

Bower Hill Community Church Presbyterian Church (USA)

A place to Believe, Belong and Become!

NOVEMBER 2006

Blessings

As November begins, the Stewardship Campaign is in full swing and even as I write this, I can smell the sweet smell of cinnamon bread in my office. I can't help but think of that old phrase, "Life is sweet." With the approach of Thanksgiving and the reminder of all the things I have to be thankful for, that expression seems to hold a great deal of truth. And as I sit and savor the good things in my life, I am reminded of another old phrase, "Blessed to be a Blessing." In many ways, that idea very much captures the tension that we as people of faith live with every day. "Blessed to be a Blessing," begins with the daily challenge to pause and consider the ways we are blessed. With the Hunger Awareness Event very much on my mind and all the time we as a congregation have spent thinking about the hungry in our community and the world this year, I am so much more aware of how blessed we all are.

At the hunger event, The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank supplied us with handmade "Empty Bowls" which were a part of their Empty Bowl Project. The bowls are donated by local artists and they provide some financial support to the food bank, but they also serve a greater purpose. The hope of the project is that people will place the empty bowl on their table so that every time they gather to eat, they are reminded of the needs of the world and the many bowls that go without food. The constant reminder is not intended to fill people with sadness or guilt but to challenge people to care and take action. In other words to recognize how blessed they are and to respond in some way to be a blessing to others. I can't help wondering what would happen if we all placed empty bowls on our tables and shared the idea with our friends and family...how much more would we be challenged and moved to take action to fight hunger?

"Blessed to be a Blessing." When we take this concept seriously, our actions are motivated by a sense of gratitude and responsibility to do something with what we have been given. More than anything else, this is what stewardship is all about, considering our blessings and responding with gratitude by offering ourselves and our gifts to God. As I think about the good things that we as a church have done this past year, I am grateful for how we have been living this out through our mission activities (check out Steve Boisvert's article on page 2 for more on this). Much to my surprise, Donald Messer when he visited Bower Hill to speak at the Hunger Action Event, shared a similar sentiment. He commented on how wonderful the Hunger Action Event was and suggested we write it up to share with others. He expressed the belief that we were really doing some amazing things at Bower Hill. As I walked around the event, I realized that we were blessing God with our work. In fact, if you think about we really lived out the "Blessed to be a Blessing," idea even more as we challenged others to see how they had been blessed and to respond by being a blessing to others.

Throughout the month of November and into Advent, let us continue to consider this notion of "Blessing" as we intentionally take notice of all the "sweet" gifts we have been given. And let us respond with gratitude to those gifts by living as God's blessing and blessing others with our actions and gifts.

Blessings,
Rev. Laurie



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Mission News

Mission and Stewardship—Steve Boisvert

I know some of you missed Steve's Minute for Stewardship last Sunday, so I asked if we could print it because I thought he did such a good job celebrating the good we do through our mission work!—Rev. Laurie

The Stewardship Committee asked the Mission Committee to talk about what we have accomplished and what we are planning to do in the coming year. We are, after all Presbyterians and always form committees. I'm supposed to cover what we've done this year – impossible to cover in one minute.

I'd first like to offer the impressions of relative newcomers. When Debbie and I first came to BHCC, we noticed that the congregation was friendly and warm. That's not why we joined. Let's be honest. There are a lot of friendly and warm congregations in Mt. Lebanon. What did impress us was that the congregation was outward looking. On one of the first weeks we heard about congregation members providing assistance to flood victims in Crafton and Carnegie. It seemed to be taken for granted that is what this congregation does.

Mission @ BHCC does include supporting others who do mission on our behalf:

- Clairton School Back to school and Book drive
- Camp Crestfield scholarship - outreach that other camps can't or won't provide
- SHIM support in dollars and a Back-to-School event with Backpacks and a kick-off event in which some of our members participated.
- The Malawi visit scholarship and the Lambs opening their home and hosting Roy
- Infinite Family – We provide financial support and Betsy Hohlfelder keeps in touch with an AIDS orphan in South Africa
- Miryam's House – a shelter for women for which members of BHCC provide meals once a month
- East Liberty Family Health Center
- Mt. Washington Presbyterian Church
- Bread for the World

(It is particularly important to me to see BHCC provide continuing support to mission projects. One of my brothers is a missionary who works in Africa. As we worship together this morning, he is in Liberia. If the churches that support him withdraw their support, he is forced to spend his time and efforts raising money, not doing mission work. I am pleased BHCC does not do this.)

Notice a pattern? Mission at BHCC is not just passing money through a committee that meets to determine “worthy” causes – It's congregation members responding to God's call. The final and most striking example of the synergy at BHCC is that Lenten Wednesday evening services led members to form the Hunger Action Task Force to do something about hunger. The first project, Fill the Truck, had us at first worrying that we would not collect enough food. Our real problem turned out to be how to get two truckloads of food to Mississippi. If you were lucky enough to attend the Hunger Awareness Day October 14, you saw a wealth of activities that went beyond just a fun day that we hope inspired others. A friend of ours stopped at the Presbyterian Coffee Project table and took material home to encourage her church to start their own coffee project.

Please prayerfully consider all that BHCC accomplishes in the world in God's name when you fill out your pledge card and continue to answer the call to be part of BHCC's mission in the coming year.

Food Pantry—Jason Rising

The Food Pantry appreciates your donations of cereal and laundry detergent for the month of November. Thanks to all who participated last month! Together we collected 27 bags of food!

This month donations will be collected on Sunday, November 12th. Please contact Jason Rising at 412-851-1503, jaydr@adelphia.net, for more information.



Mission News

60 Minutes—Putting A Face On Homelessness

Washington City Mission will be presenting interviews of former Mission residents, their stories of homelessness and recovery and the latest news from the Mission. The presentation will be on November 16th, at the Peters Township Public Library at 616 East McMurray Road. Two times are scheduled: 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. (lunch) or 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. (dessert) Please R.S.V.P. at hcolletti@citymission.org or call 724-228-2940, ext. 232
The Mission's website is: www.citymission.org



Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank—25th Annual KD Turkey Drive

KDKA-TV partners with the Food Bank to raise money so that every family can celebrate Thanksgiving with a decent meal. As little as \$15 provides a family meal. People may send a check to KD Turkey Fund, P.O. Box "Thanks," Pittsburgh, PA 15230, or drop one off at any National City Branch Office.

Thanksgiving

Chinese Auction—Elaine Dalmaso

The Chinese Auction was a great success, having raised \$330.00 for the Hunger Awareness Event. The following were the winners: Hand Painted China Plates—Janis Shaw; Hand Painted Italian Tray—Jamie Sonnie; Starbucks Gifts—Betsy Hohlfelder; Steelers Chocolates—Logan Schardt; Pearl Pouch Jewelry—Theresa Child; Dinner and a Movie—LuAnn McNickle; Pirates Gifts—Natalie Shaw; A BIG thanks to the basket contributors and to you who bought tickets. Without all of you and your generosity, this article couldn't be published! Blessings to you, Elaine Dalmaso

Mission News Updates—Dave Hicks

30 Gift of the Heart Kits were completed by the kids from Vacation Bible School and they have been mailed to Church World Services.

More than 50 canvas bags were filled with school supplies for the elementary school kids in Clairton and have been delivered. The children and teachers extend their sincere thanks to the congregation. The mission committee thanks Mary Beth Waine and our kids for all their hard work in putting the bags together. They are making a big difference.

Watch for information about the Angel Tree and gifts for the soldiers in Iraq. The Angel Tree is popular every Christmas and we will continue that tradition. Last year was the second year for the soldiers' gifts and was also very popular with all involved with packaging and mailing so we've decided to do it again this Christmas.

Looking forward to 2007, there are two projects that we have begun to explore. One is at the Vets Hospital and the other is with the Neighborhood Academy. They are both very exciting and offer members of our congregation a tremendous opportunity to serve others. We can make a big difference with both of these projects, as we continue to help those who are less fortunate.

Watch for an article in next month's newsletter from Bev & Don Lamb about their experience hosting Roy Mponda from Malawi. All who were involved in the Partnership event felt it was extremely worthwhile and they learned a great deal from spending time talking with Roy. He spoke at Adult Education, at worship and at our Mission Committee meeting. Several of our members who spent time with Roy are asking how we can help to get a water well drilled in his village. Let's all think about that; the next time you go to your faucet and turn on the water and realize that you didn't have to walk three miles round trip to get the water.

Thanks to all in the congregation who work so hard on all of our mission efforts; it is inspiring and greatly appreciated!



Worship News

Greeters & Coffee Hour Hosts

Greeters:

November 5—Ben & Jackie Holdsworth,
Lucille Heckman, Nina Helbling
November 12—Dick & Kate Junker,
Moody Johnson, Zoe Kelly
November 19—Dottie Carter, Betty
Ewing, Nina Helbling
November 26—Graham & Carol Knox,
Truman & Jane Kohman, Dawn Kane



Coffee Hour: There are sign up sheets for November and December Coffee Hour in the Narthex. Please be sure to select a date! Thank you!

Communion Servers for December

The following people are scheduled to serve communion on Sunday, December 3rd. If you are not able to serve communion, please arrange for a substitute.

Bob & Joan Bridges
Julia Snead
Dave & Susan Hicks
Woody & Barbara Hughes
Bob Winnett
Choir: Joan Zakor & Margaret Zabo



Sermon Texts for November

November 5: Mark 12:28-34
November 12: Mark 12: 38-44
November 19: Mark 13:1-8
November 26: 9:00 Psalm 118
A Thanksgiving Celebration
10:15 am John 18:33-37



Advent Candle

Lighters

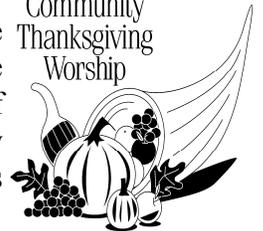
Candle lighters are needed for the four Sundays of Advent. If you are interested in lighting candles and reading a short reading, please let one of the pastors know. Singles, couples, and families are all encouraged to volunteer!



39th Annual Community Thanksgiving Service

On Tuesday, November 21st 2006 at 7:30 p.m., Our Lady of Grace Church will be hosting this year's Thanksgiving service. As a part of worship, food donations for the SHIM food pantry will be collected, so if you are attending, don't forget your bag of food. If you are unable to attend, you can bring a bag of food to Bower Hill on Sunday Nov. 19th and we will deliver it for you. If you would like more information on this event, please contact Barbara Houston, SHIM Program Director, at 412-854-9120, ext 17.

Community
Thanksgiving
Worship



Education News

Adult Education For November

November 5—Steve Levin from the Pittsburgh Post Gazette will discuss the current status of mainline and other churches.
November 12—Global Warming; Science behind global warming
November 19—Global Warming; Ethical implications and exploring the PCUSA positions on this topic.
November 26—Tom Flynn; "Byron said what?!!!"



Church News

Website Updates—Glenn Child

As mentioned in September's newsletter, more changes were planned for the website by the Evangelism & Membership Committee this year. The latest change is to allow the website to be searched by keying in a few words. This feature is similar to searching the internet using search engines such as Google, Yahoo, etc.

To use our search engine, on the home page click on Search Block in the upper left corner. In the search form, key in a word to search. When keying in multiple words, separate the words by "or" or "and" to get desired results as explained in the following examples:

For example, if you key in:

Music—shows any article with the word "music" in it

Worship—Shows any article with the word "worship" in it

Music and Worship—Shows any article with either the word "music" or "worship" in it

Music Worship—Shows any article with the words "music worship" in it. They must be next to each other and in this order. While this option is very specific and will return fewer pages, quite often you will not find pages of interest. Using the "and" option is probably better.

The results page will display information for each page that matches the search criteria. For each result item, pertinent information is displayed. The first line contains the result number, and the title of the web page that contains more detailed information. The next lines contain the context in which the item was found. In general, looking at the title and context is the best way to determine if this page contains information you are seeking. Click on the title of the page for which you would like more information. You may occasionally reach an invalid page. Ignore any error messages, click on the back button in your internet browser and try another link.

Work on the "Members Only" section mentioned in the September newsletter is coming along well. It will probably be a few months until all of the logistics maintaining the members section can be worked out. An article about using the "Members Only" section will be forthcoming in a future newsletter.



"You Heard It From The Clerk"—George Freas, Clerk of Session

Here are some highlights from the September 25th Session Meeting:

Session approved a committee to begin the search for a permanent Director of Music. The committee will be composed of: one member from Administration & Personnel, two members from Worship & Music, one member from the Choir and one member from the congregation at large.

Session approved the following changes to the roll: 18 members from active to inactive roll, 12 members removed from the active roll.

Session approved the 2007 Stewardship Campaign plan.

Session approved the September 24th baptism of Jacob Ryan Geis.



Poinsettias for Christmas—Cindy Waller

This year's Poinsettia orders will be accepted from now until December 14. The plants are \$10.00 each and will be used for the Church Christmas tree display. Orders forms are included in this newsletter and will also be available in the Church Office. Please complete one order form for each Poinsettia purchased.

For further information contact the Church Office or call Cindy Waller at 412-571-1346.



Poinsettias

Church News

Flea Market Helpers Needed—Theresa Child

The Flea Market will be held Saturday, November 18th from 8:30a.m.-3:00p.m. Help is needed for both the *sale* and the *set up*. Set up will begin on Thursday, November 16th at 9:30a.m. and if needed Friday, November 17th at 12:30p.m. Helpers on the day of the sale should show up at 8:00a.m. Help one day or all three (bring a brown bag lunch on Thursday and Saturday). If you would like to help, just show up at any of these times. Any questions, please call Jean Grabow at 412-343-4396.

Bookworms

November 14th: *Suite Francaise*, by Irene Nemirovsky; at the home of Anne Mitchell. (Please note the November meeting will be on the 14th, not the 21st, due to Thanksgiving). There will be no meeting in December.



Bower Hillers

The Bower Hillers will meet on November 29th, at 12:00 p.m. at Deblasio's Restaurant. November's hosts are George and Eleanora Freas and the guest speaker will be a representative of the Bower Hill Braillists. Invitations will follow!

Youth News

November Greetings!—Brian Hayes



Hello everyone and thank you for all your prayers and encouragement. As the first two months of the new school year are passing, the church's youth program has incited motivation from our first few meetings. Both of our groups— middle school and high school— are fueled by a genuine and enthusiastic group of kids. Credit cannot be taken away from the supportive group of parents who believe that these students deserve an outlet from the stressful life that school demands. Without the mothers and fathers of the community, my job description would be unrealistic. So once again, *thank you* to all the parents for your faith and attention in regards to our youth program.

Our last high school meeting was entitled *Tailgate Fiesta*. The students and I used the church's kitchen to make a traditional Mexican dinner. The middle school kids took me bowling during the previous week. The evening was capped off with a late-night visit to Eat 'n Park. Our next middle school event will be to decorate pumpkins for shut-ins around the community.

I was ecstatic to learn that we now have kids showing up who are not members of the church. I would, however, remain earnest to continue building attendance from within the congregation as well. In addition, we are searching for any musicians who feel like jamming. Elliot Roth has communicated his willingness to incorporate as many young, musically oriented participants as we can locate. All levels of experience and expertise are welcome. Therefore, if anybody would like to disseminate any helpful information, names of potentials or anything else, please feel free to contact me at the church.

This journey has only begun and some exciting events are waiting to be hatched in the next two months. A lock-in is being planned, a movie outing is in the works, as well as some holiday mission work projects.

God has blessed this church's youth program with potential. I can only hope to serve as a vessel for the momentum to accelerate. I pray that observers of the youth groups here will be able to recognize the magnificent story which our Father is currently enacting. If that sounds too heavy, then maybe we can remember to stop and smell the roses once in a while.

NOVEMBER EVENTS: 11/5/06: Steeler Tailgate Party (Senior High), Time 1:00 p.m. 11/14/06: Helping Hands (Middle School), 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. 11/18/06: Flea Market Bake Sale, (Senior High), 9:30 a.m. 11/26/06: Night at the Movies, (Middle School), Time TBA

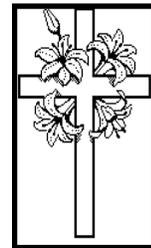
Care List

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
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
Marcia Maley, Marian Manor, 2695 Winchester Drive, #216C, Pittsburgh, PA 15220
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



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

COMEDY CORNER



OUR CHURCH STAFF

Tom Flynn, Interim Director of Music Ministries

to@bhccml.com

Brian Hayes, Director of Youth Ministries

br@bhccml.com

Jim Kline, Custodian

Elliot Roth, Contemporary Music Leader

jabinmusic@yahoo.com

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 - 5:15 pm

Office email: office@bhccml.com

***Please note that the newsletter deadline has changed to the 15th of every month. This is a permanent change. Thank you.**

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