"

**December 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**  
Music begins at 6:30 p.m. and worship at 7:00 p.m.

**December 28**

Informal worship and "carol sing"

**DECEMBER WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS**

**USHER CAPTAIN:** Mike Riemer

**COMMUNION SERVERS**

Betsy Hohlfelder, Alan Hohlfelder, Mary Good, Beth Robosky

**COFFEE HOUR**

December 7	Saba Family
December 14	Bailey Family
December 21	Hicks Family
December 24	
December 28	Mitchell Family

**LECTOR**

December 7	Sarah Cannon
December 14	Dick Headley
December 21	Tim Lease
December 28	Jean Miewald

**ADVENT READERS**

November 30

December 7

December 14

December 21

Druckenbrod/Schlesinger family

DJ Geis family

Rising family

Laufers

**GREETERS**

December 7

December 14

December 21

December 24

Dick Westerhoff, Carol Westerhoff,

Michelle Snyder

Lynn Foltz, Jennifer Foster, Robert Foster

Alfie Watterson, Dave Hicks, Susan Hicks

Dave Green, Nancy Green, Sheri Geis

**ACOLYTES**

December 7

December 14

December 21

December 28

Leo Geis, Jacob Geis, Graceann Foster

Lindsay Bruder, Allie Bruder

Anna Mezyk, Ellie Rising

Avery Saba, Sydney Saba



Marla Kemmler  
ma@bhccml.com

**Sunday**  
9:00 a.m. - 12 p.m.

**Monday**  
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

It is hard to believe I have been on staff here at Bower Hill for a year! What a fun year it has been. I have met so many new people with such great vision and love for the Lord and each other. As we move into the Advent Season, my prayer for you all is that you will open your hearts to the love and joy brought to us all by the birth of our savior Jesus. Try not to get bogged down in the hustle and bustle of shopping, baking, and parties. Take time every day with your family to rejoice in the love God has for us. Merry Christmas!

#### **ATTENTION PARENTS!**

On December 21 during the worship service, the children will present a Christmas play in place of the sermon. The play has NO lines to memorize BUT costumes will be provided. Our very own 5th and 6th graders will be producing the play. If your child would like to be a part of the play, rehearsals will be December 7 and 14 during second hour. We will need to fill the parts of Isaiah the Prophet, Mary and Joseph, Shepherds, Magi and Angels.

All are welcome to take part in this fun event!  
There will be NO SUNDAY SCHOOL December 21. BUT the nursery will be open!

If you have any questions please contact Marla at  
ma@bhccml.com or 412-670-2313  
Thank you!

#### **IMPORTANT DATES**

**December 7 and 14:** pageant rehearsal during second hour in the sanctuary

**December 21:** NO SUNDAY SCHOOL  
Everyone will remain in worship for presentation of the Christmas Pageant.

**December 28:** NO SUNDAY SCHOOL  
Second Annual PJ and donut breakfast in the Lounge for Preschool- 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

**January 4:** NO SUNDAY SCHOOL—Family Worship

**January 11:** Normal Sunday school schedule resumes.

\*\*\*\*On Sundays where there is NO Sunday school, the nursery will be open.\*\*\*\*

#### **SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE**

*See below for the Fall Sunday School Schedule.  
Preschool- 4<sup>th</sup> grade will be dismissed after the children's sermon to their classes. Please meet your children in Fellowship Hall after worship for pick up.*

**Preschool-2<sup>nd</sup> grade**  
will meet in the Chapel and Room 207.

**3rd and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade** will meet in Room 203.

**5<sup>th</sup> grade and up** will remain in worship. This group will meet after worship in the Chapel.

#### **NEW PROCEDURE FOR SECOND-HOUR CHILD CARE**

Children attending Kid's Care childcare in Room 110 during the Adult Education hour must be dropped off and picked up by an adult responsible for their care. An adult's signature is required for admittance to Kid's Care. Unattended children will not be admitted.

#### **REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE**

As of October 31, approximately 46% of the pledges made to the Capital Campaign have been received. This has allowed the major projects of the Steeple Repair and Playground Renovation to be completed.

In keeping with the promise to give 10% of the money collected on a quarterly basis to mission, \$2,410.97 was paid in October to each of the four mission projects: the Haiti Water Project, Family Promise, SHIM, and Hekima Place. This brings the total given to these mission projects for 2014 to \$34,422.95.

On a Sunday in December, the Haiti Team will be presenting a program to show the congregation more about what they do when installing a water system. Pictures from currently installed sites will be shown during Fellowship Time. Watch for more information on the exact date.

As part of the Branching Out Campaign, perhaps you've noticed the "stump" under the Branch in the hallway to Fellowship Hall. That stump is really a bank to collect change that the children (and adults) may wish to donate. To date since the stump was installed, over \$17 in change has been collected. Put some coins in the bank and listen to the sound it makes.





Christmas poinsettias are available for purchase this year to be given in honor or in memory of loved ones. Each poinsettia plant is \$8.00 with a portion of the sale donated toward the Youth Work Trip. Please deliver this order form with payment to the Church Office or leave it in the Offering tray.

Sale Dates: November 23, November 30 and December 7

*Deadline for orders is NOON on Monday, December 8.*

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

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

Check # \_\_\_\_\_

# of Plants \_\_\_\_\_

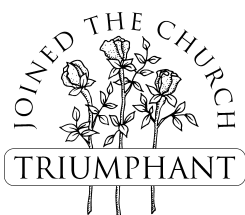
In Memory  
of \_\_\_\_\_

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

Flowers can be taken home after  
the service on Christmas Eve.

\_\_\_ I will take my flowers home.

\_\_\_ Please deliver my flowers to those who cannot  
attend church.



### IN MEMORIAM

Longtime member Jeanne Olsen passed away peacefully at home and in her sleep on November 5, surrounded by her adult children. Her memorial service will be held at the church on Saturday, December 13, at 1:00 p.m. The bell choir will participate in the service, as a tribute to Jeanne's love of handbells.



Welcome new Secretary, Karen Reynolds, whose first day is Monday, December 1. Karen is replacing long time Secretary, Emily Kerr. Call or stop by to introduce yourself and make her feel welcome.

Emily will be in the office Wednesday through Friday until December 12. Stop in, say goodbye, and wish her well in her new ventures.

A big thank you to Chris Robbins and Steve Boisvert who have worked tirelessly in the past month to upgrade the computer hardware and software in the office.

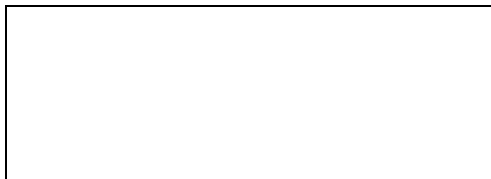
## BOWER HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

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

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### OUR CHURCH STAFF

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

Company of Pastors  
Rev. Grafton Eliason  
Rev. Dr. Betty Sykes  
Rev. Calvin C. Wilson  
Rev. John Yohe

Marla Kemmler, Director of Christian Education  
and Youth Programs  
[ma@bhccml.com](mailto:ma@bhccml.com)

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

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

Jim Askins, Custodian

### 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  
**Betty Eisenbeis**, 730 Bower Hill Road, Apt. 219, Pittsburgh, PA 15243  
**Ethel La Barbera**, 50 Vanadium Road, #130, Bridgeville, PA 15017  
**Alma Johnson**, 13 Charles Street, Dravosburg, PA 15034  
**Velma Noonan**, 50 Vanadium Road, #1119, Bridgeville, PA 15017  
**Pat Nuernberg**, 619 Friendship Circle, Pittsburgh, PA 15241  
**John Theilacker**, 101 Manorview Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15220

### SUNDAY TRANSPORTATION

Need a ride to worship? The deacons would like to provide a ride to worship for members who need one. If you find yourself in need of a ride, you may call your parish deacon prior to Sunday to arrange a ride. Not sure who to call? Contact the church office for assistance.



### 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 contact Kate Junker at:  
[katejunker@aol.com](mailto:katejunker@aol.com).