



## ~The Wings of the Morning~

*"If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits  
of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and  
your right hand shall hold me fast."*

~Psalm 139:9-10

Dear Members and Friends,

Christ's peace to you in this beautiful winter season. As I write these words, the snow lies heavy and white, reminding me of all that we missed back in December when it was almost Christmas but 58 degrees! Instead of an inspirational message, I thought I'd use my space in the newsletter this month to share with you a few "newsy" items. There is much happening at the church, and I hope you're taking part.

First, we do hope that you are worshiping with your Bower Hill congregation by one means or another - either in person, or via live stream on Sunday mornings, or even by watching the weekly recording of our worship service on our YouTube channel later in the day. (We know that 9:30 comes awfully early for some folks!) However, we would encourage you to "Remember the Sabbath," and watch the video on Sunday if that is at all possible-setting aside one holy day for worship, prayer, rest, and acts of mercy. It's always best to participate in the entire service, but if you're on the run, and you'd like to catch just the sermon, here's how to do that: Go to [www.bowerhillchurch.org](http://www.bowerhillchurch.org), and on the home page, scroll down to the area where it says "Recent Sermons." There you will find audio recordings of sermons by themselves. You can treat these like podcasts; listen on your phone, on the run, anytime and anywhere. Share them with friends.

Second, Ali Michael, Ph.D., is a native of Mt. Lebanon and an educationist who specializes in issues of race and public education. She's an insightful, entertaining speaker, and you can find some of her TED Talks online. She speaks frequently about the blessings and deficits of growing up in our community. (If you look her up, be sure to type the "Ph.D." after her name; otherwise you'll get a fashion model by the same name!) The municipality has invited Dr. Michael back to do a series of workshops about race, racial bias, and how to be white allies without guilt. As a part of that series, our church was asked to host a special interfaith event with Dr. Michael on the weekend of February 19 and 20— exact day and time TBA. We are simply providing the space. The event is free and open to the public, and we would encourage you to take part. Look for an eBlast with the day, time, and an RSVP for childcare.

Third, session is giving me a sabbatical in the summer of 2022! Clergy sabbaticals have become standard practice in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, usually once every seven years. A sabbatical is not an extended vacation, but a time spent in intentional study, writing, planning, and renewal. I'm so grateful for this opportunity to be retooled as your pastor for the changing years ahead. Our Parish Associate, Rev. Fred Leasure, will be handling the ins-and-outs of church administration and pastoral care during my absence, as well as much (but not all) of the worship leadership. Stay tuned as details emerge.

And what about the "wings of the morning"? Oh, it's just a verse for you to dwell upon today. May you sense the nearness and the peace of God's Spirit wherever you are and whatever you're doing. I'm glad to be journeying along with you.

In Christ's Peace,  
~Brian

## SANCTUARY FLOWERS / DONATION 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. At this time, the following Sunday dates are available:  
February 6 and February 13



### **February 6** Communion Sunday

Isaiah 6:1-8

Luke 5:1-11

### **February 13** Jeremiah 17:5-10 Luke 6:17-26

### **February 20** Luke 6:27-38 I Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50

### **February 27** Transfiguration Sunday Exodus 34:29-35 Luke 9:28-36

## **CONGREGATION MEETING NOTICE**

By official call of the Session, the first 2022 regular meeting of the congregation of Bower Hill Community Church (Presbyterian U.S.A.) will be held on **Sunday, February 27, via Hybrid.**



The agenda for the meeting includes a review of the 2021 Annual Report and year-end financial statement, along with presentation of the 2022 operating budget as adopted by Session. Additional agenda items will be announced via E-blasts, along with instructions on how to vote.

*--Bill Cadwell, Clerk of Session*

### **The church office will be closed:**

Monday, February 21 - Presidents' Day



## **LIGHTING THE STEEPLE**

The opportunity to light the steeple of Bower Hill Community Church continues. Many have sponsored a night in honor of a person or a special occasion. It has also been lit as a way to memorialize a special person who has passed away. Notice of the lighting and the person, event, or date that it commemorates, will appear in the weekly bulletin. The cost of this is \$10 a day and can be sent directly to the church. (You will not be billed for this.)

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: Amy Leasure at amlea97@hotmail.com. MULTIPLE sponsors can share the SAME DATE.



**Are you creative, amusing or inspirational?**

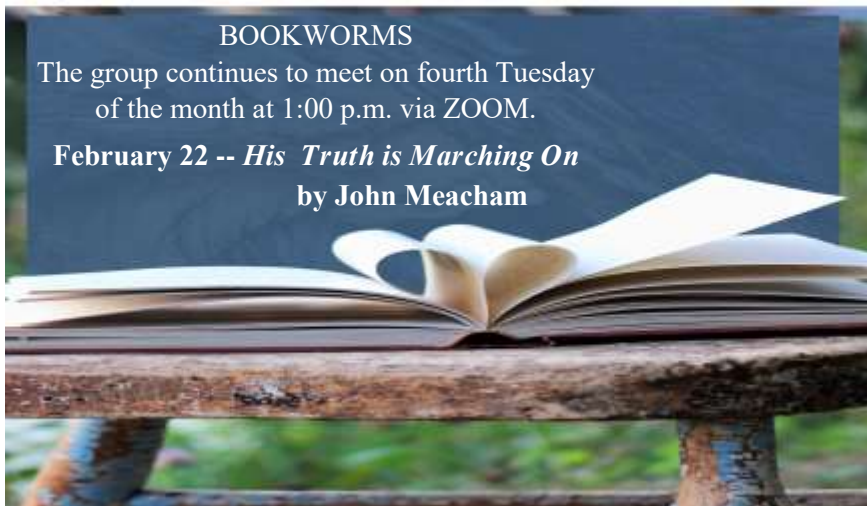
The Communication Committee is seeking your suggestions that are seasonal, uplifting, humorous or spiritual for our digital sign. Due to space limitations, content must be brief, as well as Pastor Brian approved. E-mail your submissions to Connie May at [maze3909@aol.com](mailto:maze3909@aol.com)."

**COME AS YOU ARE!  
YOU CAN CHANGE  
INSIDE**

**BOOKWORMS**

The group continues to meet on fourth Tuesday of the month at 1:00 p.m. via ZOOM.

**February 22 -- *His Truth is Marching On*  
by John Meacham**

**UNITY FOOD PANTRY  
COLLECTION**

Sunday, February 13, is the next collection date. The Unity Food Pantry's current needs are for boxed cereal, canned soups, peanut butter, and feminine hygiene

**SENIOR MENS BREAKFAST**

Our next gathering will be on **Tuesday, February 1, at 8:00 a.m.** The meeting location is the Denny's restaurant at 2180 Greentree Road, near Swallow Hill Road. No reservation is required, and conversation is spontaneous. The regular meeting date will be the first Tuesday of each month. **All men are welcome.** Any questions or comments, contact Glenn Child at [gstchild@yahoo.com](mailto:gstchild@yahoo.com).

**PASTORAL PONDERINGS FROM THE PA**

Does anyone remember taking a shoe box and decorating it to take to school as a valentine box? We would have the boxes lined up on the windowsill and you could drop a card in the box of the people you wanted to remember on Valentine's Day. The cards were rather cheap and were punched out of a sheet. None were very fancy and sometimes we would glue valentine hearts on those cards we gave to someone special.

Saint Valentine was a third-century clergyman who ministered to persecuted Christians. In the year 496, the church initiated the feast of Saint Valentine to commemorate the love and compassion that he expressed to others. Today, we have romanticized the occasion with flowers, chocolates and greeting cards to those that we love.

Perhaps this year it would be more appropriate for the community of faith to express our love more universally. In keeping with the work of the saint we commemorate, let us remember the forgotten ones, the people that society has forgotten. Think how you would share love with the lonely, the homeless, the incarcerated, and those that have been the target of prejudice.

May cupid's arrow strike your heart to pour out your love to others!

~ Rev. Dr. Fred Leasure, Parish Associate

## Join Adult Education to Learn More About Being Good Neighbors

We hope many of you can join us for Adult Education classes on Sunday mornings from 11:00 a.m. to approximately 12:00 a.m. These classes meet in the Friendship Room if you are attending church in- person, but they also are available on Zoom for those staying at home. Look for the Zoom links in your Friday and Saturday E-Blasts.

We have had a number of good sessions recently that have helped us learn about our neighbors here in Pittsburgh as well as consider how we can better follow the Gospel's call to love our neighbors. We plan to continue learning and growing in these ways over the next few weeks.

On January 30, Pastor Brian Snyder is leading us in further exploration of the biblical grounding of being good neighbors and having empathy for others

On Feb 6, we will stream a video discussion between Ralph Lowe and Brian Wallace on Critical Race Theory, and Sarah Neusius will lead us in discussion of this timely topic.

On Feb 13, Pastor Brian will begin review and discussion of a study book by Deanna Ferree Womack entitled *Neighbors: Christians and Muslims Building Community*. As many Afghani families are now coming to Pittsburgh as refugees, this book addresses many topics of renewed importance to us. This first session will focus on Part 1 of this book entitled "When Our Neighbors Have A Different Religion" that looks at the issue of religious pluralism.

On Feb 20, Sarah Neusius will continue the review and discussion of *Neighbors: Christians and Muslims Building Community*. This session will focus on Part 2 of this book entitled "Christian Muslim Encounters" which considers the history of interactions between Christians and Muslims here and elsewhere in the world.

On Feb 27, BHCC has its Semi-Annual Meeting and there will be no Adult Education.

On March 6, Linda James will lead review and discussion of the final part of *Neighbors: Christians and Muslims Building Community*. Part 3 is entitled "From Neighborly Commitment to Working Together." This section explores how to listen to and be aware of our neighbors of other faiths, as well as how to build community with them.

Stay tuned for information about Adult Education sessions later this Spring, and do join us for thoughtful and lively discussions on Sunday mornings.

~Sarah Neusius, Chair, Adult Education



### 2021 Flea Market Wrap Up

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to the 2021 Flea Markets.

The spring flea market made above \$5,300 and the fall flea market made above \$6,500. The help we had last year, especially in the fall, was amazing! For the fall flea market, we had Adult Ed folks help setting up the boutique and lots of people help unpacking boxes and clean up. As always, the Boy Scouts were a huge help bringing down items and taking them back up to the loft. The day of the sale, we had so much help that it almost felt overstaffed. All our hard work has paid off! In addition to using flea market funds to pay for the new carpet that was installed in the Friendship Room, in 2021, Session voted recently to use flea market money to help fund some youth and mission programs. Whether you donated items, helped with set up, soup making, baking, cashiering, clean up or prayed for success, it all added up to great results and we THANK YOU!!



Are there any budding or accomplished photographers in your household? The Pennsylvania Resource Council sponsors an annual Lens on Litter Photo Contest. There are two categories, Student and Adult, and the prizes range from \$100-\$500. This year's student winners range from 4th to 12th grade, so there are clearly some talented young people out there! The contest runs from January 1 to October 31 every year. The photos must be taken in Pennsylvania, and a catchy title is one of the criteria. Find all the details at: <https://prc.org/programs/projects/lens-litter/>.



While we are not about to promote specific businesses, we can give you some information to check out on your own. There are two new small businesses in the local sustainability/zero-waste community. Both are “refilleries,” places where you can find refills for household cleaning and personal care products. You bring your own clean containers, although both have containers for sale. As reported in the Post-Gazette, The Refillery x The Local Instead is located on Murray Ave. in Squirrel Hill, and Peach + Park is located in Bridgewater, Beaver County. You can check out their offerings at their websites:

<https://www.therefillerypgh.com>

<http://peachandpark.com/about/>

Some other thoughts as we approach the 2nd anniversary of the pandemic's descent upon us:

In the spring of 2020, we were only learning how the virus spreads. Some regulators and plastic bag manufacturers prevailed upon stores to refuse customers' use of reusable bags. Although it has taken a while, most stores are beginning to accept them again, especially if you are willing to bag items yourself. So it's definitely time to bring out those bags you've been storing. And don't forget the places, like Aldi and Costco, that never did provide plastic bags!

We've just been through another Christmas season in which on-line shopping became the default for many. According to a business report on NPR, Americans returned over half a trillion dollars of purchases last year. That's a lot of zeroes, and a lot of stuff! Much of it ended up in landfills or was burned. High-end clothing is likely to be cleaned and re-sold, as well as unopened packages. Brick and mortar stores may have a sale table for returned items. Electronics may be resold in open boxes. But some things are not worth the retailer's time or money (same thing, I suppose), and may be simply abandoned. It behooves us all to order carefully and return mindfully.



**Mission Matters:** Bower Hill has supported the East Liberty Family Health Care Center for many years. Their mission is “*To witness to God's love, known in Jesus Christ, by empowering our patients through community centered, whole-person quality health care for all, which includes those who are uninsured, underinsured and underserved*”. As a congregation we currently donate \$2000 per year to the Center. As part of our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Capital Campaign we donated over \$20,000 to start their dental practice as part of their whole-person care. Members of our congregation have been very involved and even on the Board of Directors over the years. For more information about the Center, here is their website. [East Liberty Family Health Care Center \(elfhcc.com\)](http://elfhcc.com).

**UPDATE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION MINISTRIES -- Amy Grella - 412-801-3723****Godly Play Training 2.0**

The Christian Education Committee continues to work to prepare Sunday school teacher volunteers to lead Children's Worship. In-person training classes to cover more tactical skills on sharing a Godly Play story and leading Children's Worship have been planned. Two classes will be offered, and all Sunday School teacher volunteers are encouraged to attend one. Classes will be held in room 103, the Children's Worship room on the following dates: Sunday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> 11:00 a.m., and Sunday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 a.m.

**Upcoming Youth Events**

These events are for all youth in grades 3-12 unless otherwise listed in the descriptions.

**Sunday, Jan. 30<sup>th</sup> - 11:00 a.m. Distribute Tackle Hunger Fliers around the church neighborhood.** We will meet in Fellowship Hall following worship to walk around and hand out fliers at houses in the neighborhood around the church.

**Sunday, Feb. 13<sup>th</sup> - 6:30 p.m. - Super Bowl Watch Party and Game Tournament.** Whether or not you watch the Big Game, this event is for you. Serious football watchers will be in room 105, while snacks and our first ever game tournament will be set up in room 110. We will also collect (and count) the Souper Bowl Tackle Hunger donations and prepare them for delivery to SHIM. This is for all youth groups, so feel free to bring a friend. You can plan to stay for the whole game, or just as much as you want (we know it's a school night). Adult volunteers are needed to help with this event; please let Amy know if you are interested in helping.

**Sunday, Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> - 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Ice Skating with Senior High Youth.** We'll meet after church and head to South Park to ice skate. Cost is \$9 total (\$6 admission and \$3 skate rental). I need to purchase tickets in advance, so be on the lookout for an RSVP.

**Seeking Youth Loving Small Group Leaders**

Beginning in February, we will transition to have all youth groups meet on the same time on Sunday evenings. We will still meet as separate groups - this means we need adult volunteers to lead small groups of similar-aged youth. If you have a heart for youth and are interested in volunteering no more than 2-4 hours of your time each month, this opportunity may be for you! Be on the lookout or additional information in January.



### **Take the Challenge - Tackle Hunger**

It is estimated that 96 million people watch the Super Bowl each year, and millions more when you add in other sporting events people enjoy whether it is professional, recreational, or anywhere in-between. What if everyone watching a sporting event gave just one can of food or one dollar to a local food charity? Join Bower Hill youth and tackle hunger this winter. We will be collecting both monetary and food donation items for the Souper Bowl of Caring, which will culminate in watching the Big Game on Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>. All donations will benefit SHIM. There are two ways you can help:

- Collect canned goods in your neighborhood. Pick up copies of the Tackle Hunger Flier to hand out to your neighbors. Pick up donations on the designated day and bring them to church on Sunday, Feb. 13.
- Ask friends and family to donate \$1 to tackle hunger. With SHIM's buying power at the Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank, just a \$1 donation can buy \$5 worth of food - enough to provide an entire meal! We have created a fundraising page through SHIM's website. Share the QR code or the link so people can donate directly on-line.



### **Spring Retreat Options for Youth**

Save the date for these upcoming events. Look for registration details in the coming weeks.

#### **March 5-6<sup>th</sup> - Tweener Retreat at Camp Crestfield**

We are thrilled to get back on campus at Crestfield for a fun-filled overnight, specifically designed for students in grades 3-6. The Next Generation Team of the Pittsburgh Presbytery is running this shortened retreat, with Crestfield hosting. We will leave early on Saturday morning and return by lunchtime on Sunday.

#### **March 18-20<sup>th</sup> - Spring Retreat at Camp Ligonier**

Don't miss out this time... we will return to Camp Ligonier for a weekend retreat open to all middle school and high school students in grades 6-12. We will partner again with area youth from the six 319 / North Hills churches, and this time, Sunset Hills youth will be attending as well. We will help with an on-site work/service project on Saturday morning in exchange for (free) use of their adventure equipment in the afternoon. Look for registration details in the coming weeks.

### **High School Summer Mission Trip**

A team of nine high school youth and adult leaders will be traveling to Philadelphia, PA for a mission trip the week of June 19<sup>th</sup> 2022. The week is focused on learning about the food crisis in Philadelphia. We will partner with local organizations in helping meet the ongoing needs within the community like planting and weeding at an urban garden, packing boxes at a food distribution center or helping load and unload food deliveries to food pantries. There is still room available for youth to join us. Please contact Amy if you are interested.



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**Parish Associate**

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**Company of Pastors**

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**THE CHURCH OFFICE**

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**www.BowerHillChurch.org**



Please pray for Our  
Care List

**Bower Hill Church Members**

**Joan Bridges, Jeff Carper  
Dan Duffy, Jean Dunfee  
Georgia Gallo, Barbara Oram  
Dottie Post, Donna Williams**



February 3:	Jaime Lease	February 18:	Karl Casey
February 4:	Nathan Gray	February 20:	Taylor Linaburg
February 8:	Susan Hicks	February 22:	Mary Ryfun LuAnn McNickle
February 10:	Lauren Kocher Maggie Webler Beth Wilson	February 24:	Scott Olinger Val Watterson
February 11:	Brianna Brown Caroline Donahue	February 26:	Matthew Arner Chris Robbins
February 13:	Nathan Ivey Glenn Williams	February 27:	Jean Barker Nick Gibbs Norma Grubb Chris May Tracy Riggle Young
February 14:	Rachel McElroy		
February 16:	Jim Kane Porter Weeks Jr.	February 29:	Emily Chin

***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.