

Bower Hill Community Church Presbyterian Church (USA)

A place to Believe, Belong and Become!

FEBRUARY 2006

Resourcefulness

Once again, I find myself thinking a great deal about the value that our children are learning about in our Christian Education program. In January, we began the month by focusing on resourcefulness which was defined as, "using what you have to get the job done." Much to our surprise, January has been a difficult month, full of struggles and challenges. We began the New Year on the heels of the flu and had to cancel our after Christmas trip to New York. There have been challenges with our kids at school and concerns here at the church, with the resignation of our Director of Youth Ministries, Mike Tidd, and the yearly challenge of working though the budget. It has been a tough month, to say the least.

Much to my surprise, after a particularly difficult day, our son Andrew commented on the way home: "Mom, I really struggled today, and then I remembered one of the lessons from church, 'No matter what you do, work at it with all your might.' And so I did!" Isn't it strange how God speaks in the most unusual ways? The innocent words of a child, issuing the reminder to keep going, keep trying, no matter what. Throughout our almost four years at Bower Hill, there is one sermon that keeps haunting me as I am reminded of it frequently! The sermon was on the cost of discipleship and the overall message was: "Nobody said...it was going to be easy." It was, and is, a truth that we know all too well. This life we live, which is a wonderful gift from God, is all too often challenging, difficult sometimes, and even overwhelming. It is not easy. Nobody said it would be, but we have resources to help us along the way!

As we look to the future here at Bower Hill, with all the struggles we have experienced and all the uncertainty that lies ahead, we must not be overwhelmed by how hard all this is. Nobody said...it was going to be easy! We must believe that we are not alone in this journey! And let us hope and believe that with God's help, we can be resourceful, "using what we have to get the job done!" We are not alone in this journey! Even though it is not easy, even though we sometimes feel overwhelmed by the struggle, we have God with us to give us strength and courage and hope and peace to keep on going and trying and sometimes just to keep us standing! And when God feels too far away, we are reminded that we have one of God's best gifts, family and friends and a community of faith, who have been given to us to help us to have hope in this not so easy life.

The future awaits full of hope and new opportunities. Soon Surfing the Edge will begin and some exciting conversations and creative new vision will take shape. With God's help we can bravely go forward into whatever lies ahead. May we all find comfort and strength and courage and hope to believe in God's plans for each of us in this not so easy life that we have been given. May you feel God's abiding presence with you each and every day.



In Christ,
Rev. Laurie

INSIDE THIS ISSUE	
On a Mission	2
Church News	3-5
Youth News and Calendar	6
Care List , Elders and Deacons	7

On A Mission



A Special Thank You!—Betsy Hohlfelder

Thanks to all members who purchased gifts for the Angel Trees. Many Christmas gifts were delivered to Lydia's Place and more than 20 boxes of items were mailed to the troops in Iraq. This continues to be a great project that illustrates our concern for others.



The need for hurricane relief will be with us for a long time. It's important that we all realize that the volunteer opportunities are virtually endless and that through the 50th Anniversary Campaign funds, we are in a position to help fund members who might be interested in traveling to the affected areas to do volunteer work. These efforts can be coordinated through Hosanna Industries, other relief organizations, or independently.

Wallace Memorial Food Pantry

The food pantry appreciates your donations during the month of FEBRUARY.

Donations will be collected on the second Sunday in February (February 12th). Please contact Jason Rising at 412-851-1503, jaydr@adelphia.net, for more information.

As always, your support is greatly appreciated! —Jason Rising



Church News

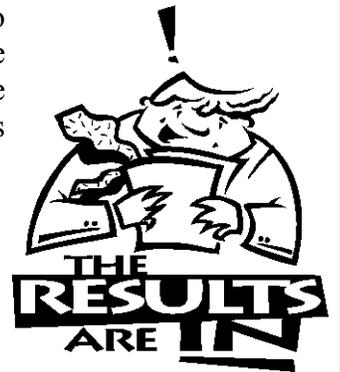
Surfing The Edge

Over the next few months, you will be hearing a lot about Surfing the Edge and we will be asking for your participation in this important event. During February, "Sign-Up" cards will be distributed requesting a commitment from each congregation member. Those who sign-up to participate will be asked to contribute up to ten hours of time over a two month period (primarily April and May). This time will be spent in four meetings comprised of small groups (seven to ten individuals) discussing the results of the Surfing the Edge survey and developing new and creative ideas to enhance Bower Hill's mission.

Surfing the Edge is an unprecedented opportunity to shape the future path of our church's place in the community. As some of you may recall an extensive survey was conducted during 2005. This survey asked detailed questions of the congregation, leadership and staff to determine our collective perceptions of the church's role in each of our lives and the community in general. The survey was the initial step in the Surfing the Edge program. This program is based on a belief that each member of the congregation has a responsibility to God and the church to be an active participant in the church's overall mission and that mission is identified through collective discussions across the congregation.

To that end, your session has spent a significant amount of time reviewing the survey and discussing the results. As we move to the next step, we are enlisting your help. Your input into this process will help to shape the church's role in each of our lives and that of the community for years to come. It is the sincere hope of Session that we will be able to generate a high level of participation from all corners of our membership. This is your opportunity to have your voice heard.

**Thank you,
The Session of Bower Hill Community Church**



Per Capita Giving

Bower Hill Community Church is required, as is every church in the denomination, to pay a fee to its Presbytery for each member on its roll. These funds are used to pay for the operation of our Presbytery, Synod and the General Assembly. For 2006 the Per Capita fee is \$21.26 and, based on our current membership, Bower Hill Church will pay the Pittsburgh Presbytery \$8,547. There is a special envelope included with the offering envelopes sent to each pledging household, but to the extent members do not reimburse this fee in addition to their regular

contribution, these funds come directly out of our Operating Budget and decrease the amount we have for, among other things, Christian Education, Youth Activities, and Mission.

While many pledging members do send in checks to cover the Per Capita cost, only about 55% of our membership is included in households that pledge. While the reasons that members cannot pledge vary, this appeal is primarily addressed to those who have the wherewithal to contribute but, for one reason or another, choose not to. Please consider sending Bower Hill Church a check for the Per Capita fee for the members in your household so that the cost of your membership does not have to be borne by Bower Hill Church and those members who do contribute.

Church News



Bonhoeffer

A special PBS presentation on February 6, 2006, 10:00 p.m., EST.

This film tells the story of the young German theologian who offered one of the few clear voices of resistance to Adolf Hitler and the rise of the Nazis. He challenged the church to stand with the Jews in their time of need. Eventually Bonhoeffer became part of a resistance movement and its plot to assassinate Hitler. After his role in the plot was discovered, he was executed by the Nazis just weeks before the end of the war. He was 39.

Bonhoeffer mixes extraordinary archival footage of Bonhoeffer's years in Germany and in New York, where he studied at Union Theological Seminary and was profoundly shaped by the faith he witnessed at Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem. It includes interviews with family, friends, students and leading theologians.

A Letter From The Youth Director

As I prepare to complete my seminary degree, I am reminded of many examples of persons throughout history who have taught by word and example how to live the Christian life. One of my favorites is Dietrich Bonhoeffer. His word and life illustrate to me the combination of the knowledge of God, a devout personal spirituality, and a desire to share the Christian faith with others at all costs—even his own death. Although he was killed by the Nazi SS in a concentration camp in April, 1943, his life and writings still continue to shed light on the how we understand and experience God together.

One of his books entitled *Life Together* discusses how we as Christians gather, worship, and grow in the ways of the Lord. He devotes time to explaining the things we do as the Body of Christ to enhance our Christian walk together. He begins by saying that we grow and share the ways of the Lord together, and that we are bound to one another by the Holy Spirit who makes us one body. He further explains our *Life Together* is built from our relationship with the Lord and that we are to encourage one another in our walk with Him.

As I have been the Youth Director for the past five months, I have attempted to share this kind of relationship with the youth and adults in the church. I have tried to foster and nurture people's faith in ways that will help them grow closer to the Lord and to one another. Working with Leonard and Laurie, the Session, the Youth Ministry Committee, and parents, I have tried to develop a youth program build on faith-related aspects which help to nurture the youth's walk with the Lord. I have done this through events at the church and in the community.

Working with the Youth Ministry Committee, we have tried to develop a youth program that meets the needs of the youth. In trying to develop youth ministry at Bower Hill, we have come to disagree on how youth ministry should be focused and the type of programming and activities for the youth. Because of these philosophical and programmatic differences, I have decided to resign as the Youth Director. My resignation became effective earlier this month; however, I will be remaining with the church as the Youth Director until the end of January 2006.

Know that I have truly enjoyed getting to know you and will continue to keep you in my thoughts and prayers.

In Christ, Michael "Mike" Tidd

Church News

Coffee Hour

February 5—Jennifer Ramaley
February 12—Cindy Waller
February 19—Cynthia Gissin
February 26—Graham & Carol
Knox



Greeters

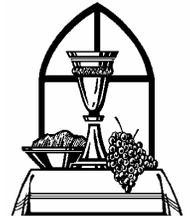
February 5—Andrews (Bill & Nancy),
Baumhammers (Andrejs & Inese), Bridges (Bob &
Joan)
February 12—Brown (Barb), Burke (Jim & Bev),
Carter (Dottie)
February 19—Child (Glenn & Sally), Criswell
(Nancy), Colquitt (Anne)
February 26—Decker (Jane), Delestienne (Judy),
Eisenbeis (Al)

Communion Servers for March

The following people are scheduled to serve communion on **Sunday, March 5th, 2006**. If you are not able to attend church on March 5th, please arrange for a substitute.

Bill & Nancy Andrews
George & Eleanora Freas
Tim Lease
Carolyn Westerhoff
Ivan Shnorhokian
Betsy Orner
Rick & Pat Jacobs

Choir:



Adult Education For

February

February 5th—Humanitarian
Efforts in Iraq, with Douglas Hottle

February 12th—A Recent History
of the Middle East, with Margeret Hall

February 19th—Stem Cells: Promise and
Problems, with Ian Campbell

February 26th— Stem Cells: Promise and
Problems, with Ian Campbell

***A note about Margeret Hall, Adult Education
speaker for February 12:**

Ms. Hall is a Global Policy Studies major at Chatham College, concentrating in Islamic political theory and the political and social ramifications of Islamic political systems domestically and internationally. She has an extensive background in the history and politics of Islam. While at Chatham, she studied abroad at the American University of Beirut and traveled in Syria, Jordan and Egypt.



All Church Bowling

Come out for an afternoon of bowling at Dormont Lanes on Sunday, February 12th from 3:00-5:00. This event is for bowlers of all ages and stages. It's a real deal: two hours of bowling and shoe rental for only \$5.00. Dinner at a local pizza place afterwards is optional for those who wish to continue the fun.

Bower Hillers

The Bower Hillers will kick off the 2006 schedule with a luncheon on February 22nd at Max & Erma's Restaurant. Our speaker will be Lucy King, owner of LaBoheme, who will present a slide show talk entitled "600 Years of Glassmaking in Bohemia." For more information, please contact George Freas at 412-279-5866. Come and spend a couple of hours with our friendly bunch for some good food, warm fellowship

Kid's Own Worship

February 5—Kathy Philson; **February 12**—
Carolyn Westerhoff; **February 19**—Carolyn
Westerhoff; **February 26**—Cindy Waller

Bookworms

Please join us for an interesting evening; new faces are always welcome!

February 21st—*Sick Puppy*, by Carl Hiaasen, at the home of Nina Helbling; **March 21st**—
Night, by Elie Wiesel, TBA.



Youth News & Calendar

Mike's Farewell from Session

As you have probably heard Mike Tidd the Director of Youth Ministries has resigned and the last day of January was his final day. You may recall that he was planning to work here into this summer so his resignation was not anticipated.

Here are two things that explain this: Mike is in the ordination process in the United Methodist Church and he may have an opportunity to work in a U.M.C. church in the very near future. That would help his ordination process along. Also the way he understands ministry to and with youth is somewhat different from some of our youth, their parents and some members of the Youth Ministries

Committee. There has been a fair amount of frustration by all the parties and genuine concern by everyone involved for the Youth Ministry program. Perhaps a poor match is the best way to put it. It is unfortunate that it has come to this.

Be assured that Mike has found many good things in his time here and he will go on to good things. Be assured that the Youth Ministries committee understands that they are responsible for the program whether or not there is a paid staff person to help them. We are Presbyterian after all. Be assured that the Session is aware that we have had five staff members responsible for the Youth Ministry Program in the last five years and it is committed to doing the necessary thought and work along with the Administration & Personnel Committee and the Youth Ministry Committee so that a stable and vibrant program can be provided for the youth we have been entrusted with.

In His Grace, Leonard

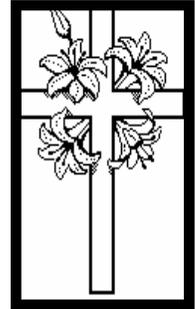


Fri 2/3	Both	7 pm – 9 pm open house format	Farewell to Mike Stop by the youth lounge to say goodbye to Mike and wish him well. We will have snacks and hangout.
Sat 2/4	Both	5:30 pm – 10:30 pm	SnoZone Snow Tubing \$15 (entry fee and tube) We will have a light dinner before we go.
Sat 2/12	Both	2:30 pm Dormont Lanes	Churchwide Bowling \$5 will get you 3 games and shoe rentals. We will meet at Dormont Lanes. Feel free to bring along the entire family and friends!
Sat 2/25	Both	3:30 – 7 pm	Video Scavenger Hunt A scavenger hunt with an electronics' twist. Return to church to eat tacos and watch videos.

Care List

• **MEMBERS AT HOME:**

Lois Conley, 1150 Bower Hill Rd, 1116A, Pittsburgh, PA 15243
Matt Dunfee, 966 Worthington Woods Blvd, Worthington, OH, 43085
Pete Fenton, 708 Bower Hill Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15243
Kenn Fetterman, 2236 Kingridge Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15237
Barbara Love, 360 Jefferson Dr, Pittsburgh, PA 15228
Jim Redmond, 101 Manor View Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15220
Verna Rose, c/o Gretchen Rose, 134 Grove Avenue, Woodridge, NJ 07095
Loretta Schweinbratten, 2960 Bethel Church Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15102
Morris Standfest, 921 Old Hickory Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15243



MEMBERS IN CARING FACILITIES:

Bette Carson, Masonic Home, One Masonic Dr, Elizabethtown, PA 17022
Raymond & Peggy Craig, 714 Bower Hill Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15243
Catheryn Deemer, Broadmore Assisted Living #205, 3275 Washington Pike, Bridgeville, PA 15017
Ruth Fenton, Asbury Place, 760 Bower Hill Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15243
Bob Gavett, Asbury Heights, 700 Bower Hill Rd., #6423, Pittsburgh, PA 15243
Pat Metheny, Asbury Place, 760 Bower Hill Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15243
Bill Nuernberg, Friendship Village #123W, 1290 Boyce Rd, Upper St. Clair, 15241
Tooie Sharkey, Asbury Place, 760 Bower Hill Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15243
Audrey Weber, Windsor Place, One Windsor Way, Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Elders & Deacons

Administration & Personnel: Chairperson—Pat Jacobs; Woody Hughes
Buildings & Grounds: Don Lamb
Christian Education: Chairperson—Pam Maniet; Dan Zabo
Community Building: Chairperson—Diane Leeson; Lynne Wohleber
Evangelism & Membership: Chairperson—Glenn Child; Betty Ewing
Finance & Stewardship: Chairperson—Kurt Kerner; Dick Junker, Jason Rising
Mission: Chairperson: Dave Hicks; Jackie Holdsworth
Nominating & Presbytery: Chairperson—Tim Lease; Margie Sewall
Music & Worship: Chairperson—Anne Mitchell; Steve Mangin
Youth Ministries: Chairperson—Curt Philson; Christine Henney

Deacons Class of 2006	Deacons Class of 2007
Barbara Brown	Bob Bridges
LuAnne McNickle	Nancy Green
Lee Ferrero	Theresa Child
Joann Vosburgh	Dave Stewart
Donna Williams	Cindy Waller



Deacons Class of 2008
Marian Brannan
Betty Chidlow
Barbara Hughes
Kathy Philson
Carolyn Westerhoff

COMEDY CORNER



OUR CHURCH STAFF

David Daugherty, Director of Music Ministries

da@bhccml.com

Jim Kline, Custodian

Dianne Scott, Financial Secretary

di@bhccml.com

Rev Laurie Sponaugle, Co-Pastor

la@bhccml.com

Rev Leonard Sponaugle, Co-Pastor

le@bhccml.com

Yara Toury-Vanzin, Administrative Secretary

ya@bhccml.com

Mike Tidd, Director of Youth Ministries

mi@bhccml.com

THE CHURCH OFFICE

[412] 561-4114

Monday - Friday

8:45 am - 4:45 pm

Office email: office@bhccml.com

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 2335
Pittsburgh, PA

Bower Hill Community Church
70 Moffett Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15243