

Bower Hill Community Church Presbyterian Church (USA)

A place to Believe, Belong and Become!

AUGUST 2006

Surfing The Edge Update

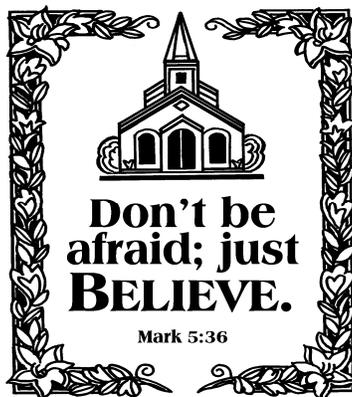
There are many things that we could write about this month, but after much consideration, we have given the August cover to Glenn Child so that he can share some information about the Surfing the Edge Project. This is one of the most important projects we have undertaken as it has led us to take a careful and thoughtful look at who we are at Bower Hill Community Church and who God is calling us to become. —Laurie & Leonard

A huge thank you to those of you that participated in the Surfing the Edge meetings. The feedback was positive and from what we see on the Group Reporter forms there was no lack of challenges to pursue. The following is a list of the steps recommended by Presbytery to move forward in the process:

1. Session plans a one day or half day retreat meeting and moves through a process to identify, from all the listening feedback, what will be the one or two missional challenges it sees as critical for the congregation to address on the basis of all the feedback from the Church Readiness Report.
2. From the congregation, a team of people are selected by the Session who will be asked to take six to eight months to address this challenge and bring back an action-plan that will be put into effect in the congregation.
3. The teams go through a one-day training process so that they understand the process. They will form what are called Missional Action Teams. Members of the team will have a complete workbook to guide their work.
4. Each team will also have a coach who works with them to keep the process moving and provide all the assistance they will require.
5. On regular occasions the teams meet with the Session to update them on their work. The Session does not interfere with the team's work or progress but these meetings for updating are very important so that there is buy-in to the action plans being developed.
6. When the team has completed its work, they present their action plans to the Session and congregation.
7. The plans are then initiated in the congregation.
8. New Missional Action Teams will be formed to address the next set of challenges.

So, where do we stand in this process? We are currently preparing for step 1. We have compiled all of the information on the Group Report forms into one document as input to the meeting. The Presbytery is expected to meet with the Session on Monday, August 28th. Our original goal was to have the Mission Action Teams formed in September. This should allow them to complete their work by Spring of 2007 and to begin implementing the changes as soon as possible after that.

—Glenn Child



INSIDE THIS ISSUE	
Church News	2
HOME Experience	2-3
On a Mission	4-5
Church & Worship News	6
Care List Elders & Deacons	7

VOLUME 15 ISSUE 5 Church News

A Letter From the Session

Dear Members of Bower Hill Community Church,

Last night with regret your Session accepted David Daugherty's resignation. He has accepted a position in Wilmington, Delaware at St. Paul's United Methodist Church. He will begin there on September 1st and his last day with us will be August 27th.



David has been here for five years and his absence will be keenly felt. We are grateful for the ministry that he has done here! Of course, the Session through its Administration & Personnel and Music & Worship Committees is responding to this unexpected news.

Good interim arrangements will be made so that there will be minimal disruption to the routine of the church and so that there will be sufficient time to make good permanent arrangements. David is very pleased with his new position and we hope it is everything he wants it to be.

Faithfully,

The Session

Note: A party is being scheduled for Sunday August 27th to say good-bye to David. Anyone who would care to donate towards a "purse," should mail their donation to the church office, marked for David or made payable to David Daugherty.

HOME Experience

Youth Work Trip- Hunger Outreach Mission Experience— Ben Hohlfelder



This was my second work trip this year and let me tell you that this year's trip shared absolutely nothing in common with last year's. The people were different; I was the only one to go for a full week this year and last. The advisors were different. The food we ate was different. We got to sleep in our own beds this year. We weren't even in the same country as we were in last year. But I think that the biggest differences from last year to this year were the goals that we had for the week and the people we served. Last year was a typical and normal work trip. We were each assigned a house where we would help an elderly or disabled person paint or build something that they normally couldn't have or afforded to have done. Many work trips have had this similar mold and don't get me wrong, they are lots of fun and we learn a lot about ourselves and God, but this year's trip seemed to serve a different purpose for ourselves and the people whose lives we effected. This year we focused on going outside of that comfort zone and the similarities that all work trips seem to share, and in turn changing the way that we all view work trips and ourselves as well. This year, we dealt with the issues of homelessness and hunger; two issues that people like to sweep under the rug and deal with later. Most recently during All-Star Week in Pittsburgh, the homeless were told to leave the city so that visitors from other cities wouldn't have to see them or deal with them during their stay. They were tossed aside so that others could more thoroughly enjoy themselves. So to try to combat these issues, we set out on Monday morning to the Pittsburgh Food Bank in Duquesne, a typical and reasonable place to start battling these problems. But what we did there seemed to us to be unnecessary and also unhelpful. For almost three hours, we transferred White Chocolate Kit Kats straight from Hershey, PA from large bags into smaller bags that could be given out in distribution centers. So after we finished repackaging 3 pallets worth of Kit Kats, we left smelling of chocolate and feeling exhausted from hours of work in a 95 or 100 degree warehouse

HOME Experience

asking ourselves the question: Why did we just spend 3 hours on packaging food that these people shouldn't be eating? Don't they need something better and more nutritious? But then, as we stopped at Rita's on the way home, we realized that just like us, these people needed an extra little treat, even if it was broken, melted, defective White Chocolate Kit Kats packaged by sweaty teenagers in a 100 degree warehouse. The next day was filled with anticipation as we were to have our first interaction with the homeless at the Washington City Mission. There we helped set up and serve lunch and then later package clothes to be sold in a thrift shop. I think that our group will always remember the clothes crusher, a machine that compacted over 1300 pounds of clothes into 6-foot high bales. But one thing that I took symbolically out of the few hours we spent in the kitchen was the similarities that we all shared.



Throughout the week, we would do a bible study either while we were in the car or at a certain place. Each day we would read a bible passage, mainly dealing with hunger or homelessness. On Wednesday, we read the common passage from Matthew 25. It says that "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left," and later goes on to say, "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'" As we read this, there was one word that stuck out at me; "least." To me, that was God's call to me to give me the motivation to do this. When I think of homelessness, I think of the "least" fortunate, the "least" nourished, the "least" everything. And by making this personal connection with the least, I felt like I was making a personal connection. So when God later tells the goats: "I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me," it calls me to action. This week we were given the opportunity to make this personal connection to God through the least. However, as I go back out into the real world, these opportunities are not going to be just handed to me. You have to find them. Oddly enough, this was reinforced on the way back from DC when in Bruce Almighty, God tells Bruce that you can't just expect miracles, you have to *be* the miracle. Through this week, I have seen that the opportunities are there. God is calling us all to make a difference. If we all just look, we can all be the miracle.



HOME Experience

During the week of July 17-21, the HOME- Hunger Outreach Mission Experience, Youth Mission Trip went visited 3 hunger agencies in the Pittsburgh area and 2 hunger agencies in Washington, D.C. On Monday we went to the Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank to repackage food. On Tuesday we went to the Washington City Mission to help serve lunch and we sorted clothes in their thrift shop. On Wednesday we went to YSOP in Washington, D.C. to make, serve, and eat dinner with the homeless. On Thursday we helped serve lunch to 322 poor people at SOME (So Others Might Eat) in Washington, D.C. and on Friday we worked at the Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank Food Farm. It was a great week.

One of the best parts is that most of the experiences were close to home, which means we as a church can volunteer at these agencies. What if 12 volunteers from the church chose a date and made arrangements with one of these agencies for a group from Bower Hill to volunteer and then invited the church along- we could make a great impact doing something together. If you are interested in setting up a mission experience at one of these agencies, let Rev. Laurie know and she will put you in touch with the volunteer coordinator.

On a Mission

Fill The Truck Update

Surfing the Edge was an unfamiliar program to me; it consisted of filling in the blocks to indicate what I thought of our church programs. I sat in with the focus group discussing the percentages given to the areas of importance of our spiritual group. The areas of communications within the church and the community awareness of BHCC were given low grades. Being new to the church, I was disappointed that this beautiful church and wonderful people were somehow missing the boat as to what we should be doing in God's name. Then came the Katrina mission; well let me tell you, if those same questionnaires were filled in during this mission, we would be high off the scale! We WERE involved with each other, communications were clear and precise, support came from all ages and groups within the church and the love for each other was very apparent.

Then, when we went into the community for help, the response was overwhelming. Does the community know who we are? You bet! We stood up in answer to God's needs and we were heard! So many of you stated how good it felt. And it did. The final Katrina meeting will be July 26th; the excess monies will be sent to Mississippi and we will move onto another mission. Are you ready to extend your heart, compassion, and resources? I am. I hope you are too! Thank you for showing me that our church is the right church for me and my family.

Elaine Dalmaso for the Fill the Truck Team



Free Braille Classes

"Oh, that book was such a good read. Thank you!" Our volunteer braillists often hear words such as these from our blind readers. The Bower Hill Braillists Foundation, located in Mt. Lebanon, is offering free classes, beginning in September, to anyone interested in learning literary Braille. For more information or to register for classes, please call Priscilla Getty at 412-531-1883. This avocation is both challenging and rewarding!

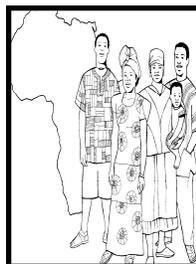
Thank you again for publishing this message!

Sincerely, Sandree Winters, Corresponding Secretary



Malawi News—Dave Hicks

Your Mission Committee, through the Presbytery, is working on a project called the Malawi Partnership Ministry. This will give the congregation the opportunity to interact with Malawi youth who will be in the US to experience our culture and share theirs with us. We will also have the opportunity to host one or more of the youth for a short period of time. Opportunities are available, September 23-27 and September 27-October 3. Host families need to attend a Host Family Orientation on Aug. 26, at 9:00am or August 27, at 2:00pm or September 9, at 9:00 am. Volunteers need to fill out a volunteer form by August 15. If you are interested in learning more about this wonderful opportunity, information is available in the office.



Food Pantry



--Jason Rising
The food pantry appreciates your donations for the month of August. Donations will

be collected on the second Sunday in August, (August 13th).

Please contact Jason Rising at 412-851-1503, jaydr@adelphia.net, for more information.

On a Mission

Bower Hill Community Hunger Project for Ocean Springs, Mississippi—John

Zoll

Lutheran Disaster Response in Mississippi (LDRM) is an organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Christus Victor Disaster Response (CVDR) was set up by LDRM to provide assistance to the residents of Pascagoula, Ocean Springs and Biloxi, Mississippi in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

CVDR provides support in the form of food distribution, community work crews, a medical clinic, and a food kitchen. CVDR runs a distribution center, warehouse, counseling and administrative offices, as well as a dormitory and kitchen, which can house and feed 300 volunteers in Ocean Springs, called Camp Victory. The building has been converted from a former garment factory. Renovations, including a new roof due to hurricane damage, have recently been completed to bring this facility online June 4th. Previously, these services were provided at Christus Victor Lutheran Church.

Camp Victory has a loading dock that can accommodate two semi tractor-trailers, and access the warehouse and distribution center. Clients are interviewed in the counseling offices to determine their needs. The clients pull up to the front of the building in their cars, some of which also serve as their homes, and are loaded with supplies. The distribution center operates from 9 to 4 Monday through Friday, and serves an average of 85 families per day.

Volunteers are the backbone of Camp Victory. They staff the warehouse and distribution center. Skilled trades people, such as plumbers, roofers and electricians, from all over the country staff the community work crews. A volunteer medical staff operates a clinic which serves those in the community that have no other source for medical care. Common maladies include respiratory ailments from the prevalent molds and mildews, called “Katrina Krud,” and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Other volunteers at Camp Victory provide support for everyday maintenance activities and feed the army of volunteers that are housed at the camp.

Donations gathered by Bower Hill Community Church were unloaded and unpacked directly into the distribution center. The boxes were broken down and the food was sorted and placed directly into circulation to be distributed. Conceivably, these donations were placed into the hands of people who needed them within 24 hours of their arrival in Mississippi.

The communities of Pascagoula, Ocean Springs and Biloxi Mississippi lost thousands of homes when Hurricane Katrina came ashore on August 29th, 2005. Houses are being renovated and replaced yet many are still living in tents, trailers and automobiles while they try to get their lives back together. Travelers on Interstate 10, which bisects the region might not have any idea of the disaster which struck were it not for the occasional shrimp boat left stranded in the tidal marshes by the storm, now visible from the highway. Major cities nearby, such as Mobile, appear normal. Fast food restaurants, hotels, casinos, grocery stores and gas stations flourish, seeming to be blissfully unaware of the ruins that lie but a scant distance away. It is troubling, this juxtaposition of abundance and need. Troubling that people can spend so much on themselves, while their neighbors don't even have fresh water, 9 months after Katrina. Troubling that a government could continue to spend billions of dollars a month overseas, while the needs of its own people are virtually ignored, and now it is hurricane season again.

Thank you for the opportunity to perform this service. This was truly a group endeavor, made possible by every member of Bower Hill Community Church. Jim, Jonah and I were merely fortunate enough to run the last leg of this relay and cross the finish line for the whole team.

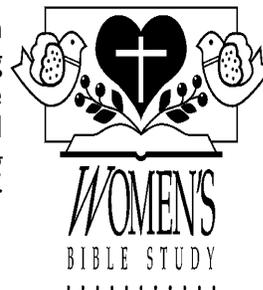
***NOTE: Due to space constraints, this article was left out of the July Newsletter. For more information about the Fill the Truck Project and observations by drives, Jim McAnulty and John Zoll and participant Jonah Zoll, please see the July Newsletter.**

Church & Worship News

Koinonia Kick-Off—Betsy Hohlfelder

Koinonia is the name of the Bower Hill Women's Bible Study group. We meet on Wednesday mornings from 9:00 until 10:30 in the Lounge. Koinonia is a Greek word meaning "fellowship." While we come together to learn and to deepen our faith, equally important is the friendship and fellowship that we share with one another. We are always hoping to add new members to our group. A strong Biblical background is not required to join us...all you need is a desire to learn and to grow.

Koinonia will resume this fall on **September 13th**. We will be using a study written by Beth Moore titled *Breaking Free: Making Liberty in Christ a Reality in Life*. By using the Book of Isaiah and other Scriptural references, Beth will encourage us to examine "ways in which we are held captive by anything that hinders the abundant and effective Spirit-filled life God planned for us." Friends who have completed *Breaking Free* and other Beth Moore studies cannot say enough good things about her and her work...we are hoping to be equally inspired and challenged as we begin this fall.



Bookworms

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



The Bookworms will meet August 15th at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Betsy Hohlfelder. The book for August is *Gilead* by Marilynne Robinson.

September's book is *The House on McCully Street*, by Gladys Brew Wilson; location, TBA.

A Note To The Congregation

Thank you for all the expressions of concern and love. The cards, e-mails, letters, flowers, phone calls and prayers have helped bolster me and my family through this awful experience.



I did not expect this and I am very sad but all your kindness has helped me.

Thank you, Jane Decker

Preaching Schedule

Your pastors will be on vacation during the first three weeks of August. While we are away, our guest preachers will be:



August 6: Rev. John Yohe
"Unity in Christ"

August 13: Rev. Bill Roemer

August 20: Rev. Bill Roemer

Please make our guests feel at home.

Communion Servers for August

The following people are scheduled to serve communion on **Sunday, August 6th, 2006**. If you are not able to attend church on August 6th, please arrange for a substitute.

Jason & Kiri Rising
Lou & Wendy Mazzini
Matt & Pam Maniet
Glenn & Sally Child



Please remember that we will celebrate communion by the traditional method in August, and we will celebrate by intinction in September.

Care List

MEMBERS AT HOME:

Lois Conley, 1150 Bower Hill Rd, 1116A, Pittsburgh, PA 15243
 Matt Dunfee, 966 Worthington Woods Blvd, Worthington, OH, 43085
 Kenn Fetterman, 2236 Kingridge Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15237
 Jane Kohman, 1300 Bower Hill Road, #1430, Pittsburgh, PA 15243
 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
 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
 Harry Retzer, 493 Castle Shannon Boulevard, #520, Pittsburgh, PA 15234
 Tooie Sharkey, Asbury Place, 760 Bower Hill Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15243

Let us pray for the loved ones of those who have died:

Nell Owens 5/13/06

(Bev Lamb's mother)

Theresa Stewart 6/29/06

Raymond Craig 6/30/06

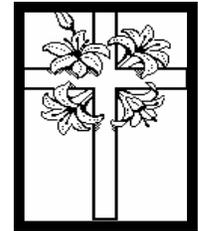
James Lather 7/1/06

(Nancy Criswell's father)

Freda Q. Foxley 7/12/06

(Glenna Creaves Karkaria's mother)

Please let the office know if you have a loved one who you would like included on this list.



Elders & Deacons

Administration & Personnel: Chairperson, Woody Hughes; Pat Jacobs

Buildings & Grounds: Chairperson, Matt Maniet; Phil Johnson

Christian Education: Chairperson, Pam Maniet; Debby Hayes; **Adult Education Subcommittee:** Nina Helbling, Dan Zabo

Community Building: Chairperson, TBA

Evangelism & Membership: Chairperson, Glenn Child; Jean Miewald

Finance & Stewardship: Chairperson, Kurt Kerner; Dick Junker

Mission: Chairperson, Dave Hicks; Diane Leeson; Lou Mazzini

Nominating & Presbytery: Chairperson, Curt Philson; Bill Cadwell

Music & Worship: Chairperson, Anne Mitchell; Margie Sewall

Youth Ministries: Chairperson, Christine Henney; Jason Rising

Deacons Class of 2007

Bob Bridges
 Nancy Green (Sanctuary Flowers)
 Theresa Child (Sanctuary Flowers)
 Dave Stewart
 Cindy Waller (Special Flowers)

Deacons Class of 2008

Marian Brannan (Feed My Sheep)
 Betty Chidlow
 Barbara Hughes (Ministry at time of death)
 Kathy Philson (Moderator)
 Carolyn Westerhoff

Deacons Class of 2009

Ben Hohlfelder (Special Flowers)
 Mary Good (Secretary)
 Margaret Zabo (Welcome Baby)
 Elaine Dalmaso
 Phyllis Yohe



Ending Hunger Now!

On June 4th, 50 copies of the book *Ending Hunger Now* by Donald Messer, Bob Dole and George McGovern, were distributed to the congregation. So...how's the reading going? We hope you have found

some time to read the book and to think about what it had to say. The Hunger Action Team met to talk about plans to discuss the book and we expect to have 3 options available in early September. Look for more details to come!

Also please save Saturday, October 14th on your calendar! We expect to have a Hunger Awareness Event for the community from about 11:00am-2:30pm. There will be stations all over the church to help people learn about and get involved in taking action against hunger. Most exciting of all, we are trying to make arrangements with Donald Messer, one of the authors of the book *Ending Hunger Now*, to come to be a guest speaker for the event!



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

THE CHURCH OFFICE

[412] 561-4114

Monday - Friday

8:45 am - 4:45 pm

Office email: office@bhccml.com

Our Web Page is: www.bhccml.com

*Please note that the newsletter deadline will be changing to the 15th of every month. This will be a permanent change. Thank you.

Pittsburgh, PA

Permit No. 2335

PAID

U.S. POSTAGE

Non-Profit Org.

Pittsburgh, PA 15243

70 Moffett Street

Bower Hill Community Church