

~ Music as Prayer ~

“I will solve my riddle to the music of a harp.”

~ Psalm 49:4b

Dear Members and Friends,

Hollywood occasionally reintroduces us to old music that our society has long-since forgotten, little bits of Americana that ring a homey and vaguely familiar sound in our ears. This happened a lot in the early 2000s, as people were looking around for music that spoke a little more deeply to the soul than contemporary pop and hip-hop. The Coen Brothers came out with the now-classic film *O Brother, Where Art Thou* in the year 2000, and the soundtrack became more popular than the movie itself. It included such old-fashioned classics as “I’ll Fly Away,” “You Are My Sunshine,” and “In the Highways.” It also introduced us to songs most had never heard, but which had the same heartfelt sound to them. It was a mystery to me, when I first got back from Africa, to discover that all the most fashionable Presbyterians were singing a song about getting baptized in a river, called “Down to the River to Pray.” Why do we love music that sings of experiences we’ve never had—like river baptisms and breaking bread together on our knees?

Another movie from that era reminded us about the all-but-lost tradition of shape note singing—which is a form of sacred music that developed in Puritan New England and still lingers in some far-flung areas of the South. In 2003, the movie *Cold Mountain* featured hymns sung in the old shape note style, which is strictly a capella. It gives the melody to the tenors, and adds haunting and strange harmonizations. Shape note can take a familiar hymn like “What Wondrous Love Is This” and turn it into something wild and urgent-sounding. I recently encountered it in another film and found it so poignant and memorable that I did some research. I discovered that there is indeed a very devoted community of shape note singers around the world, with a club here in Pittsburgh.

Music speaks to the soul in a way that no other thing can. Music in church is never a performance, but a prayer. That’s why it’s really best not to clap after a great anthem by the choir or bell choir. We don’t applaud prayers; we simply allow them to bear our spirits to another realm, another perspective, a whole other dimension of life. And then, when they’re over, we linger in their afterglow, knowing that we’ve had an experience of the holy—something that no preacher’s words could ever begin to evoke. Besides, clapping is a slippery slope. If we do it once, won’t our musicians wonder if they did poorly when we fail to clap the next time? And if we clap every time, then won’t they begin to find it disingenuous? Something to consider. Of course, Psalm 47 does encourage handclapping in worship. There are surely times when it’s suitable, like when the children’s choir sings, or when we’re having our monthly service with First Baptist and everyone is clapping along to the beat.

You’re not going to find a choir as good as ours in many churches our size. Anne has transformed our music program. I invite you, in the coming weeks, to think about how music in your life functions as a prayer, music both sacred and secular. Also, let me know what hymns you’d like to sing. You can send me an email, or write them down on a prayer request card and drop them in the offering plate. Thanks for your part in the life of our church. It’s a privilege and a joy to be making this journey with you.

In Christ’s Peace,

~Brian

PS: If you’re a visitor to Bower Hill Church and want to learn more about it, or about faith in general, we will be having a free “Newcomers’ Lunch” immediately following worship on Sunday, October 27, catered by Panera Bread. This is usually a small event with about a dozen people, and childcare will be provided. As always, feel free to contact me with any questions.

**DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
AND YOUTH PROGRAMS -- Amy Grella — am@bhccml.com**

YOUTH INFORMATION

Sunday, October 6 -- SNL (Sunday Night Live) Youth in 8th grade and up are invited to meet in Fellowship Hall from 6:00-8:00 p.m. for games, small group discussion, and snacks.

Sunday mornings, while youth in 8th and 9th grades meet for confirmation during second hour, the remaining youth are invited to help with hands-on mission projects which will be set up in room 202, the smaller room next to the Friendship Room. See Amy for additional details.

YOUTH RETREAT -- Register for STAND STRONG

Youth in grades 8 to 12 are invited to a retreat at Crestfield on November 22-24 for a weekend of fun and faith! Our theme this year is taken from Ephesians 6:10-13. **Chet Fuhrman**; father, teacher, and former conditioning coordinator for the Pittsburgh Steelers, will speak to our youth about finding strength in the context of school, sports, relationships, and God. The cost is \$105 per person. We leave around 5:45 p.m. on Friday, and return sometime around noon on Sunday. **Deadline to register is October 29.** See the email from Amy for forms and full details.

NEW CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICE FOR CHILDREN

Bower Hill is excited to offer a special worship service especially for children in the sanctuary on Christmas Eve. **Please be sure to complete the short survey from Amy to give your input on the start time for the worship service.** All children will be invited to hear and experience the Christmas story. This format is simplified and will not be in a pageant format. For performance options during December, please consider participating in a children's choir. There are now two choir options: 1) the Cherub (for preschool thru second grade) and the Chorister (for 3rd grade and up). Cherubs perform in worship on December 22, and the Chorister choir performs on December 1 and again with the cherubs on December 22.

T-SHIRTS FOR SALE

There are several short sleeve t-shirts remaining from recent events: The green "Welcome" shirts from the **commUNITY of Voices** event and the "This Changes Everything" t-shirts from Day Camp. The shirts cost \$7 and will be hanging in the hallway outside Fellowship Hall on Sundays. Please make checks payable to Bower Hill and place in with the regular offering collection.

NEW PARENT MINISTRY SMALL GROUP

Parents are the most powerful influence in a young person's faith development. Bower Hill has begun a new parent ministry small group to give parents easy and practical ways to infuse faith into their children's lives (birth-12th grade). Led by Amy Grella, these stand-alone classes will provide parents a safe space to discuss, learn, share and support one another in raising faith-filled and caring children. Classes meet in room 105 from 11:00 a.m. until noon.

ADULT EDUCATION
—Sam Kidder, Committee Chair



FAITH FORMATION AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Adult Education meets weekly at 11:00 a.m. in the Friendship Room. Led by various people and topics, including guest speakers focused on current events, join in for DVD presentations on Faith and Science, and engage in thoughtful discussion.

Plans for the month of October are as follows:

October 6: *Violence Divine* -- Second session of DVD series by John Dominic Crossan discussing what the Bible has to say about violence.

October 13: Bill Cadwell will present and lead a discussion on economic justice, drawing from Annie Lowrey's 2018 book, *Give People Money*, which focuses on a Universal Basic Income.

October 20: Sarah Neusius will present the first of two sessions on Chittester's Apostles' Creed.

October 27: Michelle King, Service Coordinator for Immigrant Services at SHIM.

CONNECT AND CONVERSE - Room 202

This dedicated space is designed to cultivate fellowship and conversation on Sunday mornings. It can be used to sit down and converse with people in a more comfortable setting to extend conversations following coffee hour.

Flea Market COLLECTION:



Collection for the fall flea market has begun. Items can be dropped off Monday through Friday during office hours or Sunday before or after worship.

If you are able, please take all items directly upstairs to the loft; otherwise leave items on the benches outside Fellowship Hall. **PLEASE do not include clothes or old TVs.** All items must be clean and in working condition.

If you have any questions, please contact Theresa Child at (412) 429-9519 or at tree-toowon@yahoo.com.



DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES -- Anne Carper Smith, an@bhccml.com

A **“thank you!”** To everyone who worked to make commUNITY of Voices a resounding success. Special thanks to Amy Grella for coordinating the kids’ events, the Hill Band, and Linda and the Ivey Boys Brother’s Band. Also thank you to all who helped set up and clean up the space. We welcomed approximately 200 members of our community. Last but not least, thank you to the Worship and Music Committee and to Session for their steadfast support. **huge**

Calling all kids in grades 3-5! The all-new **Chorister Choir** is just for you! Rehearsals begin on November 3 following coffee hour. Please be on the lookout for a signup sheet so we can get a sense of who will participate. They will perform in worship on December 1 and December 22.

Cherub Choir is for kids in preschool through grade 2. They will begin rehearsals on Sunday, December 4, and will perform

PARISH ASSOCIATE’S PONDERINGS

IT’S NOT 1980 ANY MORE



It seems to part of human nature that we tend to look back at years gone by and feel nostalgic about what used to be. Remember when you had a paperboy, an egg man, and a milk man? Now we have Uber Eats and other delivery services. However, we often think the past was better.

Perhaps the real question is how do we know what from the past we should continue to value and what should we be willing to let go. If we wallow in what used to be, we will miss the joy of the present and all it has to offer. On the other hand, there are values that are timeless and worthy of championing forever.

In the case of the church, we sometimes find ourselves trying to affirm that it is the last bastion of sameness. Familiar hymns, prayers and orders of worship bring a sense of comfort and peace to each of us. We cannot deny that the world has changed and is ever changing. As it does, we too must seek to apply the values of our faith to new challenges. Though we may need to alter the manner in which we deliver the message of Christ, the teachings of love, forgiveness and grace will remain constant.

Rev. Dr. Fred Leasure



WORSHIP PLANS

October 6: World Communion Sunday
Rev. Fred Leasure is preaching

October 13: 18th Sunday after Pentecost
Luke 17:11-19; Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7

October 20: 19th Sunday after Pentecost
Luke 18:1-8; Jeremiah 31:27-34

October 27: Reformation Sunday
Joel 2:23-32; Luke 18:9-14

LIGHTING THE STEEPLE



The opportunity to light the steeple of Bower Hill Community Church has been a great success. 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.)

Requests should include: 1) The date(s) you would like to sponsor; 2) The reason you want to sponsor (in honor, in memory, etc.); 3) The name of the person(s) or the event as you want it to appear in the bulletin; 4.) Your name. Email your request to: Amy Leasure at amlea97@hotmail.com.

Please note that there can be multiple sponsors for the same date.

Dedications for October are as follows:

October 3 -- In memory of Leo Goode, father to BHCC church member Leo Goode.

October 17 -- In honor of Joe and Carol Petti on their 27th Anniversary. Carol is daughter to Jim and Joan McAnulty.



BOWER HILL ECO-JUSTICE: YEAR IN REVIEW

Spurred by growing concerns about the ecological impacts of our human activity and the inequity in how the resulting penalties are distributed across society, Bower Hill Community Church formed an Eco-Justice Team in August 2018. Working within the Mission Committee, Eco-Justice drafted guiding principles and established a plan for progress. Step one in the plan called for evaluation and action focused on the church's activities and infrastructure. In our first year, we picked the low-hanging fruit.

Year 1 Actions:

- Analyzed our energy consumption and costs over the past five years to establish a baseline metric for future improvements.
- Compared our building to other houses of worship and associated the 21% reduction achieved over the five-year period to boiler and window replacements.
- Minimized use of disposable cups and tableware at events by organizing a rotating band of dish-washing volunteers – volunteers cleaned over 1,000 cups in the first 20 weeks.
- Composted food scraps from the kitchen and church events.
- Worked with Building and Grounds toward a 25 % reduction in chemical fertilizer application on our lawn.
- Replaced plastic communion cups with degradable corn-based cups.
- Published newsletter articles on how to reduce waste and chemical use at home.
- Met with Sunnyside and St. Paul's representatives to share sustainability ideas and offer collaboration for community efforts.

The actions above produced tangible results – thousands of disposable cups not trashed, pounds of compost added to a farmer's field. But we started small. Focused on the congregation's in-house activities, we took on the easy stuff. There is some low-hanging fruit left to pick, but we are excited to take on bigger challenges in our second year. Think Community. Think Watershed. Will you join us? Be a go-getter, occasional listener, or someone in between. We welcome your ideas, helping-hands and ears. The Eco-Justice team typically meets on the second Thursday of each month at 8:05 p.m., just after choir practice. Phone-in participation is available.

If our guiding principles stated below speak to you, please join us!

Bower Hill Community Church: Eco-Justice Team Guiding Principles

1. We are called to be stewards of God's created order.
2. The irresponsible use of the world's resources is a form of injustice against life and future generations.
3. We all participate in forms of ecological injustice that must be named and resisted, particularly as the worst impacts fall on the vulnerable and poor.

~Rob Mackey, Eco-Justice Team

SESSION RESPONSIBILITIES (2019-2020)

Clerk of Session -- Bill Cadwell

Church Treasurer -- Gordon Mitchell

Commissioners to Presbytery -- Sam Kidder and Phil Neusius

Administration and Personnel

Session Chair: Rick Jacobs
Session Member: Phil Neusius

Adult Education

Session Chair: Sam Kidder
Session Member: Linda James

Building and Grounds

Session Chair: Ben Boisvert
Session Member: Dave Hicks

Christian Education

Session Chair: Kristen Mackey
Session Member: Deb Carter

Finance and Stewardship

Session Chair: Amber Grier
Session Member: Phil Neusius

Mission

Session Chair: Linda James
Session Member: Kara Pepicelli

Nominating

Session Chair: Kara Pepicelli
Session Member: Deb Carter

Outreach Subcommittees

Communication -- Session Chair: Glenn Child

Community / Visitor Outreach -- Off-Session Chair: Matt Arner

Parish Life -- Session Chair: Theresa Child

Worship and Music

Session Chair: Karl Casey
Session Member: Rich Salvante

Youth Ministries

Session Co-Chair: Kiri Rising
Session Co-Chair: Tim Lease

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

SENIOR MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP



This group will meet on **Tuesday, October 1, at 8:00 a.m.** The meeting location is the Denny's restaurant at 2180 Greentree Road, near Swallow Hill Road. All senior men are welcome. No reservation is required. Conversation is spontaneous.

BOOKWORMS



Our ladies' book discussion group meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in Conference Room 101 for fellowship and discussion of a chosen title. Everyone is welcome to read the book for the month and join the discussion. The books selected through February are as follows, but they are subject to change.

October--*Killers of the Flower Moon*, by David Grann

November--*The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane*, by Lisa See

December--No meeting

January--*Back Roads*, by Tawnie O'Dell

February--*Finding Dorothy*, by Elizabeth Letts

Please check out the upcoming special events flyer inserted in this month's newsletter.



Two separated events are detailed on the front and back of one sheet. They are as follows:

Friday, October 11, 7:00-8:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Children's Language Immersion Program (CLIP)

Wine and Cheese & More Information, Please!!

A Taste to Serve

Thursday, October 17

6:00-9:00 p.m.

Third Street Gallery, Carnegie

Benefits Family Promise

An evening of fun, food, drinks, jazz music and gallery tour.

Thank you to Dave May and his helper, Bob Olinger, for building a wall in a room near Fellowship Hall, in order to create two Family Promise bedrooms.



SANDI'S GARDEN UPDATE

The garden is still thriving! Approximately 100 lbs. of hot peppers have been delivered to SHIM for distribution in their food pantry. Many thanks to those who donated the hot pepper plants and to those volunteers who have watered and weeded the garden. Special thanks to Donna Williams who took the reins this year and made it a success.

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA DIAPER BANK

The Mission Committee has changed the dates on which we will be collecting diapers. Collections will be made at each 5th Sunday Joint Worship/Potluck Brunch. The next projected collection date will be in **December**. Sizes 4, 5, and 6 are most in need for babies. XL Diapers are needed for our geriatric population. Donations of feminine hygiene products are also accepted--primarily sanitary napkins.

The collection container is the **Pack 'N Play**, which will be placed in **Fellowship Hall**.

To make a tax-deductible monetary donation, please make your check payable to **Western Pennsylvania Diaper Bank** and mail it to **WPA Diaper Bank, 201 N. Braddock Ave., Suite.124, Pittsburgh, PA 15208**. Please note our church name in the memo line. Please remember to save coupons for disposable diapers that you collect but don't use, and place them in the envelope near the Pack'N Play.

UNITY FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION

The next collection date will be **Sunday, October 13**. The holidays are fast approaching, and Unity Food Pantry is busy getting ready to provide client families with extra food for their celebrations! The greatest holiday needs are for dessert mixes and boxed potato mixes. Cold cereal continues to be an ongoing need as well. Thank you for enabling us to share the joy of the holidays with our client families! Collection bins are located in the hallways outside the church office and the narthex.





YOU ARE BEING CALLED TO BE A GREETER/USHER

Have you ever wondered how those peoples' names that appear as Greeters/Ushers in your monthly newsletter or your weekly bulletin got there? Well, a member of the Worship and Music Committee (that would be me) goes through the membership directory on a quarterly basis and assigns members of the congregation to fulfill that role. All members are included in the list to be drawn from, and it is important that you understand the significant part you play in fulfilling this role.

We at BHCC pride ourselves on being an open and welcoming church to all who cross our threshold. That is why we need to have at least one greeter at each of our three entrances (the Narthex entrance to the sanctuary, the handicapped entrance next to the kitchen, and the portico entrance downstairs by the church office). The greeters make everyone feel welcome and provide directions to the sanctuary for the visitors. Greeters are also asked to assist the head usher in the collection of the offering during the service. When you show up to greet on your assigned Sunday, please report to the head usher to obtain your greeting location and to confirm your participation in the offering.

If you are unable to serve in the capacity of greeter/usher for any reason, please notify me and your name will be placed on a "do not assign me" list. No questions will be asked, no arms will be twisted. You and you alone know if you are able to fulfill this role. If for any reason you are unable to serve on the Sunday you have been assigned, please try to switch Sundays with someone else on the list. If you are unable to find a substitute, please contact me directly as soon as possible (my contact information is listed below), and I will try to find a substitute. Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sally Child, Worship and Music Committee
(412) 831-3429; sa.child@yahoo.com

SOCIAL MEDIA

--AN EASY BUT IMPORTANT WAY TO HELP SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT BOWER HILL



If you love Bower Hill, why not share it with the world?

The Communication Committee (in particular Connie May) has been working hard to enhance Bower Hill's presence on Social Media, and we now have active Facebook and Instagram accounts! Will we ever "go viral"? Maybe not, but having up-to-date and relevant accounts enhances our credibility **because 80% of the visitors to our website will also check our Social Media accounts.**

How can you help?

1. **Review us** on our Facebook account and on "the big" search engine. More good reviews put us closer to the top of search results.
2. **Follow us** on Facebook and Instagram
3. **Comment** on posts. In addition to just "liking" a post, you can add a quick comment or emoji. The more "quality" interactions, the more our posts will be shared publicly.
4. **Share** posts. Connie does a fantastic job of posting about everything from worship services to Mission and Parish Life events to Adult Ed. You can share those that appeal most to you. We will also let you know about specific posts that we'd like to see shared through mass emails from the church office.
5. **Tag** your friends. When commenting or sharing posts, tag some of your fellow church members. If someone tags you, you may comment or share the post as well.
6. **Contribute to the Bower Hill Story** by sending your pictures of the church and our activities to Connie May at maze3909@gmail.com. We would love to share the stories on our pages!

If you have any questions, please contact Connie or Glenn Child.

We have a wonderful church - let's build our online reputation together.

BOWER HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

70 Moffett Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15243



Phone: 412-561-4114
E-mail: office@bhccml.com
www.BowerHillChurch.org

OUR CHURCH STAFF

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Company of Pastors
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Rev. Dr. Fred Leasure
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THE CHURCH OFFICE

[412] 561-4114

Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m.— 2:30 p.m.

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RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR CARE LIST

Dennis Geis, Sr.

Lauren Kocher

Betty Mancini, Canterbury Place, 310 Fisk St., #130, Pgh. 15201

Virginia Mason

LuAnne Pattison (former member)

Virginia Reinstadtler, mother-in-law to Mike Riemer

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 always looking for 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.