

Bower Hill Community Church Presbyterian Church (USA)

A place to Believe, Belong and Become!

DECEMBER 2006

Snowballs

As I sit in my office with the sun shining outside and the thermometer reading in the 60's on this beautiful November day, it seems peculiar to be thinking about snowballs. And yet, I have been marveling about snowballs for the past few weeks. It all started when someone came to me with a question about finding a place where their family could serve Thanksgiving Dinner. This simple question was like a tiny pebble rolling down the side of a mountain where it promptly picked up speed and a great deal of snow as other members got involved and began to ask the same question about Christmas. Before I knew what was happening a great wonderful snowball had begun to roll down the mountain and the only thing to do was to get out of its way! That is how the plans to serve Christmas Dinner at Washington City Mission took off. A small group of people got an idea and then came together to keep the ball (or snowball) rolling. As I write this, menus are being finalized and plans continue to be laid to involve as many people as possible in this Christmas mission.

On Sunday December 10th, everyone will have an opportunity to make decorations for the tables and the dining room of the Washington City Mission so that we can create a festive atmosphere for Christmas Dinner. On Sunday December 17th, we need all the homemade cookies that we can get so that we can hold a cookie exchange sale after both worship services. The cookie sale idea came from my Mom's church where they used the proceeds to help fund mission projects. The sale was so well received because the church found that many people loved to bake (and had a habit of making too many Christmas cookies), while others found that they did not have time to bake and missed the taste of homemade Christmas cookies! Our cookie sale proceeds will help us to purchase gifts to stuff into stockings for the folks at the Washington City Mission and while the cookie sale is going one will have an opportunity to stuff a stocking for the mission with pre-purchased supplies.

We also hope to involve the congregation through the baking and cooking of the meal. One easy way to get involved is to make an extra Christmas pie. A sign up sheet will be available in the narthex for folks who plan to bake a pie for the Christmas Dinner. We hope to have all the pies collected after worship on Christmas Eve morning, just in case we need to buy some extras! We also may need some cooks to make a portion of the side dishes, so if you are interested, please let me know. Of course, if you are available between 2pm and 6pm on Christmas day, we'd love to have your help serving the meal!

This snowball experience ties in so well with a verse from the book of Hebrews that we recently read in church: "And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds." (Heb. 10:24) Isn't it marvelous that we are being provoked to love and good deeds by an idea that came from one family? I can only hope that God will continue to work within our congregation to stir up more ideas that will provoke us all to love and good deeds! May there be many more snowballs in 2007.



Rev. Laurie

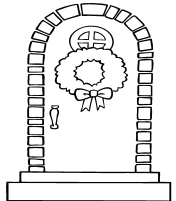
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Advent & Christmas

Church Office Open House

During Christmas week the office staff will be hosting a Christmas Open House every day during office hours. We hope you will stop by for hot cider, hot chocolate and some fresh baked holiday cookies.



OPEN HOUSE

You can join us Monday the 18th through Thursday the 21st from 10am-3pm and on Friday the 22nd from 10am-12pm.

Decorating the Church—Donna Williams

Deck the Halls will be Sunday, December 3rd. Please plan to stay after the services to transform the church in holiday dress. Muffins and Bagels will be available to stave off those hunger pains. Dress casual and remember many hands make the task go quickly!



Deck
the
Halls

Poinsettias for Christmas—

Cindy Waller

This year's Poinsettia orders will be accepted until December 14th. The plants are \$10.00 each and will be used for the church Christmas tree display. Orders forms are in the church bulletins and 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

Remember:

There will be no Christian Education classes held on Sunday, December 24th and Sunday, December 31st.



Holiday Schedule

Special Events in December

December 3

9:00 am Worship
10:15 am Worship, Choir will perform *Missa Pastoritia*.
11:30 am Deck the Halls— wear or bring casual clothes to help decorate the church after the 2nd service.

December 10

9:00 am Worship- Come in Out of the Cold— bring a friend to church for the church open house
10:15 am Worship- Come in Out of the Cold— bring a friend to church for the church open house
After worship, help us to make decorations for the Washington City Mission Open Christmas Dinner

December 17

9:00 am & 10:15 am Worship
Cookie Exchange—Cookie donations should be dropped off by 9:30 am. Cookies will be available for sale after both services. Cost of 1 dozen cookies is \$3.00 and the money will be used to offset the cost of the Washington City Mission project.

Stocking Stuffing- After worship help us stuff stockings for the Washington City Mission Christmas Dinner. Stockings and supplies will be provided. The cost will be offset by the cookie exchange.



December 24 -Christmas Eve
(pies collected for Washington City Mission

Christmas Dinner)

10:15 am Worship—Congregational Christmas Pageant
5:00 pm Christmas Eve Family Worship Celebration
Join us for a retelling of the Christmas Story, Candlelight and Carols.
8:00 pm Traditional Lessons and Carols Service
Choir music, Candlelight and Carols.

Christmas Day

2:00 pm Washington City Mission Christmas Dinner

Advent & Christmas



Holiday Mission

Come In Out of the Cold—Glenn Child

This Advent season we are going to embark on a new program to try to get the word out about the good things we are doing at Bower Hill and what our church has to offer. We are going to utilize a program developed by the Presbyterian Media Mission Group. The idea is to have an “Advent Open House” for the community. The open house will be on December 10th with linked activities on December 17th. The hope is that those who attend on December 10th will be motivated to attend worship services and other activities during the entire Advent season.

We are coordinating this event with the preparation for the Washington City Mission Christmas Project. On December 10th the community will have the opportunity to join us in worship, to tour the church and, during coffee hour, to participate in activities to support the Washington City Mission Christmas Project. Check the weekly church bulletins for further information regarding these activities. Both members and visitors will again have the opportunity to participate on December 17th with additional activities to support the mission project. We expect the activities on the 17th will include filling a stocking with small gifts and donating or purchasing cookies as part of a cookie exchange to raise money for the cost of the gifts.

How can you help?

First, pray that those we reach out to are open to this opportunity. Consider if there are family, friends or neighbors who should be invited. Volunteer to be a host and offer to show visitors around the church on December 10th, giving them a brochure highlighting the many opportunities to become involved at Bower Hill Community Church. Volunteer to make a follow-up visit early the next week with those visitors who attend on the 10th. A short visit and invitation to participate in the next week’s activities shows our sincere desire to reach out to the community. Finally, please plan on attending church on December 10th and 17th, and on participating in the mission activities and making our visitors feel welcome. Sign-up sheets will be in the Narthex, or you can contact Glenn Child or Jean Miewald to obtain additional information.



Cookie Exchange

Cookie Exchange To Benefit the Washington City Mission Christmas Project

—Jean Miewald

During the Coffee Hours after Worship on December 17th, we will have a cookie exchange. If you like to bake, please donate some of your wonderful cookies. We will put them out and folks can buy an assortment of their choosing for \$3.00 per dozen. The funds raised from this exchange will be used to defray the expenses of providing Christmas dinner to the clients of the Washington City Mission in Washington, PA.

How can you get involved?

On December 10th, during the Coffee Hours, help make decorations to take with us to make the dining room more festive. On December 17th, join us for the cookie exchange and in filling Christmas stockings to provide a small gift to each guest. We are looking to people to donate and buy cookies for the exchange. We are also interested in small toiletries for the stockings, especially dental care products. You can help cook the food that we will be taking with us to serve for dinner at the Mission, or be part of the crew that delivers the food on Christmas Day. We expect to be there between 2PM and 6PM, with the actual meal between 3 and 5, in two sittings.

Please come in out of the cold on December 10th and 17th and participate in these events!

Worship & Church News

Greeters & Coffee Hour Hosts

Greeters:

December 3—Don Lamb, Dianne Leeson, Tim & Darena Lease
December 10—Chuck & Mary Laufer, Ron & Judy Linaburg, Lou & Wendy Mazzini
December 17—Chan Ketchum, Jim & Joan McAnulty, LuAnn McNickle
December 24—Robert & Doris Olinger, Anne Noland, Jeanne Olsen
December 31—Barbara Prunchak, Jack & LuAnne Pattison, Curt & Kathy Philson



Coffee Hour:

December 3—Mary Beth Waine
December 10—Glenn & Sally Child
December 17—John & Karen Zoll
December 24 & 31—Open; there are sign up sheets in the Narthex. Please be sure to select a date!
Thank you!

Bookworms

There will be no meeting in December. January's book is *Valley of Decision*, by Marcia Davenport, at the home of Lee Ferrero. Stay tuned for updates in the next newsletter.

Communion Servers for January

The following people are scheduled to serve communion on Sunday, January 7th. If you are not able to serve communion, please arrange for a substitute.

Nina Helbling
Dave Stewart
Kurt Kerner
Don & Bev Lamb
Diane Leeson
Bill Cadwell
Choir: Lynne Wohleber and Lee Ferrero



Adult Education For December

Dec 3rd—John Zoll, *The Thoughtful Christian*, "Books that didn't make the Bible and why!" A look at how decisions were made and a look at some of the books that didn't make it.
Dec 10th—Tom Flynn, "Byron, a poet who knew it!"
Dec 17th—John Zoll, *The Thoughtful Christian*, "Books that didn't make the Bible and why!" This class will take a closer look at the Gospel of Thomas.
Dec 24th & 31st—No Christian Education.

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

Here are some highlights from the October 23rd Session Meeting:

- Session authorized the Music Director Search Committee to begin the search for a Part-Time Music Director.
- Session approved dissolution of the Community Building Committee. Functions of the former Community Building Committee will be placed under the general oversight of the Evangelism & Membership Committee. Donna Williams will carry out responsibilities associated with this change.
- Session approved changes to the rolls as follows:
 - Move from Active Roll to Inactive Roll: 24 Members
 - Remove from Active Roll: 3 Members
 - Remove from Inactive Roll: 25 Members
- Session approved plans for delivery of the 2007 pledge cards.
- Session approved repositioning of the organ console to provide the organist with a better overall view of the sanctuary, especially the choir loft and the sanctuary.
- Session approved a final reading of the Youth Ministries Position description.



Mission News

Angel/Star Trees—Diane Leeson

Christmas is a great time to share our abundance with others. One way to share is to participate in the Angel/Star Tree program. Two trees are set up outside the Friendship Room. One tree, decorated with angels, supports Lydia's Place. Lydia's Place is a faith-based, non-profit agency devoted to helping female offenders and their dependent children. The agency offers "life skill" classes and re-entry training for the women, along with support groups for both the women and children. Please note that the suggested deadline for gift collection is Sunday, December 3rd. Gifts will be delivered to Lydia's Place on Thursday, December 7th and then distributed to the children and their mothers/caregivers at their Christmas party on December 13th.

For more information about Lydia's place, visit www.lydiasplace.org

The second tree, decorated with stars, supports our soldiers in Iraq. Bower Hill has sent care packages to soldiers in the past, and the response from them was overwhelmingly positive. The holidays, away from family and friends, are lonely and difficult. Sending packages to our troops will let them know that Bower Hill cares. The deadline for these gifts is Christmas Day. The packages will be sent out after the Christmas rush.

For information about our soldiers and how our thoughtfulness impacts them, we suggest this site: www.anysoldier.com

Simply take an angel (Lydia's Place) or a star, (soldiers in Iraq). Return the unwrapped gift with the tag attached, and place it underneath the corresponding tree.

Your support and generosity are greatly appreciated!



Our Guest—Bev Lamb



Pittsburgh Presbytery maintains a partnership with several churches in Malawi, known as "the warm heart of Africa." Don and I had the pleasure of hosting Roy Mponda, a visiting Malawian, for a week. He shared our home, our church and our lives. Each day was a busy one, filled with varied activities; there were lively moments, along with frank, and sometimes difficult, discussion. We also shared plenty of laughs and uplifting devotions that bound us in a very special way. Roy was enthusiastic and excited over each new Pittsburgh experience and adventure.

I'm sure that those who met Roy in church found him as interesting, intellectual, inquiring, inspirational and fun-filled as we did. Upon learning that women in his village walk 2 km three times a day to provide water for their families, some members at Bower Hill inquired about providing a bore hole in his village. Roy tells us that when he shared that interest with the people of his church they "stood up and started dancing—a sign of thanksgiving and appreciation." However, he did caution them to be patient, as these projects take time.

Roy sends a "million thanks" to the people of Bower Hill for the "wonderful" time he had here and his family sends best wishes for our holiday season, reminding us by email that "prayers know no boundary." He prays for all of us, "knowing that even tough, it comes from over 10,000 miles away; prayer can still be of great significance to God and to you."

Food Pantry—Jason Rising

The Food Pantry appreciates your donations of canned vegetables and peanut butter for the month of December. Thanks to all who participated last month! This month donations will be collected on Sunday, December 10th. Please contact Jason Rising at 412-851-1503, jaydr@adelphia.net, for more information.



Youth News



Youth News for December—Brian Hayes

I hope and pray that everyone is navigating through this holiday season with tranquil hearts and grateful souls. I am thankful that the parents and kids of our youth program have been able to balance their copious activities and active schedules to include participation in the church's events. Late October and the month of November have yielded several enriching and joyful events for the youth of BHCC.

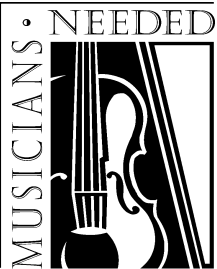
The Middle School group has been affectionately dubbed The Middies in an effort to include brevity along with a light hearted connotation. Before Halloween, the Middies decorated pumpkins for some of the members of our congregation who have diminished mobility. The kids voted on the best pumpkin decorations and the winner received a movie gift certificate. Incidentally, the winning pumpkin may have also set a world record for the most feathers inserted into a single squash!

The high school group established a new tradition: A monthly breakfast outing has been set. Since there is no Sunday School on the first Sunday of the month, we now go to breakfast at Denny's following the early service.

As food was beginning to prove itself a motivating factor, the high school group decided to bake the items themselves for the Flea Market Bake Sale this year. Two hundred and seventy six chocolate chip cookies were produced from the motivation to earn money towards the summer mission trip. Final results from the bake sale fundraising will be divulged along with the decision of where the mission trip will be in the next newsletter. Stay tuned for information involving additional fundraising events as well. The high school kids are not the only ones involved in the baking. The Middies made their first attempt at fundraising, preparing to enter the kitchen the day before the bake sale. Those involved will earn money toward the Night at the Movies excursion at the end of the month.

An earnest desire remains for the kids to incorporate their musical aptitude in our worship services. Elliot Roth is eagerly awaiting any interested parties who wish to make some noise. Either Elliot or I can be contacted through the church office or anyone can reach me through my email address: br@bhccml.com

We all know the word *grateful* has been casually incorporated as a holiday motif in everything from commercials to greeting cards. I find it challenging to couple that sentiment with humility. Peering between the lines will reveal that our quality of life includes myriad benefits and privileges which rank us in the upper echelon of the global community. The poet Robert Hunter once observed that: "Once in a while you get shown the light in the strangest of places if you look at it right." I pray that God may continue to enact in us all a deeper appreciation for life.



Youth Christian Jam Session Underway—Wendy Mazzini

On the first Sunday of December, (the 3rd), bring your instrument to the church library at 8:00 am and look over some music prepared by Elliott Roth, our Contemporary Music Director. Any youth in the 6th grade or older who has over 4 years of experience is welcome. Elliott will help the musicians through the music and select a rotating cast of individuals to accompany him month to month, beginning on January 7th at the 9:00 am service. Breakfast will be provided to lure you out of bed—sweets for the sweet. Be reminded that there is no Sunday School the first week of the month. Try tuning your instruments at home before you arrive so we can get right down to making music. If you have not yet reached the 6th grade but have been playing for 5 years, you are welcome to give the session a try. The session is not open to only Bower Hill members, so invite your friends. The church does have a drum set in the sanctuary if there is an experienced percussion player out there. Come hungry on December 3rd; breakfast will be served. Call Wendy Mazzini to sign up at 412-561-0604, so Elliott can effectively prepare and Wendy can get a breakfast headcount.

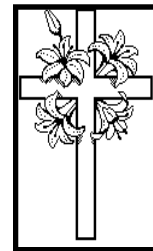
Care List

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., #6443, 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

Holiday Service Schedule



**Come and Worship! Come and Worship!
Worship Christ the Newborn King!**

Christmas Eve Worship, Sunday, December 24th
10:15 am Worship
5:00 pm Christmas Eve Family Worship Celebration
Join us for a retelling of the Christmas Story,
Candlelight and Carols.

8:00 pm Traditional Lessons and Carols Service
Choir music, Candlelight and Carols



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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